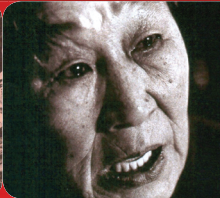


The Truth Of The Japanese Military “Comfort Women”



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The Truth Of The Japanese Military “Comfort Women”



Japan's 'Comfort Women' Testify to Abuses

WWII Sex Slaves Begin Mock Trial to Pressure Country to Accept Responsibility

By Doris Sturck
Washington Post Foreign Service

TOKYO, Dec. 8—Stories of rape and brutality tumbled out of the old women—in anger, in tears and in cold calm—at the start of an extraordinary public challenge to Japan to confront the system of sexual slavery it set up for its army during World War II.

As the five-day mock trial opened in the heart of Japan's capital, women from Korea offered personal and videotaped accounts of being kidnapped and imprisoned in "comfort stations" to provide sex on demand for front-line Japanese soldiers.

The tribunal, arranged by international women's groups, will hear testimony from other Asian women this weekend. The Japanese government has steadfastly ignored the event, a silence the organizers claim underscores their charge that Japan has not accepted blame.

But even as the victims' accounts become grimly repetitious, those involved in the issue are struggling over how to put Japan's "comfort women" system into the perspective of crimes against women in other wars.

The debate is whether Japan's

court of public opinion" in recognizing rape and sexual violence as a war crime. But she acknowledged legal progress in most courts has been slow, and Japanese courts have so far rejected claims of the victims on grounds of sexual servitude.

"The fact that the Japanese government is on the defensive is progress," she said. "They have been particularly stubborn. They could have responded in a way to settle

this case five years ago."

In 1995, Japan set up a fund for private contributions to be used as compensation for the comfort women but balked at issuing an official apology. Relatively few of the victims accepted.

Under the bright lights at an auditorium packed with spectators, some of the Korean women who testified today expressed their anger.

"I hate Japanese soldiers! I can

never forgive them! I am over 70 now, and I can never forgive!" shouted Kim Young Suk, who came from North Korea to testify. She said she was abducted at age 12, and her body is scarred from the beatings she endured.

"I didn't come here for money. I didn't come for pity. I want you to see that I lost my youth, my life. Unless the Japanese government comes to me to apologize, I will never forgive them."



At the opening of the mock trial, unidentified women carry in makeshift altar to honor rape victims of the Japanese army in

The symbolic ruling comes just days after Japanese courts rejected lawsuits brought by Korean and Filipino comfort women who were demanding compensation and apologies.

picture A newspaper article concerning the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (The Washington Post, December 9, 2000)

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Preface

During World War II, innumerable women were raped in brothels set up by the Japanese military in China, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. They were called “comfort women” by the Japanese military. Although most of the women are now dead, those who survived are still suffering physical and psychological trauma inflicted more than sixty years ago.

These women have been demanding an official apology and compensation from the Japanese government. In Seoul, South Korea, a group of old women, assisted by supporters, have held demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy for over fifteen years. During the “Wednesday demonstration,” which happens every Wednesday and thus being called, these women have been demanding official apology and proper compensation from Japan for the atrocities and cruelties against the so-called “comfort women.” Yet the re-

sponse of the Japanese government has not only fallen short of expectations but added insult to the injury through its words and actions.

The matter of “comfort women” has become an international issue. The debate came to the forefront again in 2007, in part because of the U.S. House of Representatives’ House Resolution 121. The Resolution declared that the “comfort women” system of forced military prostitution by the Japanese Government was “unprecedented in its cruelty” and “one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century.” The Resolution also called on the Japanese government to educate present and future generations about this inhumane war crime.

Who were the “comfort women” and why should their stories be heard?



picture Comfort women transportation

WHO ARE THE “COMFORT WOMEN”?

The Truth Of The Japanese Military
“Comfort Women”

1

picture Scream of comfort woman



1 Who are the “comfort women”?

“Comfort women” are women who were incarcerated in so-called “comfort stations” – military brothels – built by the Japanese armed force throughout the Japanese empire and areas under its occupation, including China, Indonesia, Singapore and Papua New Guinea. These women were forced to provide “sexual comfort” to the Japanese soldiers by having sexual intercourse with them.

These women, recruited from the areas colonized or occupied by Japan, consisted of Korean, who made up the

picture Signboard to comfort station in China



majority, Taiwanese, Chinese, Indonesian, East Timorese and Filipinos. The victims include some Dutch women and Japanese women as well. The number of "comfort women," though unknown, is estimated to range from 40,000 to over 200,000.

These women, mostly under age 20 and sexually inexperienced, were from rural and poor backgrounds. Many of them were deceived into sexual slavery by talks of factory works, nursing, or voluntary service. Deception and intimidation were often used. Many others were abducted. Procurement of the women was performed by brokers who had worked in close coordination with local police and military police.

The "comfort women" system came into full operation after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937. The Japanese army established the so-called "comfort stations" throughout the war zone and was involved in their operation directly and indirectly until Japan's defeat in August 1945.

After the war, the truth about the comfort women system remained unnoticed to the public for decades. Like other sex crimes, the systematic rape crime by the Japanese military



picture A comfort women's room

marked the surviving victims with shame and forced them to keep their painful past as a secret. It was in 1991 when Kim Hak-Soon came out as the first former "comfort woman" to make a public testimony of her experience.



The Truth Of The Japanese Military
"Comfort Women"



"COMFORT WOMEN" OR "SEX SLAVES"?

동북아역사재단

동북아역사재단

동북아역사재단
NORTHEAST ASIAN HISTORY FOUNDATION



picture Comfort women who are receiving interrogation by American soldiers in Burmese prisoners' camp, Sept. 1944

2

“Comfort women” or “sex slaves”?

The term “comfort women” in Japanese records of the time is now widely used to refer to these women. Considering, however, that these women were demeaned because their sole existence was for Japanese soldiers’ “comfort,” there should be no denying that the term glosses over the sexual violence by the military, the very point of the “comfort women” issue. Furthermore, in light of the universal values shared by all humanity, the term represents male (soldier) supremacy and discrimination against women.



picture

LEFT A comfort woman points at herself in photo

RIGHT Comfort women being abandoned by the Japanese military after the war

“Sexual slavery,” on the other hand, came into use as a more appropriate term describing the reality of these women’s victimization (rape by the Japanese military) in the UN Special Rapporteur’s report.

