**Drunken and Violent**

Korea must be one of the countries that are the most **tolerant** of drinking and drunkards, including violent ones, in public spaces. Visit any urban entertainment zone at night, and you’ll find scores of revelers staggering down the streets lined with pubs and bars.

Statistics show the time has long past for the nation to tackle excessive drinking and alcohol-related crimes. In 2010, there were nearly 360,000 reported cases of drink-related violence, alcohol was behind about one-third of most violent crimes, such as rape and murder, and the cost of dealing with drunks totaled at least 500 billion won in terms of the police’s time and resources.

Basically, alcohol in this country is too cheap and readily available. Where else can one get drunk with less than a U.S. dollar (the price of a 360-ml soju is 1,000 won)? Unlike most advanced countries that restrict the purchase and public demonstration of drinks, Koreans can buy and carry alcoholic beverages anytime, anywhere.

The time-honored tradition that regards drinking as a social lubricant of sorts and tolerates misbehaviors under the influence of alcohol have also led to nationwide binge drinking and a large number of problem drinkers.

Such social tolerance is the first and foremost reason that must change.

Even the prosecution tends to **mitigate** punishment of crimes by tipsy culprits, saying they were under a “condition of weak body and mind.” Little wonder many police boxes are turned to havens of local drunks every night.

This must change now not least because the violent drunkards are habitual criminals, and the ones targeting especially at the weaklings of society, such as the very young, the elderly and women.

So the Seoul police chief’s latest declaration of “war against violent drunkards” is welcome if belated. Policymakers should help with legal support that grants far larger power to the police wrestling with street drunkenness.

Yet the drive shouldn’t end up a one-time, demonstrative event as so many “special campaigns” have done in the past. Nor should it lead to overeager crackdowns amid competition among police stations. Most alcoholics, even violent ones, are patients that need more treatment that punishment.

Most desirable is that Korea will **cease** to be a “society that encourages boozing” as novelist Hyun Jin-geon\* described nearly a century ago. Let’s toast to the unlikely wish!

(Source, <http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinon/2012/06/202_112282.html>)

\* Hyun Jin-geon

(Early) Hyun Jin-geon was born in Daegu, Korea, in 1900 (Two different birth dates are given in the literature, September 2, and August 9). His education was international: He attended high school in Tokyo and studied German at Shanghai Hogang University in China. In China, Hyun and fellow Korean writers Lee Sangwha and Baek Giman published a literary magazine named Geohwa. His first work was published in 1920. In 1922, with Park Jonghwa, Hong Sayong, Park Yeonghui, and Na Dohyang, Hyun helped found the literary journal White Tide(Baekjo). After six years in fiction he semi-changed careers and began al ong career as journalist. In 1940 he returned to writing, serializing Heukchi Sangji-a novel about a Baekje general who fought against Tang invaders. This was deemed improper by Japanese censors and the work was never completed. Hyun died on March 21, 1943.

(Work) Hyun devoted himself to creating realistic works. Beginning with “A Lucky Day”(Unsu joeun nal). He spurned the confessional mode of first-person narrative and instead wrote in the third person perspective in his attempt to portray life vividly and without subjectivity. Working in this manner he wrote some of his most popular works: Fire(Bul), Proctor B and Love Letter(B-sagamgwa leobeuleteo), Society that encourages boozing(Sul gweonhanun Sahoi),

and Hometown(Gohyang). In 1931, he published his final work of fiction, A Ham-Fisted Thief, and moved to writing long historical novels, including Equator(Jeokdo), The Shadowless Pagoda(Muyeong tap), , and Heukchi Sangji.

(Source, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyun_Jin-geon>)

**Worksheet 1**

**Question 1) What does the editor want to say through this editorial?**

**Question 2) What are the main causes of this drunken and violent issue?**

**Worksheet 2**

Question 1) What aspect of drunken and violent problem does the editorial mainly discuss?

a. The differences between drinking and violent problems in Korea

b. How serious the drunken and violent problems and why

c. Where the Korean usually drink

d. The punishment of drunkards when they cause any problems

Question 2) With which of the following statements would the editor be **least** likely to agree with?

a. Korean tends to drink more because alcohol here is too cheap and readily available.

b. Korean regards drinking as a social lubricant of sorts.

c. Korean is genetically weak at alcohol.

d. Korean tolerates misbehaviors under the influence of alcohol.

Question 3) The word **tolerant** in the first passage is closest in meaning to

a. permissive

b. unprejudiced

c. misunderstand

d. passive

Question 4) The word **mitigate** in the passage is closest in meaning to

a. strengthen

b. alleviate

c. reinforce

d. increase

Question 5) The word **cease** in the last passage is closest in meaning to

a. begin

b. set

c. start

d. discontinue