

# **THE TRUTH ABOUT THE “COMFORT WOMEN”**

**Moteki Hiromichi, CEO  
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*This article is dedicated to the self-proclaimed champions of truth and justice who fell victim to the tales spun by Yoshida Seiji, the fabulist of the century. And may it also serve as a reminder to Americans who are so patronizing to the Japanese: Have you forgotten about the brothels that flourished during the Vietnam War?*

# THE TRUTH ABOUT THE “COMFORT WOMEN”

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## Misguided activists

They argue that members of the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps were forced to become military prostitutes, which is total nonsense. They institute lawsuits. They demand apologies. Every Wednesday they hold demonstrations. And now they have outdone themselves by installing a statue of a young woman in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul to symbolize Korean women whom they allege were coerced into sexual slavery during World War II. Who are these Koreans, and why do they continue to indulge in such shameless behavior?

The claim that members of the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps were military prostitutes is worse than misguided; it is an outright lie. The two have absolutely no connection with each other.

In accordance with the National Labor Mobilization Order issued in 1941, all unmarried women between the ages of 14 and 25 were required to serve their country by working in a factory or other production facility for a total of 30 days per year. An administrative order issued by a vice-minister in September 1943, and intended to encourage women to help the war effort by doing factory work, resulted in the formation of groups of volunteer female workers (the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps). In March 1944, with the expansion of the program, the term of service was extended to one year. In August 1944, with the issuance of the Women’s Volunteer Labor Ordinance, industrial service became mandatory for women. The ordinance applied to Korean women as well, but unlike in Japan proper, it elicited little response, but the Government-General did not want to force the issue by making women’s labor mandatory. When Korea was a tributary state of China, women were sometimes offered to the Chinese as tribute; the Koreans misunderstood the term “Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps,” thinking that they were being asked to render sexual services. But most of the volunteer work took place in nearby factories. It was very rare to assign Korean women to factories in Japan proper. And the corps never had any connection with military prostitutes, who worked in *overseas* war zones.

In fact, not one interview of a former military prostitute has revealed that women who joined the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps were then forced to serve as prostitutes. An Byeong-jik, a former Seoul University professor, supervised a research report based on interviews with former military prostitutes (*Testimonies, Part I: Korean Women Forced To Serve as Military Prostitutes*). According to that report, of 19 somewhat reliable testimonies, only two of the women said that they were compelled to join the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps and taken to Busan, in one case, and Toyama, in the other. Both allegations are dubious and, in any case, neither Busan nor Toyama was a battle zone.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nishioka Tsutomu, *Yoku wakarui anfu mondai* (Complete guide to the “comfort women” issue) (Tokyo: Soshisha, 2007), p. 98; English title: *Behind the Comfort Women Controversy: How Lies Became Truth*, [http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02\\_1/39\\_S4.pdf](http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/39_S4.pdf), p. 41.

## Yoshida's "confession" repudiated

One of the more prominent Korean organizations focusing on the "comfort women" (the term often used to describe military prostitutes) issue is the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan. (Its English-language name is misleading and deceptive: a literal translation of the original name is "Council on the Korean Volunteer Labor Corps Question.") The council's founding principle is a bald-faced lie — there is no other way to put it — and the behavior of its members is shameless and shrill. It is destined to bring dishonor to the Koreans.

However, in examining source material relating to the comfort women, I have had occasion to feel respect for the Korean people. One instance was my reaction to a report entitled "Special Questions on Koreans," which is housed in the US National Archives (My subsequent search for the English-language version was unsuccessful, but I believe that the document is genuine.)<sup>2</sup>

This is what the three Korean prostitutes told the Americans: "All Korean prostitutes working in the Pacific theater applied for that work of their own free will, or were sold by their parents. If the women had truly been abducted, Koreans, young and old, would have gone on a rampage and, heedless of possible repercussions, killed the Japanese."

This made perfect sense to me, as I know how proud the Korean people are. If women had been abducted, there would have been riots.

Another instance is the hunt for prostitutes described by the infamous Yoshida Seiji in *My War Crimes*.<sup>3</sup> He claims that a "roundup" of potential military prostitutes took place on Jeju Island. Heo Yeong-seon, a reporter for the *Jeju Ilbo*, a daily newspaper, decided to investigate; she visited the village where the abductions supposedly took place.

She spoke to Chon Ok-tan (85), a resident of Seongsan-li, who rejected Yoshida's story: "It's not true. There are only a little over 250 houses in this village. If an incident that serious, where 15 people were abducted, had taken place, everyone would have heard about it. But no one did."

