

## MILITARY PAN AMERASIANS AND 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY IMPLICATIONS FOR DIASPORIC AND GLOBAL STUDIES

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**Abstract.** Diasporic studies focusing on the human phenomena of military Pan Amerasians, the biracial progeny of U.S. servicemen and military personnel and local female nationals abandoned or stranded in numerous Southeast and East Asian nation-states dating from World War II, the Cold War and extending to contemporary times, are non-existent. This paper examines the prior and current status of Filipino Amerasians and those in other Pan Amerasian enclaves (e.g., Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Thailand, U.S. Territory of Guam, Vietnam, etc.), further advancing their cause for overdue yet neglected academic consideration as a bona fide human diaspora. Many military Amerasians, no longer children but well into adulthood and advanced age, exist today as they have for years, stigmatized, forsaken and impoverished offspring of forward deployed soldiers and private military contractors, often occupying the fringes of societies as disadvantaged, at-risk human cohorts. Analysis reveals that by many traditional measurements Pan Amerasians qualify as a diasporic entity in many or more ways than other populations benefiting from such designation have for decades.

*Asian American, Amerasian, Pan Amerasian, diaspora, stigmatization*

### INTRODUCTION

Who cares that theatrical and musical entertainment news cycles are on overdrive over plans by a United Kingdom-based musical producer to re-stage a production on London's West End of the mega musical hit "Miss Saigon?" The long running, 1990s hit musical, featuring the iconic "Kim," the sex laboring mother of an abandoned, mixed-heritage, Anglo Vietnamese Amerasian child of a U.S. Marine sergeant, would be a fixture of cultural fascination, a *sine qua non* topic for a paper in any military Amerasian Diaspora university studies program. The point is that today there is no course concentration, sequence or department in any U.S. American or East and Southeast Asian university or academic department for military Amerasian diasporic or ethnic studies.

Indeed, the reemergence of the entertainment public's interest in the Miss Saigon melodrama raises two other ironies of international interest deserving of analysis. One is that the reintroduction of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century version, in 2014, of Miss Saigon's saga of two "star-crossed lovers," (MacClear, 1995, p. 20) raises the possibility of retelling, or at least acknowledging the story of vile abandonment, human despair and global military war policy failure that led to formation of the sizeable Pan Amerasian diaspora in the first place. It may only amount to another attempt, however feeble and unpromising, to bring the now mostly forgotten Amerasian drama to a new generation of U.S. Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders. As MacClear (1995) points out, Miss Saigon, after all, was merely the updated 1990s version of a previous chapter in the extended Pan Amerasian drama, a sequel to the Marlon Brando-starring U.S. film productions of *Sayonara* (1957) and *Teahouse of the August Moon* (1956). Then, of course, the players were Japanese and Okinawans respectively, with storyline plots of romantic encounters between U.S. servicemen and native women and the fecund threat of biracial Amerasian babies being conceived along the way. In those days, as in the post-Vietnam Era of the 1990s, the U.S. American public was vaguely aware their servicemen had philandered heavily with native Asia Pacific women and left babies behind, but for the most part that is where the story ended. The overall human impact never resonated deeply or caught the social consciousness of the general American public then (Schade, 1980), and it is no more likely to now.

Another irreducible irony to the story is that London and Broadway, is once again seeking a Filipina national to play Kim's marquee role as a virgin Saigon bar girl who won the title Miss Saigon in a seedy night club on the eve of the U.S. military's inglorious exit from Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) (Oliveros, 2012). Indeed, the November, 2012 preliminary auditions held in Manila drew hundreds of performers seeking to replicate the authenticity and star power of the Filipina soprano and actress to first play Kim – Lea Salonga. An Oliver, Tony and Drama Desk award winning artist of international acclaim (Oliveros, 2012; Trueman, 2012), Salonga, a Filipina native, was born and raised as a child in Angeles City, Pampanga, Luzon. Therein may yet lay another of the many supreme ironies and sub plots surrounding the Miss Saigon label. Angeles, after all, is site of the former Clark air base and headquarters of the 13<sup>th</sup> U.S. Air Force, and it lies inside the notorious AMO (Angeles, Manila, Olongapo) Amerasian Triangle, believed to contain the largest concentration of biracial military Amerasians in Southeast and East Asia (Kutschera, Pelayo & Talamera-Sandico, 2012).

Within the greater Pan Amerasian diaspora, the Philippines today have the highest number of mixed-heritage, biracial Amerasians – 250,000 or more if second generation progeny are figured in (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). In part because of more prosperous economies in other nations where Pan Amerasians reside and perpetually languid Philippine finances, Filipino Amerasians as a mass are probably the most socioeconomically deprived, isolated, stigmatized, and deeply marginalized of all Pan Amerasians today. Kutschera (2010) found in one of the only recently known mental studies health among Filipino Amerasians that they suffered intense stigma and discrimination, experienced high psychosocial risk including joblessness, housing insecurity, dysfunctional family situations, drug and alcohol abuse and social isolation. Sixty-two percent of a 16 participant sample from Angeles sustained severe anxiety and depression scores on the DASS-21 mental health scales, indicating a propensity to develop mental pathology.

Although U.S. troops and military support and corporate contractor personnel today remain permanently stationed in other East Asian locations, chiefly Japan, Okinawa and South Korea, the sheer number of Amerasians alive in the Philippines - rivals the estimated 200,000 Japanese Amerasian children, born from 1945 to 1951 during the U.S. – Japanese Military Occupation (Schade, 1960, p. 24). Overall, U.S. military personnel fathered and largely left unsupported an estimated two million Amerasian children (Schade, 1980, p. 94). This formidable dispersal occurred in nearly a dozen East, Southeast and Pacific Island nation-states and territories. Its initial formation dated from the 1898 Treaty of Paris and the Spanish cession resulting in the U.S. acquiring the Philippine islands (Karnow, 1989).

