

A RESEARCH REPORT ON THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF
39 KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN
and
AN APPEAL FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Even though it has now been 47 years since the end of World War II, we know only a little about the so-called "comfort Women." When we use the term "Comfort Women" we usually think of those women who were taken by the Japanese to the front lines of the war. Actually, those with whom we are concerned here were also in Honshu, Japan, in places like Matsushira, Kashiwa, Tateyama, and Yanagimoto, where military air base construction was going on, and where there were mines and munitions factories as well.

As for the period when the Japanese Army started to hold prostitutes directly or indirectly under their power around their troops or for the miners, it depends on how we define the word, "Comfort Women." Some official documents which show that the Japanese Army had "Comfort Women" as early as in 1933 in the Northeast of China were very recently uncovered at the National Official Documents Center in Japan. Yet as early as the time of the Bolshevik Revolution when Japan sent soldiers to China, among the "Karayuki" (a term used for poor Japanese prostitutes,) there were a few Korean women as well. The reason the Japanese Army was so keenly concerned with prevention of venereal disease was because of these experiences dating from the time of the dispatch of troops to Siberia.

With our limited time we cannot discuss all the information thus far discovered by those who are concerned with all the ramifications of these problems. My report here focuses on the testimonies our council, especially the members of the Jungshindae Research Group, collected from the living persons concerned.

Our council has forty-seven names in all. Among those I thought that the information about eight women would not be sufficient. Thus the examination of the first six figures (attached) includes thirty-nine persons. Among those I have chosen twenty-seven for our final inquiry and report. I appreciate very much their kind cooperation, inspite of the tiresome and seemingly heartless questions we posed to them in order to learn in detail about the actual situations they faced.

Statistics Based on 38 Persons

Present Age	
83	1
82	
81	
80	
79	
78	
77	1
76	1
75	3
74	
73	5
72	3
71	1
70	2
69	3
68	1
67	6
66	2
65	4
64	1
63	
62	3
Unknown	1

Figure 1

Age When Taken	
28	1
27	
26	
25	
24	
23	1
22	1
21	1
20	1
19	2
18	4
17	8
16	7
15	4
14	
13	2
12	1
Unknown	5

Figure 2

Year When Taken	
1933	1
1934	
1935	
1936	1
1937	3
1938	2
1939	4
1940	2
1941	6
1942	6
1943	3
1944	2
1945	1
Unknown	7

Figure 3

Province Where Taken	
Hamnam	1
Kyungki	3
Seoul	2
Chungbuk	1
Chungnam	1
Kyungbuk	4
Kyungnam	9
Chunbuk	4
Chunnam	4
Unknown	9

Figure 4

The Way They Were Enlisted	
Coerced	13
Deceived	19
Volunteering as a substitute for her father who was drafted	1
No Record	5

Figure 5

Cases of Being Completely Coerced: Among women who were coercively enlisted, C.B. was taken with her shopping basket on her way home from a market, being told that she would be sent to a factory; one was helplessly enlisted because of being hunted in a village office; Y.B. was taken while she was taking a nap; and M.P. was taken when she was at home with her younger brothers (or sisters).

Cases of Being Coerced: Y.D. was working at a Seochon fabric factory in Pusan. Being afraid of being enlisted as a "comfort girl," she wanted to change her work place and visited a glove factory in Choryang. On her way home from Choryang, she was called to come to South Police Station in front of the Pusanjin railroad station. When she came in the police station, there were four girls already. About at eleven o'clock two military policemen came to bring the five girls to a wharf by a car.

K.D. was working at Doyamakeng Hujikoshi factory. She ran away from the factory because of being too hungry, but she was caught by a military policeman, was raped by him, and sent to a military unit as a "comfort girl." Later she was posted at a large military unit "comfort station."

M.O. was coercively taken by a military policeman on the way. She stayed up all night on a chair in his office. The next day he lead her and another girl to the northeast of China.

Cases of being coercively deceived: H.K. was coercively deceived when maiden girls were enlisted in the name of Japanese Emperor. She was told that she must go and that she would get a job at a munitions factory.

Cases of being deceived: H.J. was staying at her elder sister's home in Japan. One day she cried because she missed her mother so much. Then, a woman said that she would take her to Korea. Deceived by the woman, she worked at a factory in Japan and did miscellaneous services and nursing at a field hospital.

Locations of "Comfort Stations"	
Moving	6
Northeast of China	8
Center of China	5
South of China	1
La Baul, Papua New Guinea	1
Miyanma	3
The Pacific	1
Taiwan	3
Korea	1
Japan	6
No Record	2

Figure 6

Following statistics are based on 27 persons.

