

# The Origins and Implementation of the Comfort Women System

Written by Thomas J. Ward and William D. Lay

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**This is an excerpt from *Park Statue Politics: World War II Comfort Women Memorials in the United States*.  
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The term “comfort woman” (“안부녀” pronounced *ianfu* in Japanese, *wianbu* in Korean and *Wèi’ān fù* in Mandarin), literally means “comforting, consoling woman” and is a euphemistic way of referring to those women conscripted by Japan during WWII to provide sexual services for the Japanese military. The term has a long history, tracing back to the 15th century reign of King Sejong in Korea.[1] The comfort women are nonetheless frequently referred to as “sex slaves” or “sexual slaves” in Korea and in the United States by the main Korean and Korean-American CSOs who have championed the comfort women cause. Such groups have lobbied for government resolutions for the vindication of the comfort women among other efforts. More recently they have also sought government support for the erection of dozens of comfort women memorials in the United States.

The Japanese government and one Japanese and Japanese-American CSO, the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT), also normally refer to the victims as “comfort women.” However, they have also described the comfort women as “prostitutes,” in response to the allegations of sexual slavery by Korean and Korean-American CSOs supporting the comfort women cause.[2] Dr. Koichi Mera, the founder of GAHT, normally uses the term “comfort women,” opposes the Korean narrative on the comfort women, and has taken the position that prostitution can be an honorable career choice for those facing poverty.[3] In this text, in the hopes of conveying the greatest respect to the victims of this tragedy, we use the term “comfort women.” We also use the term “comfort women” for those recruited by Japan’s provisional post-WWII government to provide sex for U.S. GIs between August 1945 and March 1946, at which time the operations were closed by order of General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP).

### The Rationale for the Creation of the Comfort Women System

The official reasons usually given for the creation of the comfort women system and the conscripting of Korean and Taiwanese women into it are:

1. To prevent the rape of women in territory newly occupied by Japanese military forces, particularly following the atrocities surrounding the 1937 Nanjing Massacre. The large-scale raping of women by the Japanese military had occurred when Japan expanded its network of influence in Manchukuo, Nanjing, Shanghai, and beyond. [4]
2. To prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among the Japanese military forces. [5]

With the expansion of Japan’s military presence in the 1930s, the perceived need for comfort stations increased. After 1937 Japan relied increasingly on women who were not Japanese. Koreans were the first to be conscripted into the new system. Japanese women remained available to Japan’s commissioned officers but even commissioned officers often preferred the Korean women who were often younger and less experienced than the professional Japanese prostitutes used at that time.[6] One reason for the conscripting of non-Japanese into the system stemmed

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from concern among leaders that the Japanese military would be demoralized were they to discover their own sisters and wives among those mobilized as sex workers for the military.[7]

Unlike Chinese and Malaysians, Korean and Taiwanese women were Japanese subjects. The majority of Taiwanese and Korean comfort women also spoke Japanese and understood Japanese culture. The military assumed that they had a certain loyalty to Japan.

## **The Comfort Women's Tribulations**

A Korean woman or girl who responded to an ad to work in an office, as a nurse, a restaurant server, or even an entertainer rarely had any idea of what awaited her when she arrived at a military camp in the Pacific War theater. Upon arrival, these women and girls were introduced to a routine where they were coerced into having multiple sexual encounters daily, even several each hour in some cases. Japan's military medical corps closely monitored these women through check-ups to detect STDs.[8] Military doctors and medical workers frequently raped the women during these examinations.[9] The comfort women felt threatened and were forced to perform sexually on a daily basis, even during their menstrual cycle. Their military "johns" could punish them if they left a session unsatisfied. When women resisted having sex, they could be sharply disciplined through various means, including severe beatings.[10] Because they serviced troops along the Japanese Imperial Army's frontlines, many comfort women perished as Allied forces overwhelmed Japan's Pacific defense and annihilated Japan's troop encampments.[11] In the Battle of Saipan, comfort women, along with many other Japanese soldiers and civilians, reportedly chose suicide rather than surrender to the Allied forces.[12] In certain cases, the Japanese military also executed the Korean comfort women when they retreated from losing battles with Allied forces.[13]