Thus we see that military Pan Amerasians, though generally on the wane, in terms of numbers across the Western Pacific Basin, remain a part of the geo-political, socioeconomic, human, globular, ethnic and diasporic profile of significant locales in East and Southeast Asia. If a London, Broadway, Asian or international revival of interest in Miss Saigon is in the works, so then may be the rationale for revisiting, examining, updating and projecting what the future holds for the Pan Amerasian condition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Why have U.S. and Asia Pacific academia have to generate coherent or consistent interest over the years and, in fact, generally paid and continue to pay minimalist attention to the human plight and travail of military Amerasians?

In comparatively recent times, there have been some encouraging spurts of university community driven, empirically based research interest. For example, from the mid-1980s to well into the 1990s this occurred over socioeconomic, psychological, mental and medical health issues facing Vietnamese Amerasians; it was a condition driven by public demand to write final closure to the agonizing and volatile war era, coupled with academic institution and foundational interest on many unresolved and emotionally heart wrenching refugee issues at the conclusion of the violent Vietnam American War (1964-1975) (McKelvey, 1999). Such coalescing had also existed, in one form or another, in the years following the conclusion of the Japanese Occupation (1951), and in the long aftermath of the Korean War (1950-1953).

Yet since those years and occasional shows of cohesive academic research interest, the contemporary literature review cupboard on Amerasians is thin; there is, for instance, no coherent or unified research thrust emanating either from the academic or foundational research establishment today. This reality, essentially, leaves researchers to draw mostly on sporadic, individually driven dissertation, theses or independent researcher reports, or news media and book publishing accounts of isolated and anecdotal occurrences of stigmatization, hate mongering, or socioeconomic marginalization (i.e., Kim, 2009; Lamb, 2009; McKelvey, 1999; Song, 2003; Wu, 2012; Yarborough, 2005; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). For military Filipino Amerasians the empirical research landscape, in fact, is even bleaker.

This paper amplifies on two earlier preliminary study analyses. Kutschera and Caputi (2012) and Kutschera, Pelayo and Talamera-Sandico (2012) maintaining that (a) the unofficial estimated total number of military Amerasians in the Philippines – 50,000, was far larger than originally and unofficially projected in 1992 when permanent U.S. military bases were ejected, (b) that the total figure of Amerasians in the Philippines today, when second and new generation Amerasians are taken into account, is between 200,000 and 250,000, possibly many more, and (c) that when traditional and contemporary definitions of diaspora are taken into account, there is a strong case that Filipino Amerasians and other Pan Amerasian enclaves qualify for such designation.

Additionally, the paper seeks to provide readers a rationale for revisiting, examining, updating and projecting what the future holds for the military Filipino and broader Pan Amerasian condition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is done in the context of recent military and strategic defense and security developments in the Southeast and East Asia Pacific sphere, including such events as the recent announcement by the U.S. Obama-Biden Administration to “pivot,” or redirect the emphasis of U.S. international defense posture to East Asia from the Middle East and other regions of the globe (Cloud, 2021; O’Callaghan & Mogato, 2012); the aggressive and anxiety-provoking changes in foreign and defense policy by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as it relates to assertion of territorial and mineral claims in the South China Sea (China’s territorial disputes, 2012; Perlez, 2012), renewed tensions in East Asia regarding island and territorial disputes between the PRC and Japan (China’s territorial disputes, 2012), and the apparently continuing efforts by North Korea to develop future nuclear warhead missile delivery capability reaching as far as the U.S. mainland (Ryal, 2013).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The term *Pan Amerasian* was initiated by Kutschera (2010) who posited the phenomena as a social construct and “a general, inclusive reference” to Amerasian progeny dispersal; the direct result of long standing U.S. military presence in East and Southeast Asia. Driven by “U.S. military servicemen, civilian and contractor employees, these servicemen have fought or been garrisoned in dispersed locations, such as Guam, Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam” (p. 189). In reality, the historically definitive list includes a much wider swath, extending to other locations across East and Southeast Asia including, at one time or another, Cambodia (Kampuchea), mainland China, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, and Taiwan (Bass, 1996; Schade, 1980).

The Philippine case for diaspora offer attributes of considerable size coupled with unique historical ties to the U.S. as a former colony and commonwealth. While possessing enough of the general characteristics of traditional and contemporary diasporic definitions, Kutschera and Caputi (2012) maintained that diaspora status might also be extended to remaining Pan Amerasian cohorts perhaps in the form of a series of collective Amerasian enclaves. Kutschera and Caputi (2012) posited. .:

Certainly Filipino and other Pan Amerasians could arguably maintain that their births on foreign soil by U.S. military personnel assigned there constituted either a forceful or involuntary circumstance. Moreover, ample proof exists that Filipino and Pan Amerasian populations have

made and continue to make an on-going effort to stay in contact and maintain communication with their homeland. One verification is to log onto the Internet and search for numerous organizations and websites created by Filipino and Pan Amerasian ethnics devoted to disseminating news or providing locator sites for Amerasians seeking to locate their long lost fathers (Amerasian Research Network, Ltd., 2012, [www.AmerasianResearch.org](http://www.AmerasianResearch.org)).