While the term “comfort women” is in habitual use in East Asia, another term “military sex slaves” is more generally used in the international community now. Note, though, that neither term is respectful of the victims’ loss of dignity.

Thus, just a glance at the issue of terminology reveals that the problem of “comfort women” is essentially that of a universal value: human rights.



picture Dead bodies of comfort women killed by Japanese military, Sept. 1944



picture Japanese Soldiers in Military Camp in China



picture Comfort Station in Nanjing, China (photographed in 2003)



picture Inside view of Comfort Station in Nanjing



picture Comfort Station in Wuhan, China



picture Comfort Station in Malaysia

The Truth Of The Japanese Military
"Comfort Women"

3

WAS THERE NO FORCED
RECRUITMENT?

동북아역사재단



동북아역사재단
NORTHEAST ASIA HISTORY FOUNDATION

3



picture One of Korean 'comfort women' speaking at the international Hearing, 1992, Tokyo

Was there no forced recruitment?

Remarks that deny the fact of forced recruitment by the Japanese military have been made by some influential, conservative political leaders in Japan.

When U.S. House Resolution 121, which demanded Tokyo's formal unequivocal apology to the "comfort women" and pressed the Japanese government to take responsibility,

started to be discussed in the U.S. House of Representatives in March 2007, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and his cabinet made some statements which reflect their current historical view.

- “There is no evidence to back up (the assertion) that there was coercion as defined initially” in the role of “the Japanese military or government” in recruiting comfort women.
- There were apparent cases of coercion by private recruiters for the military, but “it was not as though military police broke into people’s homes and took them (women) away like kidnappers,” and “testimony to the claim that there had been a hunt for comfort women is a complete fabrication.”
- The Japanese government refused to issue an apology to the comfort women in response to the passage of the House Resolution 121 by the U.S. House of Representatives.

Exposed to a storm of criticism at home and abroad, Abe did extended an apology “as Prime Minister” to the former “comfort women,” declaring that he stood by the Kono Statement of 1993, which acknowledged the official involvement of the



picture A document related to the establishment of the Women's Voluntary Service Corps



picture Dead bodies of Japanese soldiers and 'comfort women' in Yunnan, China

past crime of abduction, rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of women during World War II.

The Japanese government's fixation on denying coerced recruitment, though resonant with only a few people, seems to obscure the big picture of the "comfort women" issue: that the Japanese military and government were involved in not only recruiting and transporting women, but also establishing and operating the brothels, where the women were forced to live in servitude, deprived of freedom and dignity. Although it is a fait accompli supported by records and testimony, as noted in the United States Congressional Research Service Memorandum of 2007, this issue of the "comfort women" has not been acknowledged by the Japanese government yet.



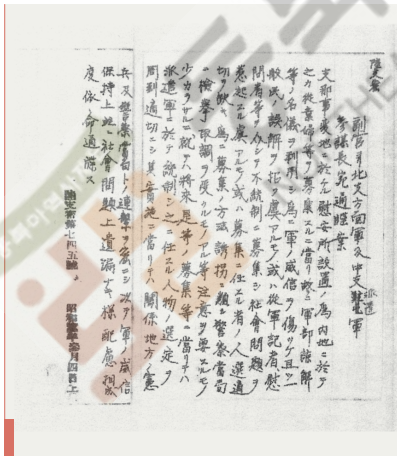
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Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the result of the study on the issue of "comfort women"

August 4, 1993

“As a result of the study [conducted by the Japanese Government since December 1991] which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the

transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.……”



picture Japanese military document related to the recruitment of 'comfort women'



check box

The testimony of Chong Ok-Sun, who is now 74 years old, reflects in particular the brutal and harsh treatment that these women had to endure in addition to sexual assault and daily rape by soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army:

“I was born on 28 December 1920, in Phabal-Ri, Pungsan County, South Hamgyong Province, in the north of the Korean peninsula. One day in June, at the age of 13, I had to prepare lunch for my parents who were working in the field and so I went to the village well to fetch water. A Japanese garrison soldier surprised me there and took me away, so that my parents never knew what had happened to their daughter. I was taken to the police station in a truck, where I was raped by several policemen. When I shouted, they put socks in my mouth and continued to rape me. The head of the police station hit me in my left eye because I was crying. That day I lost my eyesight in the left eye.

After 10 days or so, I was taken to the Japanese army garrison barracks in Heysan City. There were around 400 other Korean young girls with me and we had to serve over 5,000 Japanese soldiers as sex slaves everyday - up to 40 men per day……

One Korean girl who was with us once demanded why we had to serve so many, up to 40, men per day. To punish her for her questioning, the Japanese company

commander Yamamoto ordered her to be beaten with a sword. While we were watching, they took off her clothes, tied her legs and hand, and rolled her over a board with nails until the nails were covered with blood and pieces of her flesh. In the end, they cut off her head……

I think over half of the girls who were at the garrison barracks were killed. Twice I tried to run away, but both times we were caught after a few days. We were tortured even more and I was hit on my head so many times that all the scars still remain. They also tattooed me on the inside of my lips, my chest, my stomach and my body. I fainted. When I woke up, I was on a mountainside, presumably left for dead. Of the two girls with me, only Kuk Hae and I survived. A 50-year-old man who lived in the mountains found us, gave us clothes and something to eat. He also helped us to travel back to Korea, where I returned, scarred, barren and with difficulties in speaking, at the age of 18, after five years of serving as a sex slave for the Japanese.”

The Radhika Coomaraswamy reports



picture Japanese Materials of the Taiwanese colonization company, which include a lot of documents concerning Japanese military comfort system

慰安所 軍関与示す資料

防衛庁図書館に在る日本軍の通達・自誌

部隊に設置指示 募集含め統制・監督

「民間」政府見解揺らぐ 参謀長名で、次官印も

日本軍や官軍の中で、日本統治下の朝鮮や、戦時下の南洋に結成していた慰安所の中心に、政府関係の部隊が設置されていたことが、防衛庁図書館に在る日本軍の通達・自誌から明らかになった。資料は昭和11年から昭和17年にかけてのもので、慰安所の設置や募集、統制・監督について、自衛隊の部隊に設置するよう指示が出ている。また、募集を含め統制・監督を行うことについても、参謀長の名で、次官の印も押されている。民間の見解も揺らぐことが、資料から読み取れる。

自衛隊の部隊に設置するよう指示が出ている。また、募集を含め統制・監督を行うことについても、参謀長の名で、次官の印も押されている。民間の見解も揺らぐことが、資料から読み取れる。

「民間」政府見解揺らぐ
参謀長名で、次官印も

多くは朝鮮人女性
左記は、中心軍隊の慰安所設置指示の要旨を要約したものである。昭和11年11月11日、防衛庁次官の印が押された。この指示は、自衛隊の部隊に設置するよう指示が出ている。また、募集を含め統制・監督を行うことについても、参謀長の名で、次官の印も押されている。民間の見解も揺らぐことが、資料から読み取れる。

picture Professor Yoshiaki Yoshimi at Chuo University unveiled the documents which prove Japanese military was directly involved in recruiting comfort women for Japanese soldiers during the war (Asahi Shinbun, November 11, 1992)

The Truth Of The Japanese Military
"Comfort Women"

4

“JUST PROSTITUTES”?

