

Comfort Women

Sexual Slavery in
the Japanese Military
During World War II

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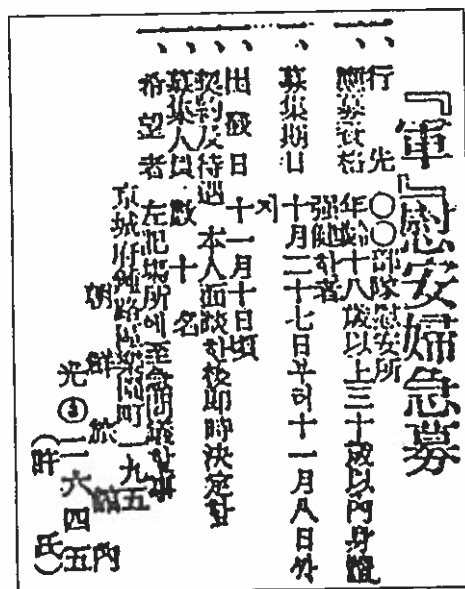
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How Were the Women Rounded Up?

Comfort Women's Testimonies and Soldiers' Recollections



WOMEN FROM JAPAN

The Significance of the Testimonies

In this chapter, I would like to clarify the conditions under which comfort women were rounded up. What kind of women were forced to become comfort women? Where did they come from? We can infer some answers to these questions from military and government documents, but, as we have seen, there are significant limits to what we can know about what actually happened. This was a situation in which the military and the government themselves repeatedly warned those responsible for recruiting comfort women that they were not abiding by accepted standards.

This chapter is mainly comprised of the testimonies of former comfort women, verified as much as possible by reference to other documents. Many of these statements are products of recently conducted interviews. Needless to say, these recollections of events that occurred over fifty years ago are not without lapses. In fact, many of the Korean and Filipina women, perhaps because they did not have opportunities to receive sufficient education, gave statements that were full of contradictions or confusion about the timing of events. The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and the "Volunteer Corps" Research Association held hearings at which the women related their experiences, and published the accounts of nineteen women (vol. 1) whose testimonies were considered reliable. An Byong-jik, a Seoul University professor who participated in the inquiry, describes the difficulties faced in trying to sort through the testimonies.

One of the extremely difficult things about conducting this research is dealing with the many logical contradictions in the witnesses' testimonies. The events are already fifty years old, so there are probably lapses in memory {reflected in the statements}. There are also things the witnesses don't want to recall, so they abbreviate those

Recruiting ad for military comfort women appearing in a Korean newspaper.
MAINICHI SHINPO, OCTOBER 27, 1944

events, revise them, or confuse them with other events. In addition, it is conceivable that events occurred in that era that are beyond the imagination of our generation.¹

I have also often experienced this sort of dilemma. Yet these testimonies, if we set aside lapses in memory and omissions concealing facts, are extremely important—not only because the information they contain does not exist in written form, but also because these intense experiences sometimes gave rise to strikingly vivid memories, and as the questions are repeated, facts and relationships that can only be narrated by those involved come to light. Only through these women's testimonies can we discover the stark realities that never appear in military and government documents, reports, or statistics. Here I will take up the testimonies considered to be the most reliable to reconstruct the facts about the rounding up of comfort women.

Japanese Comfort Women

When Japanese comfort women were to be sent overseas, they had to be over the age of twenty-one and chosen from among groups of prostitutes. These restrictions were imposed by the police. In the notice issued by the Home Ministry's Chief of the Police Bureau on February 23, 1938, "Matters Concerning the Handling of Women Sailing to China," the following regulations were established.

In regard to the travel of women intending to engage in the shameful calling, the women must be currently working as prostitutes, at least twenty-one years of age, and free from sexually transmitted and other infectious diseases. Only those headed for north or central China will be allowed until further notice . . . they should be issued identification papers in accordance with the notice of the Vice Minister of the Foreign Ministry.²

As we will see in greater detail in chapter 5, these regulations were adopted because Japan was a signatory to an international treaty that forbade the buying and selling of women and children, and this had to be taken into consideration. Japanese comfort women were chosen, accordingly, from among the prostitutes working in brothels. Let's examine several examples.