Academic Career	
Dropping out in an Advanced Course of an Elementary School	1
Graduating from an Elementary School	2
Dropping out in an Elementary School	8
Attending a Church School or an Evening School	3
Unschoolled	12
No Record	1

Figure 7

Present Address	
Seoul	10
Buchon	1
Inchon	3
Daejun	1
Chungbuk	1
Daekoo	2
Kyungbuk	1
Pusan	3
Kyungnam	3
Chunbuk	1
Kwangjoo	
Chunnam	1

Figure 8

Persons Who Took Them	
Japanese Military Policemen	2
Japanese Soldiers	5
Public Officials of Tong, Myun or Ly	1
Public Officials of Tong and Japanese	1
Koreans and Japanese in Yellow Garments without any Ensign	1
Koreans	7
Japanese Civilian Employees	2
Japanese Policemen with Guns Pointed at Them	1
Policemen and Soldiers	2
Koreans and Japanese	3
Japanese	1
No Memory	1

When these people were taken to a meeting place, armed Japanese soldiers' or military policemen's fierce guarding started. From the meeting place they took ships or trains.

Figure 9

Managers of "Comfort Stations"	
Soldiers	10
Japanese Civilians	10
Japanese Civilian Employees	1
Korean Civilians	5
Korean Civilian Employees	1
In the case of K.K.: An Officer's House in Hiroshima	1
Waitress--Japanese Woman; Manager Unknown	1
Unknown	5

Figure 10

This problem is very hard to catch hold of. Even if the manager of a "comfort station" was a Japanese civilian employee, he might have been dressed in Japanese military uniform for authority by the Japanese military. Even when the person who served them was a civilian, the running of the "comfort station" and all the charge might have belonged to the Japanese military. Statistics here are simply based on statements of "comfort women."

The Names "Comfort Women" Were Called	
Japanese Names	21
Numbers	2
Korean Names in Japanese Pronunciation	1
No Record	4

The total number of "comfort women" is 28 here because N.C. was called by the number 27 at her first "comfort station" while she was called by a Japanese name Kiyoko at her second station.

Figure 11

Charge Paid by	
Money	7
A Ticket	2
A Military Scrip	5
None	4
No Record	9

"Comfort stations" managed this matter differently. The most common way was that a soldier gave a comfort woman the ticket which was given to him when he paid money at the entrance. The next morning the woman gave all the tickets to the entrance so that the station knew the number of soldiers who had been to the station the previous day.

Figure 12

It should be noticed that a "comfort station" was a source of military revenue. A "comfort station" reported its income once a week, or once a month to the military outfit in charge of the station. Military authorities collected taxes from the station. The headquarters of Japanese troops stationed in the northeast

of China issued a "Special Income Tax Exemption Ticket." There is evidence that they issued number 8,337 of the ticket.

In the comfort station where M.K. worked, they posted a graph on the wall and punished the women who did not bring about good results. In the station where B.J. worked, they fastened a piece of red cloth to the front of blouses, and pinned a star on that of the comfort woman who brought good results, so that they set up ranks among comfort women. In Miyanma they gave prizes to comfort women with good results in order to put a strain on them to receive more soldiers.

Remuneration "Comfort Women" Received on the Spot

The Case of P.O.: She received a part of her pay calculated once a month. The rest of the pay was said to be deposited in a post office. It was said that they would give her passbook to her when she returned home. She worked in La Baul.

The Case of H.J.: In Haenamdo, Myungwolkwan, Gandong, Sumatra, Mendan, etc. Her income was 10 % of the amount she earned, and it was not sufficient for her clothes, food and cosmetics. Later when the military held the comfort station, the allotment changed from 6 (comfort station) : 4 (comfort woman) to 4 : 6 regardless of the amount of debt and the length of period. She deposited much money, about 300-400 yen, in the bank.

The Case of K.K.: She had never been paid until she bore a baby boy. After she bore a baby, the officers started to give cash to her. Except for that, she said, she never received any money.

It seems that there were two kinds of "comfort stations" : one was operated like prostitute quarters, and the other was operated directly by the military. However, it seems that the military had the ultimate right in both cases.

The Number of Soldiers "Comfort Women" Received a Day

The Case of C.I.: At a "comfort station" in the northeast of China, she received none at times while she received fifteen at other times. Sometimes she received five or six.

The average number of people "comfort women" received a day was 20-30. The case in which they received the greatest number was in Miyanma and Killim in China: the number was 60. In many cases soldiers stood in queues awaiting their turn in front of the door, and finished it within five minutes. If they stayed longer than that, a commotion broke out outside. Therefore, they had no time to untie their gaiters. They sometimes stood in queues with their trousers unbuttoned.