동북아역사재단

동북아역사재단

동북아역사재단
NORTHEAST ASIAN HISTORY FOUNDATION

4 “Just prostitutes”?

A key fallacy about the “comfort women” system is that it was a form of “licensed prostitution.” Some people have repeatedly stressed that “comfort women” were voluntarily engaged in sexual intercourse for money, as is seen in a recent *Newsweek* article contributed by one of the Japanese rightists, who called the women “prostitutes.”

Because the “comfort women” system was modeled on

picture Korean ‘comfort women’ captured in Burma, 1944



the licensed prostitution system, there could be some similarities in format between the two systems. Yet, while the state was solely in charge of regulating the licensed prostitution system, the military and the government played a major role in operating the "comfort women" system. It either operated the brothels directly or controlled /supervised the contracted civilians, who were required to submit daily or monthly reports. Recruitment of the women was performed by the brokers who worked in close coordination with local police and military police. The Japanese armed forces provided all necessary transportation for the women, such as military trucks, trains and warships.

Furthermore, the women's freedom was severely restricted to the "comfort stations." Recruited in many cases through abduction, deceit and intimidation, the women were confined in the "comfort stations," where they were deprived of freedom and forcibly raped by Japanese soldiers against their will. It is acknowledged in the U.S. Congress Research Service Memorandum of 2007 that the sexual intercourse was not voluntary and widespread rape had been committed. The women had no free choice of where to live or where to go. Nor did they have the liberty of quitting, a key point of differentiation from licensed prostitutes. The "comfort women" were maintained specifically for the benefit of soldiers, and the women were even abandoned on the battlefield.

The "comfort women" system was for a military purpose, whereas licensed prostitution was commercial. While Japan insists that the system was established to prevent soldiers raping local women, they



picture Kim Hak-soon (then, 67) was the first comfort woman victim who publicly revealed herself at a press conference and filed a suit against the Japanese government in 1992. She was died in 1997.

do acknowledge that the comfort women were considered a tool for the successful conduct of the war.

“Comfort women” were not the same as “licensed prostitutes,” but instead were victims of a state-run system of sexual violence. Yet the day has yet to come when the Japanese government formally acknowledges its responsibility and offers a sincere apology and reasonable individual compensation to the victims.



check box

Three types of military "comfort station"

There were three types of "comfort stations" varying by operation: brothels operated directly by the military; brothels managed by civilians who had been selected and licensed by the military, and these brothels were also controlled and supervised by the military; existing local

brothels designated as institutions for Japanese soldiers for a certain period of time. The second type was the one most referenced in Korean victims' testimonies and seems to have been the most common.



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Dutch woman's testimony

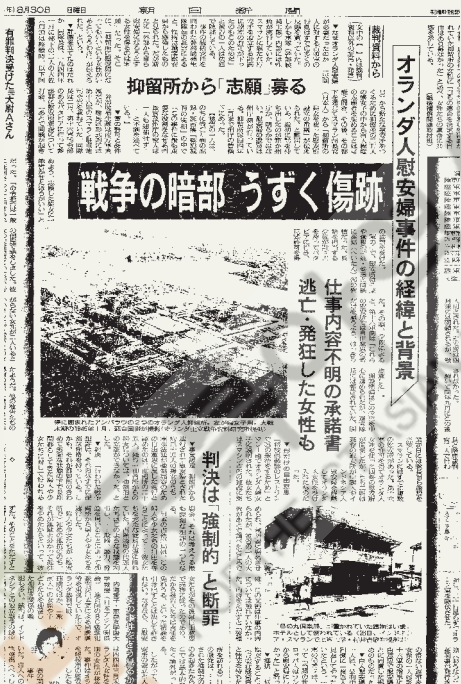
As a victim of the system, Jan Ruff-O'Herne testified before the U.S. House of Representatives, “Many stories have been told about the horrors, brutalities, suffering and starvation of Dutch women in Japanese prison camps. But one story was never told, the most shameful story of the worst human rights abuse committed by the Japanese during World War II: The story of the “Comfort Women”, the jugun infanu, and how these women were forcibly

seized against their will, to provide sexual services for the Japanese Imperial Army. In the so-called “Comfort Station” I was systematically beaten and raped day and night. Even the Japanese doctor raped me each time he visited the brothel to examine us for venereal disease.”

Statement of Jan Ruff-O'Herne, Subcommittee on Asia, Pacific and the Global Environment, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives



picture “50 Years of Silence” was published by Jan Ruff-O'Herne in 1994



picture A newspaper article about the Dutch 'comfort women' (Asahi Shinbun, August 30, 1992)

The Truth Of The Japanese Military
"Comfort Women"

5

DID JAPAN OFFER SUFFICIENT APOLOGY AND COMPENSATION?



Did Japan offer sufficient apology and compensation?

On June 26, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee passed House Resolution 121 by overwhelming majority, which calls on Japan to “formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force’s coercion of young women into sexual slavery.”

The Japanese government claimed that it has already apologized for “comfort women system.” The “apology” is said to be the 1992 statement made by Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato Koichi and another one made by his successor Kono Yohei in the following year. In the Kono Statement, the Japanese government admitted and apologized for the involvement of the Japanese armed forces and coercion in recruitment.

Despite these apologies, however, the Japanese govern-



picture Wednesday Demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, Korea

ment has consistently disclaimed any legal responsibility on this issue. Yet it created the Asian Women's Fund, based on the idea that Japan would take moral responsibility towards the "comfort women" from a humanitarian standpoint.