A woman with the professional name Keiko, who continued to work at a Fukuoka brothel after she had paid off her debt to the brothel owner, was recruited to work as a comfort woman. She received a payment of 1,000 yen from an agent and traveled to Shanghai for the first time in 1938 to work in a military comfort station.³ This agent was said to be a procurer for the army, rounding up comfort women on the orders of the Line of Communication Headquarters in Shanghai.⁴

Takanashi Taka, who worked as a prostitute on the South Seas islands of Saipan and Palau, returned to Japan in 1939, and worked in a geisha house in Osaka at the request of a friend.⁵ Sick of the work and free of any debts to an operator, she was solicited by a Yokohama employment agency. Thinking, "Well, if there's good business, I'll go make some money," she went to China with a group of five or six other comfort women (among whom she was the oldest),⁶ where they worked in a comfort station for officers in Nanking.⁷ Since she was already thirty-six years old, she seems to have worked as a waitress and comfort woman. She had a status somewhere between comfort woman and proprietress, so her case was somewhat different from that of the average comfort woman.

A woman with the professional name Kikumar, who worked as a geisha in Nishikoyama in Tokyo, went to the Truk Islands in 1942 to work in a comfort station for naval officers. Since the military agreed to pay off her debt of close to 4,000 yen to the brothel owner, she is said to have volunteered.⁸ This military comfort station was directly managed by the navy. Comfort women were referred to as "special nurses" and treated as civilian military employees.⁹ Contracts were for a period of one and a half years. Comfort women kept 40 percent of their earnings, while 60 percent went to the navy. Apparently, they were told that if they died, their spirits could be enshrined at Yasukuni Shrine {the Japanese national shrine where spirits of the war dead are enshrined and worshipped}.¹⁰ This certainly can be seen as the mobilization of young women by manipulating their patriotism. At the time, Kikumar was all of eighteen years old.

Ignoring the Age Rules

As the case of eighteen-year-old Kikumar demonstrates, the police standards for obtaining permission to travel overseas were not strictly enforced. Sasaki Takayoshi, the Vice Consul in Shanhaiguan, made the following

report to the Foreign Minister on May 12, 1939, and asked what sort of countermeasures should be taken.

[According to the Home Ministry Police Bureau Chief's notice] women traveling to China for the purpose of engaging in the shameful calling are supposed to be twenty-one years of age or older . . . but [a restaurant manager who came through Shanhaiguan on her way to Peking] had with her four geisha, the following three of whom [names omitted] were all under the age of twenty-one. In spite of the fact that it was patently obvious, considering the manager's occupation, that their purpose in traveling overseas was to engage in the shameful calling, since they had been issued identification papers by the Chief of the Asahikawa Police Department, I was obliged to let them continue on their way. There have been two or three other cases like this. I request that you please investigate the facts of this incident and advise me how to deal with such situations.¹¹

Four geisha whose purpose in traveling was to engage in prostitution were being led by a female restaurant manager. They passed through Shanhaiguan on their way to Peking. Even though three of the four were minors, they had identification papers issued by the Chief of the Asahikawa Police. There were several other incidents similar to this one, but the officials in Shanhaiguan did not know how to handle them. In this case, the girls brought from Asahikawa were aged fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen. It is clear that there were not a few cases in which, at the police's discretion, the travel of minors for the purposes of prostitution was tacitly approved.

Especially in the case of Korean women living in Japan, these standards were not enforced. The women and girls rounded up in Kyūshū by the army procurer who solicited Keiko included seven Japanese and eleven Koreans. While all of the Japanese were working as prostitutes, all of the Korean girls are said to have been tricked into going along.¹² A soldier from the 18th Division relates the following account of a Korean woman with the Japanese name Mariko whom he met in a comfort station called the Kōmyōsō in the Burmese city of Meimyō. While living in Shimono-seki, she heard that women were being recruited to work as orderlies in army hospitals in Tsushima, Japan. Since the woman who gave her the

introduction was a Korean midwife she felt she could trust, she responded to the offer. In fact, she and about one hundred other women were taken to Hainan Island and put to work in military comfort stations.¹³

Isozaki Takako, an accounting typist at a munitions company called Osaka Hemp, boarded the SS *Mizuho* as a civilian military employee, headed for the branch office in Java in August 1944. The ship, however, was attacked by an American submarine and sunk. Approximately seventy female civilian military employees were rescued and found their way to Luzon in the Philippines. But they were treated by the military units there as hangers-on. Around October, the remaining thirty women were told by a soldier on duty, acting on orders from the adjutant, that the "adjutant said that if you become comfort women, we will take care of you. So how about it? As we told the others, you'll be guaranteed food, clothing, and housing. And, of course, you can be driven around in trucks!"¹⁴ The women immediately refused, but this episode demonstrates that there were instances in which Japanese women who weren't prostitutes were requested to serve as comfort women.