## **Determining the Number of Women Conscripted into the Comfort Women System**

Debate exists on the total number of comfort women who came from Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. The estimate of between 170,000 and 200,000 is attributed to Kim Il Myon, an early researcher of the comfort women in 1976.[14] Kim's sources have been challenged by the Asian Women's Fund, an organization developed by Japan to offer symbolic compensation to victims and frame an official Japanese narrative, because they are attributed to parts of a speech delivered in 1965 by Japanese Diet Member Arafune Seijuro. Arafune specialized in hyperbole; he allegedly told an audience of supporters that Koreans claimed that 142,000 Korean comfort women had died during the Asia-Pacific War because of sexual abuses committed by the Japanese military and that Koreans claimed that 576,000 Korean soldiers had died in the war[15] – a number far higher than the 209,000 Koreans estimated to have served as combatants in the Japanese military.[16] A total of 192 Korean women have self-identified and been confirmed as "comfort women." [17]

Japanese historian Ikuhiko Hata initially estimated the total number of comfort women at approximately 90,000 but has since reduced that figure to 20,000. Some feel that he reduced this number for political reasons. Japanese historian Dr. Yoshimi Yoshiaki, credited with uncovering the first documented evidence that confirmed the system's existence in the early 1990s, estimates the number at between 50,000 and 200,000. [18] Credible academic researchers usually point to Yoshiaki's figure as the most probable range of the numbers of women involved.[19] This number again contrasts with the inscriptions on monuments in the United States including those in New Jersey, New York, Virginia, and California, which affirm the number of comfort women as "more than 200,000." [20] Nevertheless, it is clear that many tens of thousands of women were victimized by the system.

## **Methods of Recruitment**

Most Korean women were deceptively recruited into the system by promises of careers in nursing, clerical work, or restaurants only to find themselves coerced into becoming sex providers.[21] In some cases, impoverished Korean families sold their daughters.[22] Research shows that, on rare occasions, Japanese soldiers also pillaged Korean villages and took young mothers and teenage girls with them.[23] The memorials established in the United States assert that the Japanese military abducted all the comfort women. However, that was not the norm for the women conscripted into the system from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan.

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The Japanese women who joined the military comfort stations were largely professional prostitutes.[24] In the case of Taiwan and Korea, the comfort women were not professional prostitutes. They were largely young women who were deceived by brokers, often Korean or Taiwanese, acting on behalf of the Japanese military. Dr. Chu Te-lan, a recognized authority on Taiwan's comfort women, interviewed almost all of the fifty-eight Taiwanese women who self-identified as "comfort women" in the 1990s in Taiwan. She found that only three of the women interviewed understood ahead of time that they would be serving as sex workers.[25] In the case of Taiwan, some women had actually served as nurses prior to their conscription as comfort women and had agreed to serve as nurses for the Japanese military but instead faced a different fate.[26] As mentioned previously, Koreans were also deceived with the same empty promises of jobs as restaurant servers, entertainers, office workers, and even the promise of opportunities to further their education, only to find themselves reduced to being exploited and coerced into becoming comfort women.[27]

## Official versus Ad Hoc Recruitment of Comfort Women

There are two distinct types of "comfort women." One group consisted of women who were recruited and conscripted by, or with the support of, the highest levels of the Japanese military and other branches of the Japanese government including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Home Ministry was also engaged in operations to move comfort women discreetly from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan to mainland China and to key battlefronts of the Pacific War.[28]

The comfort women from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan were all subjects of the Japanese government. Because Korea and Taiwan were considered part of Japan, the Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese comfort women were all viewed by the national government as fulfilling a patriotic duty in supporting Japan's war effort. Indeed, women, "for the good of the country," were "coaxed into providing sexual services to soldiers so as to help raise their morale and win the war." [29] The Japanese government trusted Koreans and Taiwanese far more than other non-Japanese ethnic groups. Many of them perished with soldiers on the battlefields in the final days of the war.