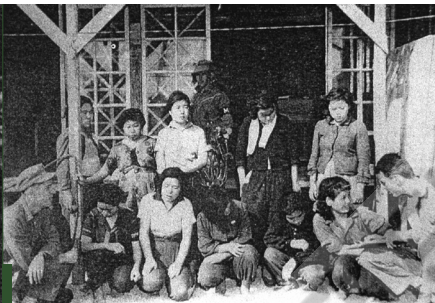
Established in 1995, the Asian Women's Fund implemented atonement projects by raising fund from Japanese citizens on a voluntary basis. Due to the lack of response from the former "comfort women," the Fund ended operation in March, 2007, without any notable achievement.

Although criticizing the Japanese government for doing nothing over the "comfort women" issue is incorrect, it is also inaccurate to say that all the problems were resolved or that Japan has "shown its best efforts."

It is necessary to ask why reconciliation has not been



picture Japanese soldiers waiting in line inside a comfort station



picture Korean 'comfort women' in Okinawan prisoners' camp. 1945

achieved between Japan and its neighboring countries and why compensation has not been made to former “comfort women” in spite of the Kono Statement and the Asian Women’s Fund.

Did the Japanese government offer sufficient apology and compensation in an appropriate manner?

It can be safely said that these problems are well laid in the House Resolution 121, introduced by U.S. Representative, Mike Honda (D-CA). The major provisions of the House Resolution 121 are:

- The Japanese government should formally acknowledge the Japanese Imperial Army’s coercion of young women into sexual slavery (the presence of “comfort women”) and apologize to them.
- The Prime Minister of Japan should apologize in his official capacity.
- The Japanese government should publicly refute claims that the “comfort women” system never existed.

- The Japanese government should follow the recommendations of the international community and educate current and future generations about the “comfort women” system.

Although apologies were made by Japanese Prime Ministers as individuals, they were not approved by the Diet or the Government. Nor was the Kono Statement passed in the Diet. In short, no official apology has been offered by the state of Japan, which was wholly responsible for the plight of the “comfort women.”

Despite the Japanese government’s denial, there are those who also hold it accountable for legal compensation.

Presented as an agenda item for the United Nations Human Rights Commission by the Korea Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan in 1992, the “comfort women” problem has been regarded as a human rights violation. Recommendations have been made by UN organizations to the Japanese government to issue an official apology to the victims and to face its legal responsibility. These recommendations remain unfulfilled, and the world is watching to see if Japan will ever face its past and educate its youth about Japan’s past mistakes.



picture A group of Korean 'comfort women' captured in Burma, who were interrogated by some bilingual American soldiers, August 1944



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Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei on the result of the study on the issue of "comfort women"

August 4, 1993

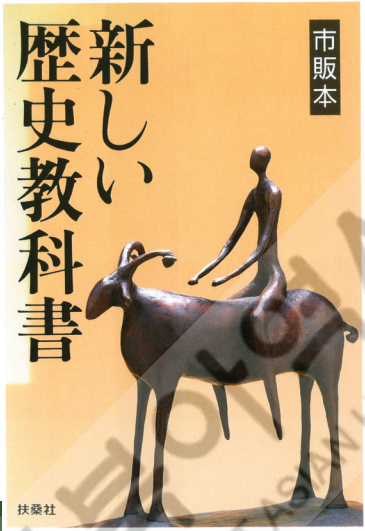
The Government of Japan has been conducting a study on the issue of wartime "comfort women" since December 1991. I wish to announce the findings as a result of that study.

"As a result of the study which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or

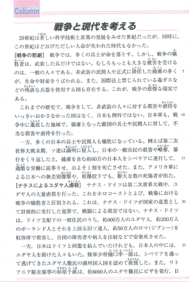
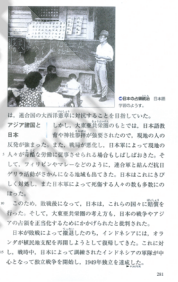
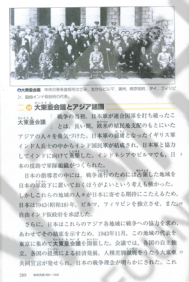
indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere."

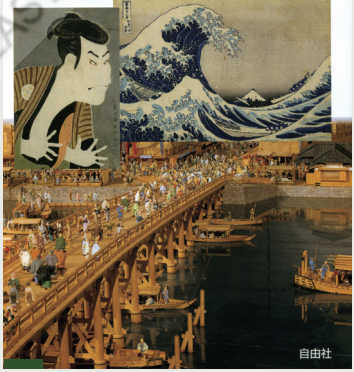


picture a revised edition, Fusosha, 2005



picture One of Japanese history textbooks called "Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho" (or "New History Textbook"; Fusosha, 2000) never wrote about the fact of 'comfort women' and comfort system at all





picture "Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho [New History Textbook]" (new edition), published by Jiyuusha, was approved in 2009. The book does not refer to "comfort women" either



check box

Radhika Coomaraswamy's reports to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

In her reports, she has written on violence in the family, violence in the community, violence against women during armed conflict and the problem of international trafficking. A strong advocate on women's rights, she has intervened on behalf of women throughout the world seeking clarification from Governments in cases involving violence against women. She

has also conducted field visits to Japan and Korea on the problem of "comfort women", Rwanda, Colombia, Haiti, Indonesia with regard to violence against women in war time, Poland, India, Bangladesh and Nepal on the issue of trafficking, the United States on women in prisons, Brazil on domestic violence and Cuba on violence against women generally.



check box

Demands by the victims

..... In this context, the Special Rapporteur would like to reflect in detail the concrete demands made by the former "comfort women" who want their voices to be heard by the international community and by the Government of Japan in particular. In response to questions raised by the Special Rapporteur most former "comfort women" informed the Special Rapporteur that the Government of Japan should:

- a) Apologize individually to each of the surviving women for the suffering they have had to endure. In addition, most victims felt that the apologies made at the time of the mission of Prime Minister Murayama were not sincere enough, especially because his statement had not been endorsed by the Japanese Diet;
- b) Recognize that the drafting of approximately 200,000 Korean women as military sexual slaves and the establishment of comfort houses for the use of the Japanese Imperial Army were carried out in a systematic and forcible manner by and/or with the knowledge of the Government and the army command;
- c) Recognize that the systematic recruitment of women for purposes of sexual slavery should be considered a crime against humanity, a gross violation of

international humanitarian law, and a crime against peace, as well as a crime of slavery, trafficking in persons and of forced prostitution;

d) Accept moral and legal responsibility for such crimes;

e) Pay compensation from governmental resources to the surviving victims. For this purpose, it was suggested that the Government of Japan should enact special legislation to enable a settlement of individual claims for compensation through civil law suits at Japanese municipal courts.