After a year of investigation, we are not aware of any other academic researchers who have succeeded in publishing academic journal articles or presenting research conference papers offering Filipino Amerasians, or any enclaves of Pan Amerasians, as suitable nominees as diaspora. This specifically includes the narrower definition of military Amerasians, the subject of this paper, whose origin are an offshoot of the original definition of Amerasian advanced by Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winning author Pearl S. Buck. The iconic Buck made first reference to the encompassing term Amerasian – a sort of counterpart to the older 19<sup>th</sup> Century Eurasian definition describing biracial colonial children of British and Indian descent.- in an early novel depicting Chinese family and marriage traditions titled *East Wind, West Wind* (1930). Buck's definition originally referred to a controversial marriage between a Chinese man and a U.S. American woman, but was interpreted to encompass multi-racial marriages of Asians and North Americans in general.

The categorical nature of Amerasians in our paper are implicitly defined as “any person who was fathered by a citizen of the United States (an American serviceman, American expatriate, or U.S. government employee, regular or contract) and whose mother is, or was an Asian national” (Amerasian Foundation, 2007). The Amerasian Foundation prefaces its basic definition with an explanation that many Amerasian progeny, who sprung up after World War II in nation-states including Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam were abandoned by their fathers and in some cases their mothers, implying but not directly stating they were abandoned by military personnel fathers.

In the first known published research report suggesting military Filipino Amerasians possessed basic attributes of a qualifying diasporic population Kutschera (2010) posited in his doctorate dissertation that, “the unique sociological configuration of Filipino Amerasians as a diaspora” might make them future candidates for such consideration (p. 8). He cited two other sources: (a) Palmer (2000), who maintained that “diasporas are generally defined as the movement, migration, forced relocation, or scattering of a people or their descendants sometimes far from an established homeland” (p. 8), and (b) San Juan (2006), who maintained that diasporas are determined “not only by a homeland but also by a desire for eventual return, and by collective identity centered on myths and memories of the homeland” (p. 42). Regardless of their location or origin, Palmer further posited that diaspora in many instances were “not actual but imaginary and symbolic communities and political constructs. [They] share an emotional attachment to their ancestral land, are cognizant of their dispersal and, if conditions warrant, their oppression and alienation.”

Indeed, in applying traditional, fundamental definitions of diaspora, Filipino and ostensibly other Pan Amerasian enclaves meet many essential qualifications. In a baseline, classical anthropological definition Kottak (2008) described diaspora simply as “people in motion...the offspring of an area who have spread to many lands...a trans-local and interactive system which is strikingly new” (as cited in Kutschera & Caputi, 2012, p. 4). Originating from Greek origins, the term also may refer quite liberally to general or specific forms of dispersal, a migration, movement, or simply a scattering of people away from an established homeland. In short, people dispersed whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or by whatever cause to multiple locations, and often settling or displaced to lands away from the ancestral locus have diasporic characteristics (Ember, Ember & Skoggard, 2004).

Given such variance of basic criteria Kutschera (2010) held that Filipino Amerasians and possibly other Pan Amerasians would qualify as a diasporic population on several levels:

1. They were fathered by military communities of U.S. servicemen stationed at permanent U.S. military bases;
2. They were forced to forfeit or suspend claim on their U.S. homeland when their fathers departed;
3. They are scattered at numerous locations in East and Southeast Asia as Pan Amerasian population cohorts (i.e., Guam, Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam);
4. They maintain collective identities as Amerasians and cultural and social ties to the U.S. mainland;
5. In significant numbers among the sample, they expressed the desire or sought, however tenuous, to immigrate and claim U.S. American family ties. (Kutschera, 2010, p. 8-9)

Kirk (1996) and Kutschera (2010) implicated that entrenched U.S. bases in the Philippines, such as Clark air base, formerly the U.S. Army's Fort Stotsenburg in Angeles; Sangley Point naval base, Cavite and Subic Bay naval base, dating to the Philippine American War (1899-1902), were virtual out posts of Americana; thus, they were de facto incubators of diaspora. They were little pockets of Americana. transported to foreign lands by a globally influenced war policy. Outside the bases, tenderloin districts symbolic of the scourge of *military prostitution* that flourished from the start of the U.S. colonial administration, fostered creation of the biracial, mixed-heritage military Amerasian phenomenon (DeStoop, 1994; Sturdevant. & Stoltzfus, 1992). The scenario was not much different from dozens of camps and bases and their surroundings, also described as "camp towns" which sprouted outside military installations in South Korea following the Korean War (Gillem, 2007, p. 55). Similar scenarios were documented in varying detail in Japan and Okinawa ( Kim & Okazawa-Re 1994; Schade, 1980); Pattaya City and Bangkok, Thailand (Odzer, 1994) and Vietnam (Bass , 1996; McKelvey, 1999).

Modernizing classical definitions of diaspora, Safran (1991) averred such human dispersals were essentially "a group of ethnic expatriates who shared" a close-knit variety of like characters (as cited in Otalvaro-Hormillosa, p. 2). Such characteristics – all of which Pan Amerasians could well qualify for - included distributions to two or more nearby or overseas regions, possession of a common memory or vision about their homeland, belief they were not fully welcomed or integrated into their current domicile, visions of their ancestral land of origin as their ideal homeland, and beliefs they should remain committed to their homeland..