The second group of comfort women were officially overseen by Japan's Ministry of Defense. Such women were abducted or otherwise conscripted onsite on an *ad hoc* basis by Japanese military units stationed in occupied territories. These women were not subjects of Japan (i.e., Korean, Taiwanese, or Japanese), and, rather than being perceived as performing a patriotic duty, they represented and were treated as "spoils of war." The Japanese commanding military officer in a certain area could order the procurement of local women to serve as comfort women. Most Filipina, Indonesian, Malaysian, Dutch, and Chinese women were brought into the comfort women system under these conditions. These women endured dehumanizing conditions and were likely treated even worse than the Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese comfort women because they were not viewed as part of the Empire but as Japan's mortal enemies who were thus expendable. Dr. Koichi Mera of GAHT does not deny that abductions and mistreatment happened in the cases of the Filipinas, the Chinese, or the Indonesians who did not hold Japanese citizenship.[30]

## The "Special Status" Attributed to Koreans and Taiwanese

Following China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, China ceded control of Taiwan to Japan through the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki. Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War also gave Japan supremacy on the Korean peninsula. Japan pressured Korea to accept the Eulsa Treaty of 1905, by which Japan agreed to "maintain the welfare and dignity of the Imperial House of Korea" until the time "when it is recognized that Korea has attained national strength." [31] This empty assurance effectively served as the rationale to annex Korea into the Japanese Empire.

As it built its Western-style empire in the 1930s, Japanese distinguished between those from the *gaichi* (outer lands) and from the *naichi* (the homeland). Nevertheless, as WWII proceeded, Japan increasingly recognized that it needed the support of both the *naichi* and the *gaichi* in the war effort. In 1942 Korea and Taiwan were both placed under the authority of the Office of Home Affairs, sending the clear signal that Koreans and Taiwanese alike were being regarded as Japanese nationals.[32] In the final year of the war, Koreans and Taiwanese were also made eligible for military conscription. Koreans and Taiwanese were also encouraged if not pressured to take on Japanese names.

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Members of Korea's royal family were encouraged to marry with Japanese royalty.

The policies of Japan toward Korea were not genocidal in their intent. Japan's policies sharply contrasted with the policies of Nazi Germany towards the Jews. Nazi Germany clearly sought the annihilation of the Jews. [33] If Germans intermarried with Jews, the offspring of such a mixed marriage were automatically classified as Jewish. The camps of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Auschwitz awaited the children, the Jewish spouse, and possibly the impudent German who had consciously married a Jew. In contrast, Japan sought to assimilate rather than eradicate Koreans and Taiwanese.

Korean supporters of comfort women memorials often seek to draw parallels between the fate of Korean comfort women and the Jewish Holocaust.[34] *Korea Times* chief Editor Oh Young-jin even admitted that he sought to "to make the Koreans out like the Jews" and get people to "see Korea's misery as compelling as they see the Jewish Holocaust" to gain support for Korea.[35] Nevertheless, evidence is manifest that Japan had no intention or grand scheme to eliminate Koreans, even though they clearly wished to eradicate the Korean national identity.

## **Asian Culture as a Facilitator of the Comfort Woman System**

Sarah Soh's *Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (2008) represents one of the few studies on comfort women that offers insights into the social conditions and prevalent attitudes that led to the creation of the comfort women system. Soh looks not just at Japan's but also Korea's patriarchal views which, she asserts, enabled the system's creation and its continuation with some permutations beyond WWII. Soh describes herself as "a supporter of the transnational feminist movement" and explains that she wrote her book on the comfort women to "transcend the ethnonationalist politics of 'partial truths' by presenting a complicated picture that may disrupt the currently internationalized normative – though partial and partisan – understandings of the Korean comfort women's horrific experience." [36]

## **The Forerunner of Japan's Military Comfort Women System**

In the fifteen-year period following the 1853 arrival of U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry in Japan, Japan's Tokugawa Shogunate weakened and finally collapsed. The emperor assumed leadership of the nation and stood as the center of both religious and political power, replacing the military rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate. With the initiation of the Meiji Empire, governance of the state largely shifted to the samurai civil servant class who led Japan's transformation from a feudal power to an industrialized, modern state. To avoid the fate that China suffered at the hands of the West, Japan chose to open to trade with the West rather than resist. Japan decided to learn from the West's successes rather than remain isolated.