…… In addition, the former “comfort women” are requesting the following measures to be taken by the Government of Japan:

a) A thorough investigation into the historical facts of the issue of military sexual slavery during the Second World War, including publicizing all official documents and materials on the matter still existent in Japan and, in particular, in official governmental archives;

b) The amendment of Japanese history books and educational curricula to reflect the historical facts which would have emerged from the investigation;

c) The identification and prosecution, under Japanese domestic law, of all perpetrators involved in the recruitment of military sexual slaves and the institutionalization of military sexual slavery.

The Radhika Coomaraswamy reports



check box

According to UN Special Rapporteur Gay J. McDougall

The Japanese government organized “rape camps” and the systematic sexual enslavement of over 200,000 girls and women during World War II, according to a new report presented to a group of independent human rights experts under the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. According to UN Special

Rapporteur Gay J. McDougall, Japan now faces a stark choice: Accepting legal responsibility for this crime — including a legal obligation to identify and prosecute surviving criminals — or continuing to avoid the responsibility, which appears to violate international law as well as Japan’s international treaty obligations.



check box

Asia Women's Fund

In 1995, Japan set up an “Asia Women's Fund” for atonement in the form of material compensation and to provide each surviving comfort woman with a signed apology from the prime minister, stating “As Prime Minister of Japan, I thus extend anew my most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered

incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.” The fund is funded by private donations and not government money, and has been criticized as a way to avoid admitting government abuse. But because of the unofficial nature of the fund, many “comfort women” have rejected these payments and continue to seek an official apology and compensation.



picture Taiwanese comfort women's demonstration in Taipei, Taiwan (April 29, 2002)



picture 'Comfort women' in Shanghai



A website to remember
some 200,000 women who were used as sexual
slaves by Japanese troops during World War II.



"It is indisputable that these women were forced, and abducted to provide sexual services to the Ja; [Japan] violated customary norms of international war crimes, crimes against humanity, slavery and women and children ... Japan should take full resp; and make suitable restitution to the victims and th

International Commission of Jurists,

"Philippine case shines at war crimes tribunal"

TOKYO—Very proud, very impressed, very moved. If you were a Filipino, this was how you would feel after watching the Philippine prosecution team argue the case of the comfort women and the Japanese government's responsibility for rape, sexual slavery and other crimes against humanity before a distinguished panel of judges. Judge Gabrielle Kirk McDonald, former president of the International War Crimes Tribunal on the former Yugoslavia, and now head of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery held in Tokyo, could not restrain herself from publicly commending the Philippine team. But, I must say, each of the nine countries sprung its own unique surprise and came up with its own distinct flavor even while sticking to the rules of procedure and evidence.

North and South Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor, the Netherlands, Japan—the countries whose women suffered under the military sexual slavery system came armed to the teeth. Emperor Hirohito and his military commanders must now be turning in their graves.

Before the Philippines presentation were those of North and South Korea and China. After the Philippines, it was Taiwan's turn. I thought I had seen it all in the cases of the two Koreas and then China. Korea had all the damning evidence it could lay its hands on and these came in the form of war documents and live witnesses. (Korea was the biggest foreign contingent and seemed to be the most aggressive in everything.)

So, what else was there to see, I thought.

Well, the Philippine appearance was indeed something to look forward to. After Korea and China's presentation, the Filipinos made sure the 10 *lolas* who would be on the witness stand would hold their heads high all through the ordeal. *Walang mangingisay ha*, we joked. One almost broke down but she held on, biting her hankie until it was over. They sat there so beautiful and dignified in their *kimona* and black *saya* and tussled *alampany*, holding back their tears. It was awesome.

If it was only all about dramatic effect, then the tribunal would simply be holding a mock trial, which it was not. The trembling and the fainting witnesses and their accounts plus the gory visual presentations would have done the job. But this was also about hard evidence. While there was nothing like listening to the live witnesses, I was even more awed by the documents that turned up and were presented by the country prosecutors aided by Japanese expert witnesses. Despite the Japanese government's effort at that time to destroy the evidence of what they had done, many documents were salvaged and preserved. But getting them was not easy for the prosecutors and the expert witnesses. Painstaking research was the key.

This was how the Philippine indictment started: "The Prosecutors of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery, pursuant to their authority granted under Article 11 of the Charter of the (IWCT 2000), charge the accused, EMPEROR HIROHIRTO, HISAICHI TERAUCHI, MASAHARU HOMMA, SHIGENORI KURODA, TOMOYUKI YAMASHITA, and YOSHIHARU IWANAKA, with

accused Emperor Hirohito, in concert with the other accused, HISAICHI TERAUCHI (as Supreme Commander of the Southern Army which covered operations in Philippines), MASAHARU HOMMA (as Commanding General of the 14th Army stationed in the Philippines from Dec. 8, 1941 to Aug. 15, 1942), SHIGENORI KURODA (as Commanding General of the 14th Army from 1943 to 1944), TOMOYUKI YAMASHITA (as Commanding General of the 14th Area Army) and YOSHIHARU IWANAKA (as Commanding General of the 2nd Tank Division or Geki Heidan of the 14th Area Army on Nov. 23, 1944), led, planned, organized and directly participated in the formulation and execution of a common plan and conspiracy to commit, or which involved the commission of Crimes Against Humanity through sexual slavery and rape, as provided in the Charter of this Tribunal, and, in accordance with the provisions of the said Charter, all accused are directly responsible for their own acts and for all acts committed by any other member of the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces in the execution of such common plan and conspiracy."

Among the exhibits were the results of examinations for sexually transmitted disease conducted in Iloilo. The purpose of these was to prove that the comfort stations indeed existed and that the women were victims of sexual slavery.