Local historian Kim Bong-ok, infuriated by Yoshida's lies, said: "It is a totally immoral book that shows how corrupt the Japanese are."

These seem to be very healthy responses from respectable Koreans. Unfortunately, the article in the *Jeju Ilbo* was ignored in Korea. And Koreans failed to react to Yoshida's book, which maintains that the Japanese treated Koreans brutally and unjustly, and that the latter neither resisted nor protested. They might just well have said, "Our women were abducted and taken away, and we, their miserable

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<sup>2</sup> "Composite Report on Three Korean Navy Civilians," List No. 78, 28 March 1945. US National Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Yoshida Seiji, *Watakushi no senso hanzai: Chosenjin kyosei renko* (My war crimes: abduction of Koreans) (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobo, 1983).

compatriots, offered no resistance.” I don’t think anyone would blame me for asking, “Where is your pride as Koreans? You should be ashamed of yourselves.”

### “Strongman” Syngman Rhee silent on “comfort women”

How did this whole controversy begin? Not in Korea, but in Japan! The first assertions that Korean women were coerced into serving as military prostitutes were made not by Koreans, but by Japanese. The anti-Japanese movement in Korea owes its existence to Koreans who were fooled by the lies of a Japan-hating Japanese.

Prior to World War II, Japan never attempted to conceal or control information about the existence of military prostitutes. In fact, recruitment notices appeared in newspapers (see Fig. 2). Private brokers made strenuous efforts to recruit them, for obvious reasons. At that time prostitution was legal in Japan, just as it was in most of the world’s nations. It was therefore not at all unusual to establish brothels in battle zones. That is why Korea’s leading newspapers carried advertisements intended to attract women to work in those brothels. It is also common knowledge that a large number of Korean women worked in war zones as military prostitutes.



Fig. 1: Source material released by the Korean government in an attempt to demonstrate that Korean women were coerced into serving as comfort women; strangely enough, it includes newspaper advertisements for comfort women (see Fig. 2)

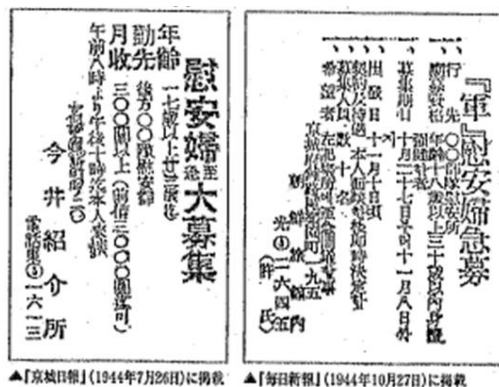


Fig. 2: Advertisements for comfort women in Seoul newspapers stating that remuneration is ¥300 per month, and that advances of up to ¥3,000 may be granted; (left)

*Keijo Nippo* (July 26, 1944) and (right) *Mainichi Shimbun* (October 27, 1944)

After Japan was defeated in World War II, Korean President Syngman Rhee implemented uncompromising anti-Japanese policies, making demand after demand, including reparations for having impressed Koreans into the labor force. But he did not insist that reparations be paid to military prostitutes, because such a demand would exceed the bounds of common sense. Rhee certainly knew about military prostitutes and the high wages they commanded. *Everyone* knew.

It is common knowledge that Koreans residing in Japan at the end of the war claimed, preposterously, that they were citizens of a victor nation and should be treated as such. There were many Koreans holding high-ranking positions in the JCP (Japanese Communist Party), among them Kim Cheon-hae, who voiced strenuous demands relating to the rights of Koreans residing in Japan. However, no one referred to requisitioned labor as “forced labor.” No demands for reparations or accusations that prostitutes were coerced were forthcoming, precisely because they would have had no basis.

Immediately after World War II, when memories of the time previous to the conflict were still vivid, no one made up stories about how women had been compelled to serve as prostitutes. It wasn’t until memories had begun to fade, in the 1970s, that journalist Senda Kako wrote a book entitled *Military Comfort Women*. In it he used language (“military comfort women,” for instance) that didn’t even exist before or during the war, and is also misleading. For instance, “military comfort women” gives the impression that the prostitutes were attached to a military unit, like military correspondents were, but this was not at all the case. Nevertheless, many left-wing human rights activists embraced what Senda wrote as though it were the truth.<sup>4</sup> Then Aoyagi Atsuko and Takagi Ken’ichi (a lawyer) entered the scene; they went to Korea, where they encouraged former military prostitutes to institute lawsuits. They were not responding to Korean demands for redress. It was not Koreans, but left-wing Japanese human rights activists who launched a “comfort women campaign” founded on lies.