Based on its study of the West, the Meiji Empire in the late nineteenth century worked to establish democratic institutions, industrialize, and evolve into a modern military power. Japan's leaders concluded that central to the West's success was its creation of an overseas imperial presence. Japan, they concluded, also needed to become an imperial power. They planned to advance their imperial ambitions through promoting what came to be known as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Japan's rendition of a European style colonial empire.

In its rise to power and its bid to become the principal Pacific hegemon, Japan fought wars with China (1894–95) and Russia (1904–05). Japan prevailed in both of these wars. As discussed previously, the Sino-Japanese War led to Japan acquiring Taiwan and the Russo-Japanese War resulted in Japan gaining hegemony over Korea. Japan then proceeded to make strides toward establishing itself on the Chinese mainland, starting with Manchuria where it eventually established its puppet state of Manchukuo. It consolidated its newly acquired network of commerce and trade through the deployment of military forces in the newly established colonies of Taiwan and Korea and its client states beginning with Manchukuo.

Japan's practice of exporting indentured Japanese sex workers overseas was in place by the latter part of the nineteenth century.[37] As Japan expanded territorially, the leadership considered that its overseas merchants and its military forces needed female companionship. Japanese professional prostitutes, frequently referred to as

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“karayuki-san” (translated as “China-going persons”) were dispatched from Japan to serve as sex workers.[38]

The karayuki-san provided temporary companionship and sexual favors for the overseas Japanese military and the businessmen and traders who accompanied them. The original karayuki-san of the nineteenth century were Japanese in origin and ethnicity.[39] By 1910 there were 47,541 such prostitutes in Japan and an additional 19,000 Japanese sex workers in Russia, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and other parts of Southeast Asia.[40] Japanese prostitutes, unlike their Chinese and Russian counterparts, readily made their services available to non-Japanese clients. In 1918 Japanese government policy changed, however, and Japanese *karayuki-san* were required to limit offering their services to Japanese citizens.[41] Noting parallels between the *karayuki-san* system and the comfort women system, research scholar Yuki Tanaka makes the following observation:

The *karayuki-san* system was undoubtedly a repressive system of sexual exploitation. The methods of procuring young women were clearly unlawful and morally unjustifiable. In this sense, they were little different from the methods that were used for the later procurement of comfort women. In both cases serious criminal acts were involved.[42]

Tanaka points out that many of the *karayuki-san* of poor family background in Nagasaki were sold by their parents to procurers and then sent to various places in the Asia-Pacific region.[43] From 1922 onward, the Japanese *karayuki-san* in China began to be supplemented by Korean women. [44] In the pre-war period, many of these women were, for all practical purposes, indentured servants if not slaves. According to Tanaka, the women were “purchased” for between \$500 and \$600 and were required to reimburse their “sponsors” if they were ever to return home.[45]

The protocols in place for the *karayuki-san* and the WWII comfort women were in many ways similar. Whenever they engaged a client, the *karayuki-san*, just like the WWII comfort women, received a ticket, indicating that a payment had been made. Approximately 50% of the fee for this ticket went to the *karayuki-san*. [46] Although the “comfort women” were theoretically also to receive a portion of the fee paid for their time and services, that was often not the case because of alleged debts that the comfort women were expected to amortize and because of injustices and graft within the system itself.[47]

The original exclusively Japanese *karayuki-san* staffed sex industry proved to be a lucrative source of foreign reserves for Japan. The *karayuki-san*’s earnings often returned as remittances to Japan to help to support the *karayuki-san*’s Japan-based families. Tanaka cites the case of Dalian in China where, in 1900, \$630,000 of the \$1,000,000 in remittances sent back to Japan originated from the sex industry.[48] Tanaka describes the working conditions of the “*karayuki-san*” as follows:

Each woman was sold to a brothel for between \$500 and \$600, which was levied upon her as a “debt” by her brothel keeper. Even in the case of kidnappings, a levy was imposed for “travel expenses.” As a result almost all *karayuki-san* were financially bound to their brothels for years until this “debt” was paid off. [49]

Tanaka’s research shows that debt, sickness, and despair “drove many *karayuki-san* to suicide.” For Tanaka, “it is indisputable that the comfort women system was essentially based on the *karayuki-san* system.”[50] C. Sarah Soh, nevertheless, points out that three major differences existed between the *karayuki-san* and those conscripted into the comfort women system:

1, *Ianfu* were only available to the military while the *karayuki-san* had a broader clientele; 2. The *Ianjo* or comfort stations were managed by the Japanese military; 3. *Ianfu*, many of whom were not ethnically Japanese, faced more violent attacks than the *karayuki-san* who were.[51]

## The Beginning of Japan’s Military Comfort Women System

Japan’s military supported a massive influx of comfort women to reduce the risk of women being raped in areas newly occupied by Japan’s military. As noted, they also established the comfort stations to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted disease.[52] Tanaka points out that “in December 1937, the Central China Area Army issued an instruction to each contingent force to set up comfort stations.”[53] However, as the war effort with China intensified,

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Japan decided against a mass mobilization of Japanese women to overseas military brothels.

To avoid negatively impacting its military's morale through soldiers seeing Japanese women, even relatives, conscripted into the comfort women system,[54] Japan turned instead to its colonies, deploying hundreds of Korean women by January 1938[55] followed within a few months by a "full scale mobilization" of Koreans.[56] Taiwanese were drafted into Japan's war efforts beginning in 1937 under Japan's national mobilization policy;[57] Taiwanese comfort women researchers and activists point to 1938 as the first year that Taiwanese women were mobilized as military comfort women.[58]

Japan made a conscientious effort to upgrade the status and public appreciation of comfort women. One Japanese medical doctor in Manchuria described a cohort of comfort women as "a military force itself" and "therefore not just prostitutes." [59] In Japan, comfort women were promised that, based on their service, they would be enshrined at the Japanese national military memorial shrine, Yasukuni, as "servers of the nation." [60]

The Japanese government also made patriotic appeals to its colonies. Gary Marvin Davison in *A Short History of Taiwan* confirms that many Taiwanese "embraced the Japanese vision of a united Greater East Asia and looked forward to rising citizenship status within the empire." [61] Dr. Chu Te-lan, a senior researcher in Academia Sinica's Research Center for the Humanities and Social Sciences and a recognized authority on Taiwan's comfort women, reminds her readers that Japan's war effort was portrayed as a "Holy (Just) War" to end European rule and assure that "Asia be for Asians." [62] Even when brought to overseas military camps on false pretenses, Taiwanese women were coerced to provide sexual services to the Japanese military "in the name of patriotism to the country." [63] C. Sarah Soh points out that Korean women were also asked to serve as comfort women once they arrived overseas and to view this as a patriotic act. [64] Today in Taiwan, pro-Japan extremists continue to spark controversy by claiming that becoming a comfort woman represented "moving upward." [65]

## The Fate of Comfort Women Following World War II

Upon returning to Korea, the suffering of the comfort women continued. Female promiscuity was taboo in Korean society, which attributed great value to premarital virginity. The loss of a Korean woman's virginity, even under the horrible circumstances of the comfort women system, meant that the survivors of the system had little or no chance of ever marrying. In a February 1994 complaint filed with the Office of Chief Prosecutor of Tokyo, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (the Korean Council) detailed the post-war hardships experienced by 19 comfort women. The Korean Council's findings indicated that if the former comfort women married, their marriages typically failed. Fifty years after the end of the war, 15 of the 19 comfort women included in the study were found to be "living alone" with no child to take care of them. [66]