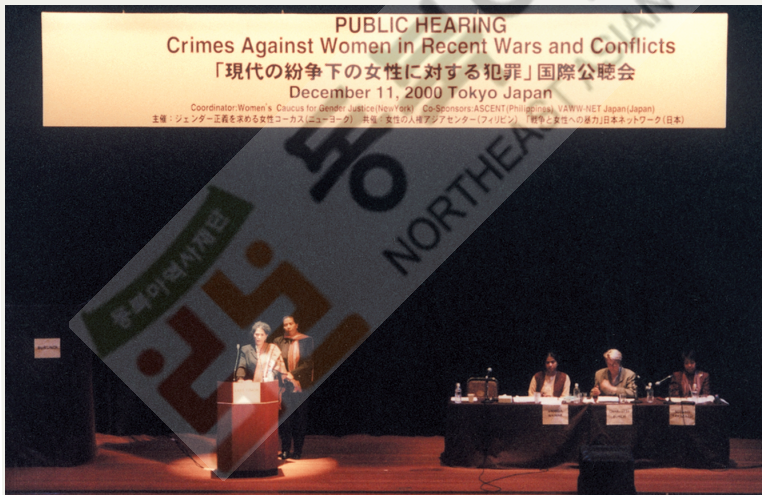
By the way, the laws applied were the laws at that time. But the accused are dead, you ask. Well, more on that another time. And what about state responsibility? This is in fact, what this is all about.

Well, there were more, and I thought the Philippine presentation was it. But it was after Taiwan's presentation and

picture The newspaper article concerning the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (Philippine Daily Inquirer, December 14, 2000)



picture The International Public Hearing concerning Post War Compensation of Japan held in Tokyo, 1992



picture Public Hearing : Crimes against Women in Recent Wars and Conflicts in Tokyo, 2000

The Truth Of The Japanese Military
"Comfort Women"

6

WHY SHOULD THE "COMFORT WOMEN" BE REMEMBERED

동북아역사재단



동북아역사재단
NORTHEAST ASIAN HISTORY FOUNDATION



picture Wooden barracks of a comfort station in Shanghai

6

Why should the “comfort women” be remembered?

Most of the victims have passed away without receiving any apologies or compensation. And surviving victims, whose exact number are unknown, await the end of their own pain and poverty, concealing the fact that they were once Japanese military “comfort women.” Not a moment should be lost in resolving this problem as there is little time left for the aging survivors.

Another reason for why a solution should be achieved is that the significance of the problem carries not only for the victims but for all of us.

The "comfort women" system was a war crime and gross violation of human rights. Wartime sex crimes are still being committed and are likely to be repeated in the future. It is only just that we treat this issue as what it is—one of the largest-scale violations of human rights in the twentieth century. To prevent the repetition of such tragedy, it is imperative that this state-led wartime crime against women, should reach a fundamental resolution. It is also a touchstone of our own attitudes about human rights in this global age.

In order for Japan to become a truly responsible member of the international community, it is imperative that Japan should face its past with sincerity and honesty. Reconciliation and cooperation among East Asian countries will be possible only when Japan acknowledges its past mistakes with modesty and humility.

picture Japanese soldiers who lined the rail in front of comfort station



Hirohito et l'amnésie japonaise

DANS un récent éditorial intitulé « Être japonais », le quotidien *Asahi* appellait ses lecteurs à faire preuve de flexibilité dans la revendication de leur identité nationale. Il relevait l'expression « guerre sacrée », qui figure sur un monument aux morts de la guerre du Pacifique, érigé l'année dernière, dans la préfecture de Kanazawa. L'étranger rappelle quant à lui régulièrement au Japon un passé qu'il semble occulter. La condamnation – symbolique, puisque sans effet légal – des responsables du drame des deux cent mille « femmes du réconfort », contraintes à se prostituer pour la soldatesque nipponne au cours de la « guerre de la Grande Asie », par le Tribunal international des femmes contre l'esclavage sexuel, qui s'est tenu en décembre à Tokyo, est un nouveau rappel à l'ordre de la mémoire. Parmi les accusés jugés responsables du sort de ces femmes figure celui au nom duquel fut menée la guerre : l'empereur Showa (Hirohito).

Pour symbolique qu'elle soit, cette condamnation est une incitation à ouvrir un débat sur la responsabilité de l'empereur mais aussi sur la cons-

Officiellement, celui-ci ne peut être qu'un pacifiste – vision contestable, construite par l'occupant américain. C'est le grand mérite du livre de l'historien du Japon Herbert Bix, *Hirohito, and the Making of Modern Japan* (Harper Collins, 2000), de montrer, à partir de lettres et de journaux des conseillers de Hirohito, rendus publics après la mort de celui-ci, la responsabilité du monarque dans la guerre : de l'invasion de la Chine au conflit avec les États-Unis, en passant par le massacre de Nankin (1937) : « *C'était finalement le seul homme libre du pays* », résume l'historien. Hirohito savait ce qui se passait et avait la possibilité d'infléchir le cours des événements.

LE CAS DE L'« UNITÉ 731 »

Pourquoi cette absolution ? Pourquoi, bien que la majorité ne nie pas le passé, les Japonais semblent ne pas avoir vraiment cherché à connaître les faits ? Après la défaite, la plupart ont perçu la guerre comme un conflit absurde. Les bombardements de Hiroshima et de Nagasaki

ne l'y eut aucune poursuite en échange de la fourniture à Washington des résultats de ces expériences. Un calcul analogue présida au sort de Hirohito.

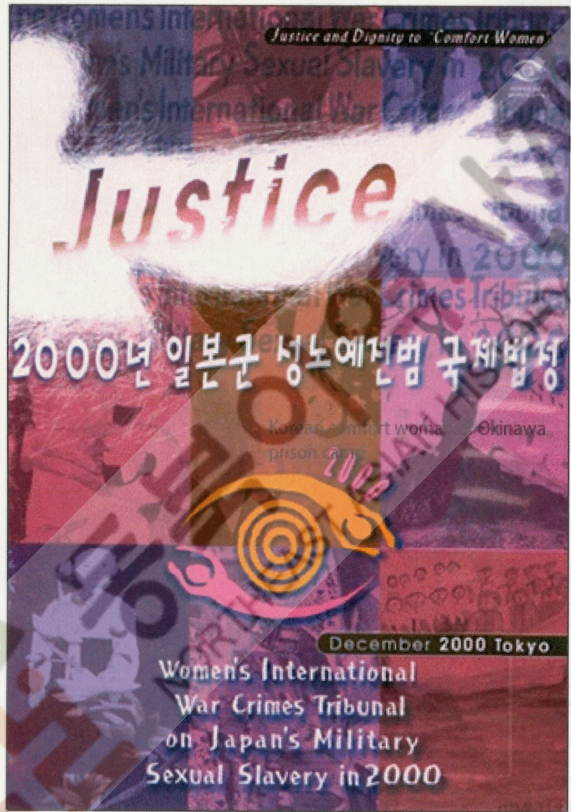
Avant même la défaite du Japon, deux écoles de pensée partageaient le département d'État : les partisans de la mise en cause de Hirohito et ceux qui militaient en faveur de son absolution. Le général MacArthur, commandant en chef des forces alliées au Japon, choisit la plus conservatrice. Il câbla à Washington qu'il n'y avait pas de preuve de la responsabilité de Hirohito et que, si celui-ci était contraint à abdiquer, les États-Unis devaient maintenir pendant des années un million de soldats dans l'archipel pour y faire régner l'ordre. Erreur de jugement fondée sur une vision « culturaliste » du système impérial ? Convergences d'intérêt entre le trône et l'occupant, soucieux d'utiliser celui-ci pour mener sa politique d'occupation ? Question : en contraignant Hirohito à abdiquer, la démocratisa-