### **Yoshida: fabulist of the century**

When the lies about women having been coerced to serve as military prostitutes began to spread, Yoshida Seiji burst onto the scene with his earth-shaking confession.

The year was 1983, and Yoshida’s published confession was entitled *My War Crimes: Abduction of Koreans*. The author, who claims to have been head of the Shimonoseki Branch Mobilization Department, which operated under the oversight of the Yamaguchi Prefectural Labor Association, recalls receiving an order from Western District Army Headquarters stating that 200 Korean women from the Women’s Labor Volunteer Corps were to be mobilized as military prostitutes. Yoshida then proceeds to describe how women were rounded up on Jeju Island and elsewhere.

Those who weren’t aware of the facts (or rather, those who were convinced that Japanese military personnel were evil personified), must have thought that Yoshida’s realistically woven tale was true. Surely they felt new anger at the unforgivable criminal acts he recounted.

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<sup>4</sup> Senda Kako, *Jugun ianfu* (Military comfort women) (Tokyo: Futabasha, 1973).

The book had a tremendous impact. *Asahi Shimbun* and other publications of its ilk were already entrenched in the conviction that Japanese soldiers were wicked creatures. Those publications gave Yoshida's book a tremendous amount of coverage, primarily because he validated their own credo. It isn't difficult to understand why the many Diet representatives who simple-mindedly believe that the *Asahi Shimbun* is the font of wisdom believed Yoshida as well. So widespread had the myth of women coerced into prostitution become that even a Foreign Ministry bureaucrat, when questioned about the veracity of Yoshida's claims, said "Why would an admitted wrongdoer lie?" Nishioka Tsutomu felt compelled to include this comment in his book.<sup>5</sup>

Yoshida Seiji didn't stop with *My War Crimes*. He set out on an atonement pilgrimage, travelling to Korea, where he prostrated himself and begged for forgiveness!

But as I have already stated, everything he wrote or said was untrue. His lies further entrenched Korean misconceptions, even inspiring the erection of a statue commemorating the suffering of the "coerced comfort women," an act historic in its imbecility.

At long last Yoshida's lies were exposed, and even the *Asahi Shimbun* and television coverage of his book and adventures ceased. But I find it unforgiveable that neither the *Asahi Shimbun* nor the television networks had the decency to print or broadcast a retraction. That means that many Japanese continue to harbor the notion, however vague, women really were coerced into serving as military prostitutes, and by extension, that Japanese military personnel must have been involved in other acts involving compulsion and fraud.

Why did Yoshida Seiji go to the trouble of making up stories that incriminated him, and then broadcast them to the world? Readers may wonder, as did the Foreign Ministry bureaucrat, why someone would confess falsely. But it is not difficult to arrive at an explanation.

It is righteous to condemn the evil Japanese military. It is categorically righteous to expose evil deeds perpetrated by the Japanese military and to denounce them. It may seem as though Yoshida is apologizing for having been party to those evil deeds. But in actuality he becomes symbolic of the Japanese military; when he confesses to his sins and prostrates himself, he enters the realm of absolute righteousness. And one might add that it is permissible to lie to attain absolute righteousness.

We should be mindful that, to use the language of Lenin, the notion that the end justifies the means is coursing through leftist minds.

### **And he calls himself a lawyer!**

The term "sex slave" is now in widespread use all over the world, particularly in the context of military prostitutes who serviced Japanese soldiers. For this we have Totsuka Etsuro, a Japanese attorney, to thank. Totsuka represents International

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<sup>5</sup> Nishioka, *op. cit.*, p. 59; English translation at [http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02\\_1/39\\_S4.pdf](http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/39_S4.pdf), p.25.