In December 1991 Kim Hak-Sun, a Korean, became the first woman to "go public" and identify herself as a former comfort woman. Just a few months later, in February 1992, Ms. Itoh Hideko, a former member of the Japan Diet, uncovered three telegrams in the Japanese Defense Agency that confirmed that not just Koreans but also Taiwanese women had been dispatched as comfort women. The telegrams referenced a March 12, 1942 request for 50 women to be sent to Borneo from Taiwan. A later telegram requested an additional 20 women because the women were overworked and exhausted. The telegrams confirmed "beyond doubt that during WWII, Taiwanese women were sent to the Japanese frontline as sexual slaves for the Japanese Military." [67]

In the months following Itoh's uncovering of the telegrams, the first Taiwanese came forward identifying themselves as "comfort women." Like many of the Korean comfort women, the Taiwanese were initially reticent about identifying themselves in public: "veiled behind black drapes, they accused the Japanese government, reclaiming their dignity, seeking an apology and reparations." [68] In most cases, their testimonies showed that the young Taiwanese women who joined Japan's military effort, not understanding that they would become comfort women, did so at their parents' behest. In some cases, they joined on their own accord but even then it was done with the intention of helping their families.

A few Taiwanese comfort women said that they had actually been sold by their families to Taiwanese brothels and

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from there were sent to comfort stations abroad.[69] Most Taiwanese comfort women who were interviewed had been born to impoverished families, and their parents worked as peasant farmers, fishermen, laborers, and street vendors.[70] Nevertheless, some women from well-to-do Taiwanese families also apparently ended up being deceptively recruited into the system. When interviewed, one Taiwanese comfort woman reflected on a co-worker named Mitsue whom she described as well-read and with excellent calligraphy. She pondered how her friend could be “so unlucky as to be tricked to come here?”[71] A nurse who had been recruited recalled how, on the first day, she and her fellow nurses realized they “were cheated” and she wept: “I was nineteen, with a wonderful prospect in life. And now, my youth, my virginity, and my dignity were all buried at this comfort station.”[72]

When interviewed, one Taiwanese comfort woman reflected on how she was confronted on the first day by the harsh orders of a Japanese woman: “once you are here, you’d better listen and do what I say.” The interviewee was unsuccessful in three attempts to commit suicide “by drinking antiseptic” and so she “continued to be assaulted.” When she returned home after the war, her uncle admonished her, saying “our family can’t have whores.” When she finally married, she was unable to bear children, and her mother-in-law forced her to accept divorce. She made her living by selling coconuts and added, “I often drink alone, cup after cup, to forget about my pain.”[73] Another of those interviewed lamented, “I used to be a clean girl but I was trashed by the Japanese.” Filled with guilt, she regularly visited a temple seeking “mercy from the Goddess of Mercy.” Emphatic that she was “forced” and clear that the guilt resides with those who took advantage of her, she nevertheless made it a habit to seek forgiveness: “I repent, eat vegetarian food, recite sutra, listen to sermons, and volunteer at the temple.” Through this, she feels “better afterwards.”[74]

## Notes

[1] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 232.

[2] “Koichi Mera: President of GAHT-US Corporation (GAHT: the Global Alliance for Historical Truth),” YouTube video, press conference with Koichi Mera, posted by “The Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan,” August 25, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkkS5AhdKeY>.

[3] “Koichi Mera: President of GAHT-US Corporation (GAHT: the Global Alliance for Historical Truth),” YouTube video.

[4] Yuki Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 45, 60.

[5] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation*, 47, 60.

[6] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation*, 90.

[7] Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during WWII* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 155.

[8] Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during WWII*.

[9] US Congress, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearing on Protecting the Human Rights of “Comfort Women,”* Statement by Jan Ruff O’Herne AO Friends of “Comfort Women” in Australia, February 15, 2007, <https://web.archive.org/web/20070228195049/http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/110/ohe021507.htm>

[10] Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women*, 151.

