

I am a Korean who has a Japanese name - Finding my identity

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I am a Korean who has a Japanese name, Hiroaki Noda. Thanks to my father and mother, I naturally consider both Japan and Korea as my country. However, in general society, it is not natural at all. People always ask me which country I support in games in which Korea versus Japan. I was living with Japanese blessed family members at school. Japanese friends in the dormitory looked at me as Korean; Korean friends at school looked at me as Japanese, and I was always facing Korea and Japan as a foreigner.

In case you haven't heard it, the nation is nobler than the individual. I formed strong bonds with people, and I always wanted to have a clear sense of belonging. Also, the role of soldiers has immense value because people think that soldiers exist only for their country and would sacrifice everything for their nation. People connect soldiers with the patriotism.

In my third year of high school, I finally made my choice. My love for Korea, for True Parents' country, and my desire to be a soldier for my country, was the opposite of conscientious objection; I went through naturalization to be a Korean citizen for the conscientious choice of serving in the military. And I supported the Military Academy to become the best soldier.

I worked hard academically and physically to get good grades, but they rejected me as an officer. In their judgment, children of parents who weren't

both Korean were unfit to become officers. It was unfair because it was an unreasonable, but my mind did not change about being a soldier. So after attending a general university, I applied to the Marine Special Investigation College and served in the military on Yeonpyeong Island, one of the furthest frontline units. [North Korean artillery units bombarded Yeonpyeong Island with 170 artillery shells on November 23, 2010, killing four South Koreans and injuring 19.]

I found myself in an increasingly difficult position because I wanted to dedicate myself and have a meaningful military life. I accept the fact that choosing naturalization did not make me wholly Korean. I am myself. I am a true person of Japan through my father and of Korea through my mother. From now on, I will do my best to grow into a future person who can play a bridging role for the peace and prosperity of my parents and my chosen countries, Korea and Japan. Thank you.