Violence

Almost every "comfort woman" was beaten at first because of her refusal to serve.

The case of L.S.: In Pharao she was stabbed on the chest and the arm by a sword during military training. The manager beat her to force her to receive soldiers, and the soldiers beat her to make her obey their orders.

Some soldiers brought terribly wicked photos and ordered the women to do the same things. When the women refused to do them, they were assaulted.

A comfort woman was caught running away. She was undressed, hung upside down, coerced to drink water, and scorched on the back. She has the scar on her back still. It is said that since ancient times Japan has had a custom of inflicting such physical punishment as undressing, hanging upside down and assaulting on a registered prostitute.

Another comfort woman was assaulted by a soldier who came drunken and brandished a dagger. Risking her own life, she attacked him. He dropped the dagger and she stabbed him in the chest with the dagger. She stood before a military trial, but she was given a verdict of "not guilty."

Some soldiers came drunken and beat comfort women if they did not meekly obey their requests. They kicked them. They did just as they liked, stabbing their daggers on Japanese floor mats.

A woman was caught while running away from a comfort station at Youngdo, Pusan. She was hit thrice on the hip by the muzzle of a rifle. The wound on her hip festered, but she was forced to receive soldiers anyway.

A comfort woman was raped even while running away from a bombing attack. She was bitten on the lip at that time, and the scar remains still.

A woman was beaten to death by a guide when she was on deck due to nausea on the way from Pusan to Simonoseki.

The Use of Condoms	
Used	18
Unused	3
At will (of the soldiers)	4
No Record	2

Figure 13

One of the cases in which condoms were not used was in a Taiwan comfort station. The station consisted of two kinds of stations: one was for a "special attack" corps and the other was for Kyusu officers. In the Killim comfort station, condoms were used. However, for the first fifteen days after new comfort women arrived, officers visited them. After fifteen days the women started to receive common soldiers. Many of them got pregnant during the first fifteen days when condoms were not used.

Medical Examination	
There was a medical examination	3
There was no medical examination	3
A medical exam once a week	11
A medical exam twice or thrice a month	1
A medical exam once a month	2
A medical exam once a month or once every other month	1
A medical exam twice a month	2
No Record	4

Figure 14

Pregnancy	
Pregnancy (One bore two baby boys, and the other gave birth to a dead child of about six or seven months)	2
No Pregnancy	25

Figure 15

Venereal Infection	
Infected	8
Not Infected	19

Figure 16

Time Table for the Use of "Comfort Station"	
7:00 am - 4:00 pm 9:00 am - 5:00 pm 9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Common Soldiers
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Noncommissioned Officers
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm 10:00 pm - 12:00 pm 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Officers
Officers could stay for the night with a "long night."	

Figure 17

"Comfort women" had to get up at four o'clock in the morning to clean in some "comfort stations," while they had to get up at seven o'clock to clean in other stations. They had their breakfast at seven o'clock in the morning in some stations.

How Much Soldiers Paid

Common Soldiers	1.50 yen; in some stations, a white ticket (2 yen)
Noncommissioned Officers	2 yen; in some stations, a blue ticket (2.50 yen)
Officers	2.50 yen; in some stations, a red ticket (3 yen)
"Long Night"	3 or 4 yen; in some stations, 8 yen

Figure 18

For a Day	1 yen
For a "Long Night"	3 yen

Figure 19

A "Long Night" was allowed for officers only. It is unknown who paid 1 yen for a day.

In a "comfort station" in Japan:

There was a soldier who just sat and went out. There was a soldier who saw the "comfort woman's" genitals with blood and pus, cleansed them, and went out. K.K. did not believe even these men and did not answer when they tried to speak to her. It seemed that an officer of these men sent her home before Japan lost the war.

A soldier belonging to a suicide squad brought his photos and all his washing tools to L.Y. one day, saying he would go to the front the following day to die. He told her that he took as a gift the venereal infection he got from her when he had visited her twice before. He taught her a song. He never came to her again.

An army doctor let M.K., a sixteen year old "comfort woman," take a rest for a year by paying all the charges to the "comfort station" and keeping her exclusively to himself. He let her cook, clean, and do all kinds of domestic duties in an official residence of the hospital. M.K. has thought of the army doctor as her benefactor till now.

A Japanese officer called K.S., a seventeen year old "comfort woman," to his quarters and was kind to her. He gave her 100 yen in 1940 to return her four friends and herself to Korea. He said that it was dangerous for her to stay in Japan because she was frequently ill and because the war was getting worse.