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- [11] George Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1995), 153-155.
- [12] Nancy Bartlit, "Japanese Mass Suicides," Atomic Heritage Foundation, July 28, 2016, <http://www.atomicheritage.org/history/japanese-mass-suicides>.
- [13] Hicks, *The Comfort Women*, 154.
- [14] "Number of Comfort Stations and Comfort Women," Asian Women's Fund, <http://awf.or.jp/e1/facts-07.html>.
- [15] "The 'Comfort Women' Issue and the Asian Women's Fund," Asian Women's Fund, 12, <http://www.awf.or.jp/pdf/0170.pdf>.
- [16] Brian Palmer, *Fighting for the Enemy: Koreans in Japan's War 1937-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 123.
- [17] "7. How Have the Women Lived after the War?, " Fight for Justice, [http://fightforjustice.info/?page\\_id=2772&lang=en](http://fightforjustice.info/?page_id=2772&lang=en).
- [18] "Number of Comfort Stations," Asian Women's Fund
- [19] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 140-141.
- [20] Kirk Semple, "In New Jersey, Memorial for 'Comfort Women' Deepens Old Animosity," *New York Times*, May 18, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html>.
- [21] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 42.
- [22] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 42-43.
- [23] Although the Japanese dispute that women were taken in this way, Korean allegations to this effect are supported by the graphic description of rape and sequestration that Filipinas suffered in the creation of comfort women stations in the Philippines. See also Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 49. However, both Yoshiaki and Tanaka indicate that this was not the norm for Koreans.
- [24] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 18.
- [25] Dennis Halpin, "Taiwan's Comfort Women," The Point, December 30, 2016, <http://newasiapolicypoint.blogspot.com/2016/12/taiwans-comfort-women.html>.
- [26] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 44.
- [27] Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 38-43.
- [28] Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women*, 154-155.
- [29] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 71.
- [30] "Koichi Mera: President of GAHT-US," Youtube video.
- [31] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, "The Eulsa Restriction Treaty," November 17, 1905, [http://dokdo.mofa.go.kr/m/eng/pds/pomflet\\_03.jsp](http://dokdo.mofa.go.kr/m/eng/pds/pomflet_03.jsp).

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[32] Ching-chih Chen, *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon Hawley Myers and Mark Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 243.

[33] “Hitler Talks of Jewish ‘Annihilation,’ ” WW2 History, [http://ww2history.com/key\\_moments/Holocaust/Hitler\\_talks\\_of\\_Jewish\\_annihilation](http://ww2history.com/key_moments/Holocaust/Hitler_talks_of_Jewish_annihilation).

[34] See, e.g., Antonio Olivo, “Memorial to WWII Comfort Women Dedicated in Fairfax County amid Protests,” *Washington Post*, May 30, 2014, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/memorial-to-wwii-comfort-women-dedicated-in-fairfax-county/2014/05/30/730a1248-e684-11e3-a86b-362fd5443d19\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.9de22c4bdfb0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/memorial-to-wwii-comfort-women-dedicated-in-fairfax-county/2014/05/30/730a1248-e684-11e3-a86b-362fd5443d19_story.html?utm_term=.9de22c4bdfb0).

[35] Oh Young-jin, “Holocaust vs. Comfort Women,” *The Korea Times*, June 2, 2017, [http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2017/06/667\\_230509.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2017/06/667_230509.html).

[36] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, xvii.

[37] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 167-173.

[38] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 167.

[39] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 168–169.

[40] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 169.

[41] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 172.

[42] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 173.

[43] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 10.

[44] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 36–37.

[45] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 170.

[46] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*.

[47] Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women*, 142–144.

[48] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 170.

[49] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*.

[50] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*.

[51] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 115.

[52] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 10.

[53] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 18.

[54] Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women*, 155.

[55] Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women*, 52–54.

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[66] See legal complaint by the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan to the Chief Prosecutor Tokyo District Prosecutors' Office in February 7, 1994, <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/alpha/learn/comp.htm>.

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[74] Lai et al., *Silent Scars*, 89.

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