One of the formidable hurdles confronting Pan Amerasian diaspora advocates would be to clear the bar defining diaspora as presented by Tololyan (2007), a contemporary seminal writer on the subject, who has promulgated robust if not highly challenging diasporic definitional requirement doctrine. Specifically, Tololyan (2007) maintains that mere human dispersals or distributions for whatever reason are over simplistic and not reason enough to qualify as a true, contemporary diaspora. For example, Tololyan (2007) wrote of a common mistake by some social scientists and more probably news reporters who erroneously defined general dispersals of varying reasons as diaspora. "Though conceptually untidy, this is one of the ways in which diaspora is used today. For example, the dispersion of poor and often blacks from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina is now routinely called 'the Katrina diaspora'" (p. 12). Surely the case for a Pan Amerasian diaspora might be much stronger than the Katrina reference.

Tololyan (2007) originated one of the defining conundrums of the modern day diaspora, positing that, "All diasporic communities are also ethnic communities, but not all ethnic communities are diasporic" (p. 649). In ascertaining diaspora, Tololyan required "a culture and a collective memory that preserves elements of the homeland's language or religious, social, and cultural practice...by contrast, ethnic groups at best exhibit a diluted form of biculturalism." Tololyan's tests for a population's desire to restore linkages or return to the homeland mandate a high threshold, something that might be particularly difficult to sustain among Pan Amerasian enclaves in Japan and Korea, for instance, where national

economies have improved so much there is virtually no economic incentive for mixed-blood military Amerasians to reunite with military fathers.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Filipino and Pan Amerasian Diasporic Historical Insights**

Although U.S. military preoccupation in the Western Pacific Basin is historically linked to the Spanish American War (1898), and subsequent surrender of the Philippines to the U.S by Spain, the Amerasian Foundation (2007) suggests that U.S. involvement and birth of the first mixed-race Amerasians actually date to the early 1850s and expeditions to Japan and later Taiwan (Formosa) by the U.S. Navy vessels commanded by Commodore Matthew C. Perry; the commodore's exploits are credited with reconnoitering and opening up Japan and adjacent sea lanes to U.S. and Western shipping commerce.

Although the Philippines is believed today to hold the highest number of living military origin Amerasians (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012), that distinction for many years probably belonged to Japan and the Ryukyu chain island of Okinawa, where an estimated two-thirds to 75 % of U.S. air force, navy, army and marine personnel in Japan are today stationed (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2004). Thirty years after the U.S. occupation of Japan (1945-1951) ended, the Pearl Buck Foundation estimated 200,000 plus Anglo, African, Hispanic and Latino and Native American origin Japanese Amerasians were living there having been sired by U.S. servicemen. Buck wrote despairingly of the Japanese Amerasian condition:

The problem, of course, is how to get the children into this land of their fathers. Our present narrow immigration laws forbid their being brought in easily. American parents have often asked me how to do what they (*sic*) can to alleviate suffering in Asia, particularly for children...It is imperative what whatever is done should be done soon, for the younger the child, the more easily he or she will be accepted into American homes. (Schade, 1980, p. 24-25)

Literature supporting possible diasporic formation for military Filipino Amerasians or Pan Amerasians is not known. In fact, chroniclers of the various Asian American diaspora and their myriad ethnic or cultural experiences, in and out of the U.S. mainland - whether Filipino, Japanese, Korean or Vietnamese - either rarely mentioned and more often ignored unsavory or disdainful military Amerasian originations. They viewed or categorized them on the far margins of the Asian American experience, driven whether consciously or not by the stereotypical belief, whether reality or not, that the overwhelming number of Amerasian children were the offspring of mothers driven involuntarily or not into prostitution or sex labor. Contributing factors included traditionally patriarchal Asian societies, widespread developing world impoverishment and a venal system of globally-sanctioned militarism and military prostitution (Butler, 2000; Enloe, 1989; Moon, 1997; Sturdevant & Stultzfus, 1992). Such has generally been the case, for example, for Amerasians mentioned or provided notice in contemporary studies of Japanese Americans (Chan, 2007); Korean Americans (Young-ee, 2007); or mixed heritage, multi-racial Asian Americans (Williams-Leon & Nakashima, 2001)

Given the lack of extant research or any centralized or formal method of enumeration or census taking of Filipino or other Pan Amerasian populations (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012), one of the most creditable sources of information remains *America's Forgotten Children: The Amerasians* (1980), a book written by John C. Schade. A devoted researcher of the military Amerasian experience, Schade was executive director of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, the non-profit NGO long active in humanitarian support and adoption programs for Filipino and Pan Amerasians for many decades following World War II. Schade's book, though dated, remains one of the most authoritative, comprehensive and thoroughly researched chronicles on military Pan Amerasians. It is one of the few making an attempt to enumerate and analyze total numbers of mixed-blood Amerasian born in East and Southeast Asian nation-states.

Schade (1980) and numerous contemporary researchers (i.e., Bass (1996); Gage (2007); Kutschera (2010); Levi (1993); McKelvey, 1999; Yarborough, 2005) have all reported wide divergence in estimated numbers of military Amerasians residing in host nation-states. There are several reasons. For instance, Kutschera and Caputi (2012) reported that during the nearly century long colonial and neo-colonial involvement of the U.S. in the Philippines, neither government recorded consistent, comprehensive or reliable census figures; this was particularly the condition with unrecorded or so-called illegitimate, out-of-wedlock births. Most significantly, Schade (1980) maintained such was also the condition with Amerasians in other East Asian states. In reality, there was no sound political or strategic reason for government to do so because uncared for, orphaned or unsupported Amerasian progeny were basically powerless and voiceless, a geo-political embarrassment, and/or a living example of war and social policy failure.