Lives in "Comfort Stations"

Whichever way the girls were taken, from the very moment when a guide started to lead them, they were under a fierce guard. When they arrived at "comfort stations," most of them were posted to a space of two and a half pieces of tatami, Japanese floor mats, and they were not allowed any freedom to go out.

K.K. and K.S. were allowed to go out of their rooms only when they went to a toilet even within the building. Mostly underwear was not necessary. When they went out, several women went out together by permission of the manager. Their bodies were frequently violated even when they ran away to mountains or air-raid shelters due to bombing. They could scarcely sleep even in air-raid shelters.

After liberation married or lived with a man	
Yes	17
No	9
No Answer	1

Figure 20

Children	
Yes	8
No	17
No answer	2

Figure 21

Income of "Comfort Women"		
Yes	Cash	1
	Account book	1
	Tip	2
No		23

Figure 22

Among the twenty-three who received no payment there was one who was paid 30 sens a month at an Army Medical Center where she worked for a while.

Account book was given after subtracting expenses for room and board, clothes, cosmetics, etc. when returned home. But the record was lost when the ship was shipwrecked by torpedoes.

Tip was given by soldiers and deposited by the "comfort women." Moon Ok-Ju is this case. Her name by Humihara Yashiko is found on the account record at Hiroshima Post Office.

Other Forced Labor Activities	
Laundry, Cooking, etc.	6
Seeing off soldiers leaving for battlegrounds	
Weeding, Collecting bullet shells	
Army training	1
Nursing at Army Medical Center, Laundry of the center	1
Escort woman for drinking occasions	2
Farming at various sites as they were driven to "comfort stations"	2
Cooking at the stations	
None	15

Figure 23

Among the "Comfort Women" many were only young girls, age 12 and up, who were kidnapped by trickery, deception, and violence. Under severe watch in a tiny room they were forced to entertain Japanese soldiers who stood waiting their turns in line. The girls were undernourished. They could not adjust to the weather in the Northeast of China and the Pacific Islands. They could not accept the task and resisted and then were beaten.

More than anything, the women victims suffered from the shame. Some confessed that they could not forgive themselves for not being able to even jump into the sea, because of their fears of the deep swirling water. One said she could not commit suicide because she was afraid of the disgrace and torture which awaited if she were discovered before her life ended.

As shown by the name "Sen Pees" ('sen' is a derogatory term for 'Korean' in Japanese, and 'pees' means 'vulva' in Chinese), when the Japanese Army decided to institute the "Comfort Women" policy, for them Korean women were no longer human beings. They used the Korean women as if they were animals or objects necessary only to satisfy their impulses.

This problem is not only a matter remaining in the past. The women victims concerned are now living with diseases, physical, mental and emotional, if not destroyed and distorted. We believe that human beings can exist only in relationship with other human beings. However, without a close relationship with another, we cannot continue to exist, because we are the result of the most intimate of all relationships, that between two opposite sexes. This intimate relationship should be carried out with love. And a child should be the fruit of two persons' love for each other. But when sex is used most inhumanly and brutally and wrongly, there can be no worse way of disgracing and destroying and wronging another human being. At the "Comfort Women" center, when a woman became pregnant, she had to have an abortion.

The seriousness of the problem lies in the fact that this policy was a planned and organized national-level policy. Inasmuch as Japan has not yet dealt seriously and fully with this problem, the modern day "Comfort Women" issue is still before our eyes in another form today which is known as "Japa-yuki." This term refers to the many young women from around Asia, especially Thailand and the Philippines, who are becoming victims of sexual exploitation in Japan. However, instead of taking up the basic issues, Japan speaks of establishing a fund to support the livelihood of the Korean former "Comfort Women."

Our Council believes that the women should receive compensation, but that it should be only one of the items of reparation that we are demanding to Japan. On one level, this is a problem of the assaulters and the victims, a women's problem. At the same time, nevertheless, I would like to emphasize that this is a problem of all humanity. It is a human rights issue. Since we have come to know about the depth of the problem, we feel that it is the responsibility of all of us to work for the restoration of the "Comfort Women's" pride, along with undergirding genuine respect for the humanity and human rights of everyone of us living at the end of the 20th century. In order for this to be truly achieved, we believe that Japan must make the following reparations:

1. Research all the facts about the "Comfort Women."

--Our Council suggests that the Japanese government should hear the testimonies of the living "Comfort Women" in Korea.

2. Make all facts public to the world.

3. Apologize to the victims, to the Korean people, and to all Asians.

4. Pay financial compensation to the victims.

5. Erect a monument in Japan OR Establish a "Comfort Women" information center.

6. Correct Japanese history textbooks and teach the younger generation truths of the matter.

7. Punish the responsible persons.

Seoul, Korea
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