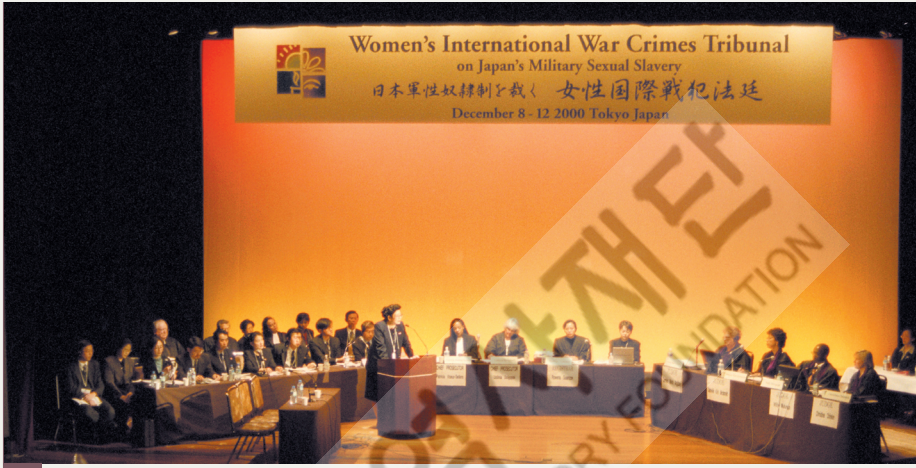
tion n'aurait-elle pas été plus profonde ? Son maintien dans le trône n'aurait-il pas fait perdre de vue que les contributions des deux américains à une révision de Hirohito dans la guerre n'ont pas fait perdre de vue que les vœux reposent largement d'une jeune génération d'Américains qui ont mis en responsabilité de l'empereur Yutaka Yoshida et Osamu Bix. Les historiens japonais ont continué à faire valoir (c'est l'un d'entre eux, Yoshimi, qui a établi la responsabilité de l'État dans le drame des deux cent mille « femmes du réconfort »). Les recherches restent souvent négligées au monde académique fait défaut au Japon, ces son lyses destinées au grand public tant l'écueil du doléisme et négationnisme.

Philippe

Pour symbolique qu'elle soit, cette condamnation est une incitation à ouvrir un débat sur la responsabilité de l'empereur mais aussi sur la cons-

picture A newspaper article concerning the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (Le Monde, January 11, 2001)





picture Women's international war crimes tribunal on Japan's military sexual slavery in Tokyo, 2000

Hirohito 'guilty' over sex slaves

A mock international war crimes tribunal in Tokyo has found the late Emperor Hirohito guilty for his army's wartime policy of forcing foreign women to work as sex slaves.

The tribunal concluded the emperor knew, or should have known, about the establishment of military brothels where some 200,000 women were forced into prostitution.



Today the judges have found Emperor Hirohito guilty of crimes against humanity Judge Gabrielle McDonald

During the five-day hearing scores of former comfort women gave evidence of their suffering during the 1930s and 1940s.

The trial was set up by women's groups from eight countries and had no official standing. But the organisers hope to put pressure on Japan to redress the wrong.

The symbolic ruling comes just days after Japanese courts rejected lawsuits brought by Korean and Filipino comfort women who were demanding compensation and apologies.

Determined to fight

More than 450 participants, including victims, lawyers, judges and scholars from around the world attended the tribunal.

In its condemnation of Hirohito, the mock tribunal concluded: "Superiors can be responsible for the acts of their subordinates if they'd known or should have known that these acts had been committed."

The four judges - headed by the former president of the UN's Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal, Gabrielle McDonald - also found that individual victims have a right to claim compensation from Japan.

"The state must act with due diligence to address and repair the harm," said Christine Chinkin, one of the judges.

Although many women are now in their 70s - while others have died - they are still determined to fight for an official Japanese apology and compensation for their suffering.

Women abducted

An estimated 200,000 to 300,000 women across Asia, predominantly Korean and Chinese, are believed to have been forced to work as sex slaves in Japanese military brothels.

The state must act with the diligence to address and repair the harm Judge Christine Chinkin



Many were abducted young, as 10 were as young as 10 years old, where they were forced to work with as many as 30 men.

No defence lawyers for Emperor Hirohito attended the tribunal, but it did call

The symbolic ruling comes just days after Japanese courts rejected lawsuits brought by Korean and Filipino comfort women who were demanding compensation and apologies.

picture The newspaper article concerning the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (BBC, December 12, 2000)

Chronology of date and events

Year	Month	Events
1894	8	Sino-Japanese War starts.
1904	2	Russo-Japanese War starts.
1905	11	Korea is made a protectorate of Japan.
1910	8	Japan annexes Korea.
1914~1918		The First World War
1925		Japan ratifies the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, with reservations as to the application of the Convention to its colonies, i.e. Korea, Taiwan and Kwantung Province and as to the setting of the age of minority, making it 18 instead of 21.
1931	9	Japan invades Manchuria.
1932	1	Japan invades Shanghai and sets up military controlled comfort stations in Shanghai.
1937~1945		Asian and Pacific War (The Second World War) The Japanese military sets up a network of comfort stations wherever it sends its troops.
1937	12	Nanking Massacre (Rape of Nanking)
1945	7	Potsdam Declaration foreshadows the creation of an international war crimes tribunal for Japanese and German war criminals and further defines crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity.
	8	Japan signs the instrument of unconditional surrender.
1946	5	Establishing the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) to try Japanese war criminals.
1946~1948		Allied nations also create "satellite" tribunals in Asia and the Pacific to try Japanese war criminals (Classes "B" and "C").
1948		The Batavia Trial is held in Indonesia includes a trial of Japanese military personnels who forced about 35 Dutch women to become Comfort Women.