## **. Pan Amerasian Diaspora: Update and Background**

### **South Korea**

Schade (1980) reported that in 1957, at the end of the Korean War, Pearl Buck personally estimated that the number of stranded Korean Amerasian children, “probably exceeded 25,000” (p. 29). Consider the significance of this figure within the context that for 60 years the U.S. has maintained a consistent military garrison presence in South Korea. Today, there is no reliable way of knowing how many first or second generation African, Anglo or Latino Amerasians reside in Korea. Nor is there any clear way of knowing how many Amerasians have been abandoned or stranded – or even born here - since the Korean War (Choe, 1997). An estimated 2,500 emigrated to the U.S. following the 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act which allowed certain Pan Amerasian nationals immigration easements; Filipinos, Japanese, Okinawans, and Taiwanese, however, were specifically excluded. According to a past Buck Foundation International registry, there were nearly 5,000 Amerasians on the south peninsula at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet the foundation reported that the actual number may have been as much as four times the registration figure (Biracial people, 2005).

Biracial Amerasians societal status is often marginalized due to widespread Korean society intolerance to mixed-racial populations (Choe,1997). As Schade (1980) reported, and as Buck wrote and her foundation documented over the years, discriminatory practices against Amerasians in Korean society were among the severest in East Asia. In the 1950s Buck wrote of, “The unforgiving patriarchal traditions of Asia means a fatherless, mixed-race child was (and is) abused as a pariah, insulted and sometimes beaten, and routinely denied access to any educational or economic opportunity. Buck maintained that since Korean children could only be registered in their father’s names at birth; those Amerasians abandoned or orphaned by U.S. military person in effect had no legal status. “Many were killed and an unknown number of male children were castrated” Buck reported (Conn, 1996, p. 313). Park (2010) recently updated and further confirmed Buck’s firsthand accounts in his recent dissertation on stateless Korean G.I. babies.

Today, due to a variety of factors the number of military Korean Amerasians born is a fraction of the past. First, the number of U.S. troops has declined over the years as the South Korean military rapidly modernized defense capabilities. There are approximately 28,500 U.S. troops in Korea today, down from 35,000 in 2000, spread across about 20 military installations according to Rowland (2010) and the U.S. Forces Korea Command (USFK).

Another factor is economy related. As the Korean economy has rocketed upward in recent decades the number of Korean women engaging in prostitution or sex labor has decreased markedly; precipitously so around the numerous *kijichon* military prostitution camp towns (Hughes, Chon & Ellerman, 2007), widely believed to a ready source of Amerasian children from impregnated sex laborers. However, in

Korea and Okinawa local national women have often been replaced by sex laborers from the Philippines, Russia and the former states of the Soviet Union (Cervantes, 2011; Lee, 2007). Though never reliably proven through empirical research, the widely held stereotype in the Philippines and other Pan Amerasian states, including South Korea (Lee, 2007) and Vietnam (Bass, 1996; McKelvey, 1999), is that sex laboring women comprised the majority of mothers of Amerasians. Such is despite long traditions of U.S. military personal liaisons with overseas female national residents (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). While prostitution is officially outlawed in Korea, a highly organized sex industry encircling military bases thrived through well into the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. (Hughes, Chon & Ellerman, 2007). In more recent times, U.S. military personnel accessibility to sex industry enticements has grown more muted based on several primary developments affecting Korea, Okinawa and mainland Japan, particularly where U.S. troops and bases are actively sited:

1. Between 2001 and 2004, following extensive worldwide publicity over the scourge of trafficking of women, largely for purposes of sex labor, the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush prompted the Department of Defense to revisit its policies regarding troops' consorting with prostitutes and engaging in inappropriate fraternization with local women overseas. The administration also vigorously enforced the State Department's policy of monitoring and reporting tier ratings of nations worldwide and their human trafficking records. In 2001, South Korea, for instance, had a lowly tier 3 rating under the U.S. Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) grading system (the lowest mark), for failure to meet or attempt to meet minimum trafficking enforcement standards. In the next decade, the Republic of Korea rating worked its way up to tier 2, and the department's 2012 TVPA granted Korea a tier 1, or high compliance rating (Human trafficking, 2012). Yet, as little as six years ago Hughes, Chon and Ellerman (2007) described U.S. military bases in Korea as "a hub for the transnational trafficking of women from the Asia-Pacific and Eurasia to South Korea and the U.S" (p. 16).
2. In 2005, a benchmark change in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), Article 134, provided for a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of pay and allowances, and up to 1 year confinement for military personnel patronizing prostitutes (Jowers, 2006). It is a dramatic departure from the past, as the UCMJ provides criminal sanction for all U.S. military services. Both Hughes, Chon and Ellerman (2007) and Squatrito (2005) posited U.S. military enforcement of such measures historically is dismal.
3. In recent years in many *kijichon* camp towns in South Korea harder edge, alcohol serving night spots, honky tonk and drinking and dance clubs have been replaced with so-called "juicy bars," or drinking and dancing establishments which serve non-alcoholic beverages only. They are the new face and a sort of 21st Century version of a very old profession. The establishments cater largely to lower rank and lower paid U.S. servicemen who, because of the economic turn of the time, simply don't have the wad of pocket money their fathers, or even grandfathers, used to have to buy no holds barred, unrestricted sex and booze (Rabiroff & Hae-rym, 2009). While lower key and a tad subtle the scenario inside juicy bars hasn't changed much. basically from the old days and prostitution services are often available in many.