韓 国 の  
元 従 軍 慰 安 婦

# 軍事貯金の原簿あった

## 「請求権消滅せず、返して」

第二次大戦中「従軍慰安婦」として強制連行されたミャンマー(旧ビルマ)で預けた軍事郵便貯金の支払いを求めていた韓国・大邱市在住の文玉珠さん(61)が十一日、山口県下関市の下関郵便局を訪れ、預けた貯金の原簿があったことが分かった。元従軍慰安婦による強制連行先での軍事郵便

貯金原簿の存在を日本側が認めただけは全額で初めて。原簿は一九六五年の日韓協定で権利は消滅したとしているが、文さんは「個人の請求権は消滅していない。当時、日本人として貯金した個人のお金だから、直ちに返して」と訴えている。文さんは三月、過去を証言するために下関市や福岡市などの市民グループの招きで来日。当時、貯金の債権郵便局だった下関郵便局に二度にわたって調査と支払いを求めていた。

十一日午後三時すぎ、同郵便局を三度目に訪れた文さんらに應對した竹村功・中国郵政総局貯金部業務主任(広島市)は最初「文玉珠、または文さんの日本名の文原吉子さんの原簿はないが、類似したものがある」と回答。文さんが「そんな回答では納得がない」と直ちに再調査を求めたところ、郵便局は三時間半後の午後六時半ごろ、原簿の保管先である熊本貯金事務センター(熊本市)に「文原玉珠」名の原簿があると回答。文さんの貯金と確認した。原簿によると四三年六月から四五年九月まで十二回の貯金の記録があり、残高は二万六千四百四十五円となっている。文さんの母は四二年、十八歳の時に釜山から百一十五人の若い女性と共にヤンミン(ラングーン)に連れていかれ、日本人の相手させられた。宴会にも呼ばれ、もらったチップを野郎郵便局に文原吉子名義で貯金していた。



原簿が見つかり、会見する文さん(右)  
—下関郵便局で11日午後7時20分

Fig. 3: Article in *Mainichi Shimbun* (May 12, 1992 edition) about former military prostitute Mun Ok-ju, who accumulated ¥26,145 in savings; headlines read “Records of military savings account found”; “Right to claim has not expired. Give me my money!”

Education Development (IED), a Japanese NGO. Sex slaves is the term he used in his relentless petitions to the UNCHR (UN Commission on Human Rights) for the opportunity to address the comfort women issue. It is indeed unfortunate that the UNHCR adopted Totsuka’s terminology.

According to left-wing doctrine, lying is a permissible means to an end. To achieve righteousness (condemning the Japanese military as evil), it is perfectly all right to lie.

We can forgive the world outside Japan for being unfamiliar with military prostitution and how it works. But here we have a Japanese lawyer who is convinced that the

military prostitutes visited by Japanese soldiers were sex slaves. How can someone be so ill informed and ignorant?

“Comfort women” is a term often used to describe military prostitutes who worked in overseas war zones where the Japanese fought. How could Totsuka not know that? It is hard to imagine how someone so ignorant could manage to exercise the legal profession.

An article in the *Mainichi Shimbun* (Fig. 3) dated May 12, 1992 states that Mun Ok-ju, a former military prostitute who worked in Burma, once visited the Shimonoseki Post Office to claim funds she had deposited in her postal savings account during her term of service (two years and six months). Ms. Mun had accumulated a balance of ¥26,145! Since it is unlikely that she deposited all the money she earned, she may have been making as much as ¥1,000 per month. This was in an era when an Army officer earned a monthly salary of ¥70 (or at the maximum, ¥90, if one includes a combat allowance). Ms. Mun must have been paid more than 10 times that, or 40 or 50 times the salary of a rank-and-file soldier.

Does Totsuka Etsuro really think women with such high earnings were sex slaves? Whatever the case, ¥26,000 would have bought Ms. Mun 10 houses in her native land. Does Totsuka not know that women from poor families were willing to take risks and face danger when a great deal of money was at stake?

It would seem that Totsuka Etsuro, in petitioning the UNCHR on behalf of “sex slaves,” was guilty of a crime of conscience motivated by leftist ideology. Perhaps that was not the case, but his behavior was certainly shameful.

### **Mike Honda and the US Congress**

By adopting the term “sex slaves,” the UNHCR perpetuated the grossly mistaken notion that the Japanese forced women into prostitution. Furthermore, the words have such a powerful impact that they robbed listeners or readers of their reasoning power, and caused outrage to multiply exponentially.

Totsuka and other Japanese left-wing human rights activists, as well as like-minded anti-Japanese Koreans, shared their views about military prostitutes with American left-wing human rights activists. Consequently, in 2006 a resolution condemning Japan was brought before the House Committee on International Relations, which passed it; however, it did not go further than that.

The Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact sent messages protesting the injustice of the resolution via facsimile to all 435 members of the US House of Representatives. Nevertheless, Rep. Mike Honda submitted another, similar resolution in 2008. We sent a list of open questions to Honda, which explained, in great detail, exactly why the resolution was unjust. We sent copies of those questions to Rep. Tom Lantos, chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (the new name of the House Committee on International Relations), and to the other committee members.

In those open questions we placed particular emphasis on an official US document emanating from the US Office of War Information, Psychological Warfare Team attached to the US Army Forces, India-Burma Theater. The document states that



“‘comfort girls’ are nothing more than a prostitute or professional ‘camp follower,’” and that the that “the girls’ average total monthly earnings were 1,500 yen, and 750 yen went to their master.”

This is a very reliable document, based on interviews of prisoners of war conducted by US military personnel. The comfort women were not coerced, and they were paid very well for their services. The document thoroughly repudiates the claims about sex slaves stated in the resolution. Incidentally, Japanese Army sergeants at the time were paid ¥30 per month; therefore, the prostitutes made 25 times what they did.

This document alone negates the portion of the resolution that reads as follows:

Whereas the ‘comfort women’ system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan, considered unprecedented in its cruelty and magnitude, included gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation, and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death, or eventual suicide in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century;<sup>6</sup>

This notwithstanding, our open questions and protests were ignored. We even wrote to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, asking her to review the facts carefully before voting on the resolution. This appeal too was ignored, and the US House of Representatives passed a resolution based on lies, and thus unparalleled in history.

Mike Honda and the US Congress must be made to understand that they passed a criminally fallacious resolution.

### **How the US military procured prostitutes**

Throughout history all the world’s nations have formulated policies designed to respond to the sexual needs of their soldiers stationed overseas, in accordance with domestic laws governing prostitution. In Japan prostitution was legal; therefore, brothels were established in war zones and run as businesses.

Since prostitution was not legal in the US, prostitutes were procured locally. There is no need to go back 70 years to learn what the situation was. In her best-selling *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Susan Brownmiller describes the situation in Vietnam 50 years ago, and the behavior of American GIs.

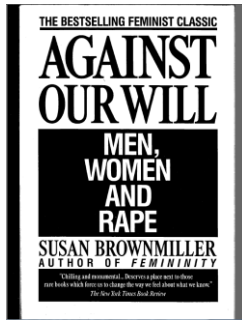
Military brothels on Army base camps (“Sin Cities,” “Disneylands” or “boom-boom parlors”) were built by decision of a division commander, a two-star general, and were under the direct operational control of a brigade commander with the rank of colonel. Clearly, Army brothels in Vietnam existed by the grace of Army Chief of Staff William C. Westmoreland, the United States Embassy in Saigon, and the Pentagon.<sup>7</sup>

Americans seem to believe that their soldiers are innocents who would never

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.thomas.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/hr121\\_ih.xml](http://www.thomas.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/hr121_ih.xml).

<sup>7</sup> Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1975), p. 95.



韓国の官憲こそ米軍向け慰安娼派遣に直接関与している！



Fig. 4: Articles from *Dong-a Ilbo* dated January 31, 1961 (left) and September 14 of the same year (right) about Korean government establishing brothels for American GIs

patronize a prostitute, but they are in for a huge surprise. They are still doing what Japanese military personnel were doing during World War II. The only difference is how the prostitutes were hired (domestically or locally).

And what were American GIs doing in Korea? Articles appearing in *Dong-a Ilbo*, one of Korea’s leading dailies, on January 31 and September 14, 1961 (Fig. 4) answer the question.

The January 31 article describes a training course for 800 prostitutes conducted by US Army officers and Korean police. Taking strict precautions to prevent the spread of venereal disease was the main focus of the program. The September 14 article states that the police in Seoul had asked municipal authorities to oversee the registration of prostitutes who serviced United Nations Command soldiers, again in an attempt to prevent the spread of venereal disease.

Therefore, we know that American military personnel procured prostitutes locally, with the cooperation of the Korean government. Americans have no business condemning Japan. But more important, I recommend that Koreans and their government, if they object so much to the procurement of military prostitutes, focus their wrath not on events that occurred nearly a century ago, but something much more recent and much closer to home.

### Kono Yohei owes Japan an apology

As already stated, the Japanese government did not coerce Korean women into serving as military prostitutes. Nor was it necessary to do so, given the laws and mores of that era. Interviews of former military prostitutes have failed to prove otherwise.