Year	Month	Events
1951	9	The San Francisco Peace Conference is held. The Treaty of San Francisco between Japan and the Allied Powers is signed. Japanese and Dutch governments exchanges letters in which Japan asserts that the Peace Treaty allows private claims against Japan by Dutch Nationals as citizens of the Allied countries of the Second World War.
1965	6	The Republic of Korea and Japan normalizes their diplomatic relations by signing the Korea-Japan Basic Treaty.
1988		Women's organizations in the Republic of Korea hear of the institution of comfort stations in the Japanese military, and demand an investigation.
1990	7	The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (an NGO) is formed in the Republic of Korea.
1991	8	Kim Hak-Soon, a former Comfort Woman in the Republic of Korea, testifies in public that she had been forcibly taken as a Comfort Woman by the Japanese military.
	12	A lawsuit is filed by Kim Hak-Soon and others against Japan, in the Tokyo District Court, for damages and other compensations. The Government of the Republic of Korearequests the Japanese Government to conduct an investigation. The Wednesday Demonstration starts in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul.
1992	1	The "Asahi Shimbun" publishes the Japanese archive documents obtained by Professor YoshimiYoshiaki, a well known Japanese historian and researcher, revealing the direct role of the Japanese military in maintaining a huge network of military brothels known as 'Comfort Houses.'
	2	The Comfort Women issue is raised at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
	7	The Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato Yoichi of Japan admits for the first time that the Japanese Imperial Army was in some way involved in running military brothels.

Year	Month	Events
1992	11	Hwang Kum-Ju, a former comfort woman, made a testimony in the Washington Central Korean Church in Virginia, U.S.A. and the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issue (WCCWI) is organized in Washington, D.C.. This is the beginning of 17 years of comfort women activism in the U.S.
1993	6	Japanese government instructs that all government-approved high school textbooks on Japanese history carry the reference to Comfort Women.
	8	The Kono statement is released.
1994	4	The United Nations Commission on Human Rights appoints Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy as Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, with a special brief to investigate crimes against Comfort Women.
1995	7	Asian Women's Fund is established by the initiative of the Japanese government.
1996	4	The United Nations Commission on Human Rights, bowing to intense pressure from Japanese representatives, adopts "compromise" resolution that "takes note" of the Coomaraswamy report.
	12	The U.S. Justice Department issued "Watch List" of 16 Japanese who were involved in the comfort station business during the Second World War.
1997	4	Comfort Women issue is discussed in all the middle-school history textbooks in Japan.
1998	12	The Second U.N.- Commissioned Report on Comfort Women invested by Special Rapporteur Gay McDougall of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights released.
2000	6	The U.S. House Representative Lane Evans (D-IL) and other thirty House Representatives introduced House Resolution 357, calling on the Japanese government to formally issue an apology and pay reparations to the victims of war crimes committed by the Japanese military during World War Two.

Year	Month	Events
2000	9	Fifteen former Comfort Women from Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., using the Alien Tort Claims Act of 1787. This is the first time the issue of military sexual slavery was addressed in the U.S. Courts, as well as the first time Japan is named as a defendant.
	12	The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal (Mock) on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery held in Tokyo (December 8-12) where ex-comfort women from nine countries (North and South Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor, the Netherlands, Japan) testify their abuses indicting Emperor Hirohito of Japan in charge of crimes against humanity.
2001	7	House Representative Lane Evans introduces House Resolution 195 to call upon the Japanese government to formally issue an unambiguous apology; it is followed by a press conference at which a former comfort woman, Kim Soon-Duk makes a testimony.
	8	A Hearing held for the class action lawsuit filed by the fifteen Comfort Women at the U.S. District of Columbia Circuit Court.
	9	The U.N. Commission on Human Rights recommends to Japan that "victims of Japan during World War II must be compensated."
	12	Hague Tribunal (Mock) held in the Netherlands; Japan's war criminals are prosecuted.
2003	6	Judges Douglas H. Ginsburg, Judith W. Rogers, and Davis T. Tatel of the U.S. Court of Appeal for the District of Columbia dismiss the appeal of the Comfort Women. U.S. Congressmen Lane Evans, Michael Honda (D-CA), and others reintroduces House Resolution 226 and it is rejected again. This is the first time that comfort women issue is addressed exclusively as violation of women's human rights, rather than one of Japan-Korea history conflicts over the wrongdoings of World War II.
2004	7	United States Supreme Court issues an order in the Comfort Women case Hwang vs. Japan; Petition granted, judgment vacated and case remanded for further consideration in light of Republic of Austria vs. Altmann.

Year	Month	Events
2005		U.N. and Amnesty International call for the Japanese government to provide direct compensation to former comfort women, criticizing the Asian Women's Fund as a tactic of Japanese government to avoid any official responsibilities.
2006	9	The U.S. House Resolution 759, which urged Japan to formally acknowledge and accept full responsibility, passes the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives in unanimous vote for the first time in 7 years of comfort women legal activism in the U.S. politics. The measure fails, however, in moving up for consideration in the main-session of the House.
	11	Democrats win a big victory in the mid-term election and return as majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives, a critical sea-change for the political timing of the Comfort Women resolution.
2007	1	House Resolution 121 is introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs by Congressman Mike Honda and other co-sponsors.
	3	Asian Women's Fund is dissolved. Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo causes controversies by challenging the resolution and denying coercion in recruiting Comfort Women.
	6~7	House Resolution 121 passes in the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs and moved to the main session of the House with 182 co-sponsors, out of 435 members of the House, and passes with unanimous consent (July 30, 2007).
1991~2007		Demonstrations are held in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, Korea, every Wednesday, demanding apology and compensation by the Japanese government to the former Comfort Women.
2007	11	Passing of Comfort Women Resolution in Netherlands. Passing of Comfort Women Resolution in Canada.
	12	Passing of Comfort Women Resolution in European Union.

Year	Month	Events
2008	10	WCCWI (Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issue) holds meeting on First anniversary of the passing of House Resolution 121 and promotion of global awareness in Virginia.



PHOTOS

KIM, BUJA(金富子; p.17)
RUMIKO NISHINO(西野瑠美子; p.15, 18)
US National Archives(p.14, 23, 30)
ATSUKO SHIBASAKI(柴崎温子; p.48)
MITSUKO NOBUKAWA(信川美津子; p.37)
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**The Truth Of
The Japanese Military
“Comfort Women”**

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