## **Thailand**

One of the nearly forgotten or overlooked Pan Amerasian enclaves is Thailand where an estimated 5,000 to 8,000 Amerasian orphans, most now in their late 30s to 40 plus years old, remain in country according to the S. Buck Foundation's Bangkok office (Goniwiecha, 2004). Schade (1980) reported there were an estimated 11,000 Amerasians born to Thai national mothers during the Vietnam War. As many as 50,000 U.S. servicemen were stationed there beginning in 1967 with the construction of six major air force installations and as many as 10 separate military installations; GIs on R&R leave from Vietnam also travelled in and out of three primary recreation areas: Bangkok, Chiangmai and Pattaya City. Some Thai



Amerasians managed to immigrate to the U.S. mainland, mostly as a result of eased visa and residency policies from the 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act.

The throbbing, steamy, “unbridled” and rowdy red light districts of Pattaya have long been the talk of U.S. Navy rest and recuperation (R &R) recreation lore. “It catered to every whim of sex-hungry American sailors, regularly disgorged from visiting U.S. warships. The town is synonymous with its continuous...zone of bars, brothels and massage parlors” (Fawthrop & Jarvis, 2004, P. 94). Odzer (1994) described the arrival and excitement generated by R&R visits of crews from U.S. Seventh Fleet Navy vessels in the post Vietnam War 1990s in Pattaya. She observed, “Each ship had its own Thai fishing boat to ferry the boys back and forth. A cloth strung between trees announced WELCOME U.S. NAVY. A bank trailer waited so that they could change their (U.S. dollars) right there. Very organized” (p. 156). One of the ships docking at Pattaya was the US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Carl Vinson* and its seven support ships. Ironically, the *Carl Vinson* is the same ship which docked in Manila Bay May 15-19, 2011 on its way back to the U.S. after it completed a mission of burying the remains of *al-Quida* founder and terrorist operative Osama bin Laden at sea. Manila newspapers and a U.S. Embassy press release reported that the *Carl Vinson* ship crew and carrier group pulled a few days of community visits and R&R crew rest in the Philippine capital. The visit resulted in the outlay of more than P200 (US\$5 million) spent on the local economy (Embassy of the United.States. Manila, Philippines, 2011).

### **Japan and Okinawa**

Though the main islands of Japan held the preponderance of U.S. military bases in the aftermath of World War II for three decades or more – and most of the reputed 200,000 Nipponese Amerasian children abandoned and orphaned during the Japanese Occupation years (1945-1951) (Schade, 1980) - most of the focus in contemporary times involving U.S. troops and a significantly less incidence of Amerasian births has shifted to the southern Ryukyu chain island of Okinawa. There, anywhere from two-thirds to three-quarters of U.S. troops and bases are currently located (Okinawans, Americans, 2010; Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2004). The island includes Kadena air base, a close in, major strategic asset in the defense of the region.

There are approximately 35,000 U.S. military personnel deployed to Japan today, predominantly marines and air force, two services highly represented on Okinawa; The U.S. Seventh Fleet is based in Yokosuka (Reiji, 2008). Controversy has shrouded much of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa in the past decade. A myriad of issues are the cause including protests involving crowding of too many troops and bases on the island, fears that the military hurts Okinawa’s expanding tourism industry, concerns over security of the local population from transient troops populations and outcries over a series of criminal cases involving marines and air force personnel in serious criminal offenses including violent assaults, rapes, violence against women and vehicular homicides (Okinawans, Americans, 2010). Numerous surveys and opinion polls taken on Okinawa and the Japanese mainland have urged that the number of personnel and bases be sharply reduced (Japanese protest, 2009). In partial response the U.S. Department of Defense has announced plans to reassign approximately 8,000 marines about 9000 family members from Okinawa to the U.S. Territory of Guam (Koop, 2009; Paik, 2010) within several years..

By most scattered reports levels of stigma and discrimination facing Amerasians on Okinawa are not much better than in South Korea, mainland Japan or the Philippines. Confirming that the practice of U.S. military personnel continuing to impregnate local women and not providing support, “Social services agencies and children’s’ rights advocates estimate there are about 4,000 Okinawan children abandoned by U.S. servicemen,” (Sims, 2000). Local government officials have claimed that about 200 or Amerasian children are born annually on the island called “The Rock” by uniformed personnel (Okinawans, Americans, 2010). Typically, Amerasian numbers if they are accurately reported by host government agencies only categorically report children or teenage numbers, not adults, the elderly or second

generation Amerasians which would be included in a diasporic study or enumeration. A number of Internet blogs report that the Japanese Amerasians residing on Okinawa alone probably number more like 15,000-20,000 (Amerasians, 2010).

### **Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos**

Again no one precisely knows how many Vietnamese Amerasians were actually conceived there during the protracted Vietnam War (1964-1975) nor left behind even after the U.S. government offered immigration easements to many (Lee, 2009). In a dispatch from the war zone late *New York Times* columnist and editor James Reston estimated that as many as 100,000 Amerasian children were sired (as cited in Bass, 1996), including unaccounted for thousands who may have perished as street children. Benge (2005) estimated that 50,000 children were left behind. U.S. government estimates placed the official figure at 30,000 (O'Connor-Sutter, 1990), an always disputed figure (Kutschera, 2010). Vietnamese Amerasians, unlike any other Pan Amerasian population cohort, benefitted immensely from a virtually unprecedented act of the U.S. Congress – the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1987 – which permitted approximately 26,000 men and women Amerasians visa entry to the U.S. mainland under the Orderly Departure Program (Lamb, 2009). Advocacy groups such as the Amerasian Independent Voice of America and the Amerasian Fellowship Association claim that only a few Amerasians may still actually remain in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Lamb, 2009). Less is known about precise figures for comparatively isolated Cambodian and Laotian Amerasians