But one Japanese politician issued a statement that pandered to demands from the Korean government. On August 4, 1993, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei issued what is now known as the Kono Statement. In it he conceded that women were indeed coerced into serving as military prostitutes in some cases, for which he apologized. Kono was admitting to coercion “in a broad sense,” an extremely bizarre turn of phrase. His words were exceedingly ill-chosen, since they implied that every unfortunate

event in society can be blamed on “coercion by the authorities” (the women came from poor families). Furthermore, as a result of his statement, the idea that the Japanese forced women to serve as military prostitutes, turning them into sex slaves, and mistreated them, soon spread all over the world.

The Kono Statement was issued even though Deputy Cabinet Secretary Ishihara Nobuo had said that an examination of all research resources, including interviews with former comfort women, had revealed no proof of coercion. Then what motivated Kono to issue the statement, with its “broad sense” excuse?

My guess is that that Kono is a victim of the Tokyo Trials mindset, meaning that he is convinced that the Japanese military committed atrocities during World War II. Consequently, he felt that he should apologize because, despite the fact that there was no conclusive proof of those evil deeds, Japanese soldiers must have committed crimes. The media, including *Asahi Shimbun*, had devoted an inordinate amount of time and space to Yoshida Seiji’s comfort women hunt tales. But they never issued a retraction, even after they discovered he had been lying, probably because in the back of their minds was the thought that there really had been coercion, somewhere, somehow. And the government must have issued the criminal statement for the same reason, because they thought it was the right thing to do.

The ignorance and the masochistic perception of Japanese history that arise from laziness, which prevented him from doing a careful investigation into the facts, makes Kono Yohei guilty of crimes against Japan. He should apologize for the statement he made. If he has a conscience, that is.

### **Fraud with international repercussions**

The first attempt at government regulation of prostitutes was made in Paris in 1798. Not long thereafter Great Britain enacted a law designed to prevent the spread of venereal disease, which was to be administered by military authorities (British colonial policy involved dispatching a great number of soldiers to foreign outposts).

By the mid-1850s the concept of the oversight of venereal disease had been introduced to Japan from Great Britain and other European nations. Japan made genuine efforts to regulate prostitution and manage venereal disease in both the civilian and military populations.

*The Relationship Between ‘Comfort Women’ and Medical Treatment*, written by Amako Kuni and Aso Tetsuo, traces the history of prostitution in the modern era, as well as attempts to prevent the spread of venereal disease. It also describes efforts made by the Japanese military along those lines in detail. Dr. Aso writes about his experiences as an army physician and his efforts to prevent venereal disease and to improve methods of combating it. The book also includes an essay he wrote entitled “Assertive Venereal Prophylaxis,” which contains Dr. Aso’s descriptions of methods used to fight venereal disease in France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, the

US and the Soviet Union. It turns out that the Japanese were more conscientious than other nations in waging war with these diseases. Any claims that the Japanese rounded up and abused “sex slaves” are utter nonsense.

Once their coercion argument is thoroughly discredited, human rights activists will broach the charge that prostitution should be regarded as the abuse of women, and attempt to continue with their condemnation of the Japanese military.

But prostitution and military prostitution have been practiced all over the world since ancient times. Singling out the Japanese military as a horrible example would be nothing less than discriminatory. If they truly care about women’s rights, as they claim to, these activists should focus not on the past, but on the present, since prostitution exists all over the world, as does military prostitution.

Furthermore, if their protest is against women whose rights were violated because they suffered in a battle zone, they should not limit their attention to the comfort women. People of any occupation may be subject to unfair treatment, and may suffer in many ways in a battle zone. It is hard to see the point in dredging up events that allegedly transpired 70 years ago. Former comfort women’s statements are likely to be unreliable, or even contrived. One cannot help but conclude that there is a hidden, ulterior motive to their demanding reparations and apologies from Japan on the basis of groundless accusations.

Now that the “coercion” accusation has been discredited, one would think that the comfort women issue would be laid to rest. But then someone mentions “coercion in the broad sense,” which encourages human rights activists to continue their railing about the comfort women issue. The only conclusion possible is that they are hell-bent on vilifying Japan, even today, by branding the Japanese military as evil incarnate.

The Japanese did not force anyone into sexual slavery. Accusing them of having done so and calling them the worst violators of human rights in history does nothing to protect anyone’s human rights. The only outcome is the sully of Japan’s national honor. Those who brandish the human rights banner in this particular case are committing unconscionable, international fraud.

(This essay originally appeared in the January 2012 issue of *Rekishi tsu* (The History Enthusiast), published by WAC Magazines Co., Ltd.)

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