### **Territory of Guam**

There is scant anecdotal, and no empirical research information regarding birth of Filipino Amerasian and indigenous Chamorros and Pacific Islander children from U.S. military personnel and local national women; recent census information indicates the population includes 39 percent Chamorros, Micronesian heritage Guam home landers, 26 percent Filipinos and 11 percent Pacific Islanders residing on this southernmost island in the Pacific Mariana chain. A veritable U.S. military island fortress and modern day forward US Pacific Forces deployment platform (Kopp, 2009; Paik, 2010), Guam is home of Anderson air base, a strategic, B-52 staging installation for heavy U.S. bombing capability; strategic and expanding Apra Harbor naval base is also sited on Guam. There are no extant figures readily available on numbers of military Filipino Amerasian or other mixed-blood Chamorro or Pacific Islander progeny with military personnel fathers. Nevertheless, the recipe for a sizeable Pan Amerasian enclave is obvious given the long standing use of Guam as a U.S. military base hub. Military presence on Guam dates to its acquisition along with the Philippines and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1898 (Karnow, 1989). Today, the same tenderloin district type bars, discos, honky tonks, strip bars, karaoke and juicy bars found in South Korea and Okinawa proliferate in Guam.

### **Perspectives, Aspects and Global Implications of Pan Amerasians as Diaspora**

Filipino Amerasians represented the best candidates for future formal categorization as diaspora given a variety of factors including their deep historical ties to the U.S. mainland, a high English speaking penetration among the population, and its sheer size (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). But the researchers never ruled out other Pan Amerasian enclaves as possibilities, implying that a number of the characteristics which presented Filipino Amerasians as standouts were also inherent in Pan Amerasian groupings. Among the attributes and similarities that would provide Pan Amerasians needed credentials for diasporic categorization include:

1. Similar to Filipino Amerasians, their military personnel fathers in many cases resided, at least for the length of extended military tours and even shorter deployments, on U.S. military bases

and installations, many of which were virtual pockets of American society and culture (Gillem, 2004). Thus, the links to their patriarchal bloodline were just as powerful as that of many other already readily recognized diasporas given that original, incipient bloodlines were as close or undiluted as the progeny of many traditionally or contemporarily recognized diasporas (Ember, Ember & Skoggard, 2004).

2. As in the case of the Filipinos, Pan Amerasians were forced to forfeit or suspend claim on their U.S. homeland when their fathers departed. In short, first generation Pan Amerasians faced the same socioeconomic travail, impoverishment and stigma brought on by the loss and abandonment by the father as Filipino Amerasians. In addition to losing any claim to U.S. citizenship Amerasians, labeled *honhyola* in Korea, were classified as stateless because children with Korean mothers but non-citizen fathers were regarded as such by archaic and racist South Korean National Assembly laws (Park, 2010).

3. Pan Amerasians, though many in much less numbers than Filipinos, Japanese (Okinawan) and Korean Amerasians, (i.e. Cambodia, Guam, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam), are dispersed across multiple locations of East and Southeast Asia - a strong requirement for diaspora bona fides.

4. Pan Amerasian social, cultural and linguistic linkages may not be as intense as Filipino Amerasians, who are virtually all English language speakers. A former U.S. colony, English along with Filipino (Tagalog), is one of two official state languages mandatorily taught in public schools (The Philippines, 2013). Nevertheless, many Pan Amerasians maintain binary, hybrid identities and promote cultural and social ties to the U.S. mainland through English, or their native tongues of their birthplace abroad. One of the proofs of this phenomenon is evidenced by the high number of active Pan Amerasian community unity organizations with websites on the Internet and the emergence of the Internet in the last two decades as a precursor for bonding diasporic populations in general (Hiller & Frantz, 2004; Pro-Amerasian groups, 2013).

5. Although household incomes are doubtlessly higher for most Pan Amerasian than for Filipino Amerasians (i.e., Japan, Okinawa, South Korea), there is ample empirical evidence that such economic advantage does not necessarily translate into social or psychological advantage. Many Pan Amerasians, (e.g., Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Vietnam) face exclusion, isolation, discrimination and stigmatization (Benge, 2005; Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2004; Park, 2010; Lee, 2007; MacClear, 1995, 2008; Wu, 2012). Isolation, marginalization and stigmatization have plagued numerous diasporic groups for centuries and, indeed, it is one of the hallmark characteristics, and most qualifying traits of numerous diasporas (Ember, Ember & Skoggard, 2004).

Kutschera and Caputi (2012) maintained that although the Filipino case was the strongest, the Pan Amerasian groups with higher populations had the greatest potential. For example, the sharp reduction of Vietnamese as a result of the 1987 U.S. homecoming act and smaller numbers and research barriers on current Amerasian population numbers in the Cambodia and Laos may make their situations unrealistic to consider. Due to the aging of World War II era Amerasian populations and barriers to research, Myanmar (Burma) and the PRC, for all intents and purposes, may have already been relegated to research history's dustbin. Perhaps a case could be maintained for researching the Taiwan (Formosa) situation, given that the U.S. maintained semblance of a garrison troop presence on Taiwan as late as the 1960s. There was a substantial enough population of Amerasian progeny on Taiwan for them to be included in the initial draft of the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 which eased immigration easements for many Pan Amerasians groupings, but Taiwanese, Filipino and Japanese Amerasians were specifically cut from the bill before the full Congress voted on it.

## **Advantages of Diasporic Labeling and Implications for Global Affairs**

As a minimum random disinterest and as a maximum institutional failure on the part of U.S. or East and Southeast Asian academic and foundational researchers to pay significant attention to mixed-race military Amerasian as suitable candidates for diasporic subjects has impacted on their common welfare negatively (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). The general U.S. public's interest in the plight of the Vietnamese refugee boat people and subsequently the somewhat more dramatic Vietnamese Amerasian refugee saga, engaged the attention of human services and mental health researchers who for over a decade (1982-1996) researched the Vietnamese Amerasian condition – a commendable humanitarian gesture (McKelvey, 1999; Yarborough, 2005). Yet, virtual banishment of military Amerasians as a standalone diasporic entity stands out even at this late date, as their numbers diminish and the population ages (Kutschera, Pelayo & Talamera-Sandico, 2012)..

The exclusion of military Amerasians for diasporic consideration extends to a closely allied area of diasporic research activity – Asian American studies. Kutschera and Caputi (2012) commented, “if noticed or discussed, the uniquely biracial... Amerasian experience is usually lumped together with or analyzed concomitantly as merely another segment of the generalized Asian American diasporic experience.” Various examples include Amerasians mentioned or provided notice of in contemporary studies of Japanese Americans (Chan, 2007); Korean Americans (Young-ee, 2007); or mixed heritage, multi-racial Asian Americans (Williams-Leon & Nakashima, 2001). Moreover, in instances such as the Vietnamese Amerasian phenomena numerous book authors (i.e., Bass, 1996; McKelvey, 1999; Yarborough, 2005) intensely examined, discussed and analyzed military Amerasian refugee and immigrant experiences, but avoided suggestion they merited inclusion as a distinct or special diasporic entity.

New diasporic study in Pan Amerasians, - clearly a retro era by-product of both the world wide military garrison and national security state and the Cold War Era (1948-1990) - may initiate or encourage academic research interest in related areas including: (a) aspects of human trafficking and the use of women and children in prostitution and related aspects of sex labor in military deployment settings, (b) initiation of research in military science and studies disciplines, particularly with respect to new policy formation and reviews of current command control procedures as they relate to monitoring troop R&R off duty leisure time pursuits, and (c) encouraging research initiatives in the areas of business administration and management as they relate to policies and procedures governing defense contractor staffing assigned to work projects abroad , and imperatives for contractor rules of deportment and civil behavior in such situations. .

What global event or series of events will it take to alter the status quo which constitutes a virtual blackout or little organized or coherent academic interest in research and examining military Amerasians Could increasingly aggressive military strategic initiatives by the PRC focusing, on territorial, sovereignty and mineral rights claims in the South and East China Sea, spur a renewed military and related strategic tensions within the Western Pacific Basin (China's territorial disputes; Perlez, 2012)? A U.S. counter measure, perhaps part of the Obama-Biden administration's Asian “pivot,” could serve to remind ASEAN and Allied nation-states with bulky Amerasian populations (i.e. Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea) of the potential reemergence or enlargement of the Amerasian problem should U.S. troop deployments surge again. Or, more likely, would a slowed and deliberate U.S. response barely raise a muted yawn from the public over the presence but continuing invisibility of Pan Amerasian populations. This scenario seems to be particularly evident in the Philippines. There, news media coverage of increasingly visible visits to Subic Bay and other ports of call by U.S. Seventh Fleet war vessels raises more interest in how many additional pesos ship and crew visits will pump into the local economy rather than concerns over sailors and seafarer contractors once again crowding Olongapo bars and nightspots searching for illicit female companionship (O'Callaghan & Mogato, 2012).

## **CONCLUSION**

In many, many respects the military Pan Amerasian presence in East and Southeast Asia - as we move rapidly into the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - raise more questions than they answer. In a sense also, mixed-heritage, biracial Pan Amerasians, scattered like fallen leaves in numerous pockets and enclaves across the Western Pacific Basin, constitute supreme victims of the passage of time. In one sense, they are considered yesterday's story. Marginalized as the detritus of old wars and faded hostilities, they are forgotten or uncared about by their own generations in the U.S. and ASEAN nations. Correspondingly, they also evoke a "who cares?" response from younger generations or youth who have no interest and connection, or simply cannot relate to the turbulent global events which brought many misbegotten Amerasian souls into the world in the first place.

For too long the status quo has remained unchanged for Pan Amerasians. Schade (1980), the chief chronicler of Amerasian travail, probably stumbled across the proverbial "smoking gun" when he wrote that there was absolutely little self-interest, either on the part of the U.S. or host nation-states to do much of anything humanely to alleviate Amerasian suffering. The result was that today, for all intents and purposes, this marginalized, forsaken and under reported population constitute, in many respects, the status of non-people. Upgrading the cohort to the recognizable status of diaspora, a transparent responsibility of the academic, university, and college research community, foundations and NGO/NGA not-for-profit groups, would go a long way towards moving them out of the globe's human shadows. Such action is woefully overdue.

One of the most poignant observations about military Amerasians was made recently by Emma Rossi Landi, the Italian co-producer of *Left by the Ship* (2010), a 79-minute film documentary on four African Filipinos, today ranging in ages from a second-generation teenager to young adults, abandoned by their sailor fathers within the shadow of Subic Bay naval base. Landi Rossi stated, "War sometimes has unexpected consequences: children who were left behind, whose lives are shaped by the situations they were born into, and which they could not avoid. Why do women and children pay the highest price for global politics?" (deLeon, 2012).

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