WOMEN FROM KOREA

Examples of Deception

Cases of women being deceived and led off are much more common among those rounded up in Korea. Let's examine a representative example. According to the testimony of Song Shin-do, a Korean former comfort woman living in Japan who has filed a suit seeking compensation, she was forced to have intercourse with soldiers in a military comfort station in Wuchang just as it was about to be occupied at the end of 1938. The circumstances leading to her being held there were as follows.¹⁵

Song was sixteen years old by Japanese reckoning (fifteen years by Western), and was betrothed to a man her mother had chosen. But Song hated him and found the prospect of life with him unbearable. So on her wedding day, she pretended to go to the bathroom and ran away. When she had been working as a nanny in Dejon for several months, Song was asked by a beautifully dressed Korean woman, "Won't you go to the front and work for your country?" She was a procurer rounding up comfort women. There was no

explanation of what sort of work Song would be doing. Song was taken to Pyongyang and sold to a Korean man. They traveled overland to China, passed from Tientsin to Hankow, and arrived in Wuchang. This is a typical example of the solicitation of women, particularly underaged girls, by fraud.

We see many similar cases among the women's statements in the testimonies gathered by the Korean Council. Seventeen of the nineteen women whose testimonies appear in the book were rounded up in Korea. Of those seventeen, twelve were victims of this sort of deception. Li Yong-suk was making her living working as a maid in other people's homes, as both of her parents had died.¹⁶ She was looked down upon by everyone, and in whatever household she worked, she endured being screamed at by both adults and children. She survived "crying tears of regret."¹⁷ Around this time, a Korean husband and wife approached her, asking if she wouldn't like to go to Japan and work; she accepted their offer. Along with some other girls in similar circumstances, the Korean couple took her to Pusan.¹⁸ There the girls were turned over to a Japanese man, who put them on board a ship. They made stops at Shimonoseki and Taiwan before being taken to Guangzhou. These events took place in December 1939, when Li was just seventeen years old.¹⁹

After the Start of the Asia Pacific War

Mun Pil-gi's parents owned a grocery store and some fields, so they were perhaps somewhat better off. Mun entered regular school (comparable to Japan's elementary schools, but attendance was not mandatory) at age nine.²⁰ Her father, however, withdrew her from school and burned all her textbooks, saying that "women who study become foxes." After she was forced to quit school, she had to do all kinds of work, such as housework, working in the fields, spinning thread, and helping out in the store.²¹ She suffered from the discrimination against women that pervaded Confucian morality. Another critical factor was that for Koreans, Japan did not maintain a compulsory education system. Since Mun longed to study, when a Korean man told her that he would "take her to a place where she could study and earn a lot of money," she agreed to go.²²

The year was 1943, and Mun was just eighteen years old. She left her village in a truck, but the truck stopped in an out-of-the-way spot. It is significant that she remembers that a Japanese policeman posted to the vil-

lage's police box was standing there.²³ It seems likely that the police were secretly aiding agents in their efforts to round up comfort women. Mun was then taken to Pusan, put on a train to northeastern China, and forced to work in a military comfort station there.

As is clear from these testimonies, the vast majority of these girls came from poor families, so they were forced into a life of struggle with no hope. On account of Japan's colonial policies in Korea and general discrimination against women, these girls were unable to receive an adequate education. According to a 1930 survey of the state of the nation in Korea, 36 percent of Korean men were literate, while a mere 8 percent of Korean women were.²⁴ Trapped in these circumstances, the girls were deceived by procurers' appealing offers of good work in factories and such and then led off. Li Yong-suk made up her mind to go with a Japanese man after he "showed her a red dress and leather shoes."²⁵ Agents took advantage of these girls' feelings of oppression. Even if the girls realized something was amiss along the way, they had no means of escaping. Since they couldn't just go home, they gave up trying to escape, assured themselves that the work waiting for them couldn't be so bad, and tried to figure out what they would do in the future. In the end, they were forced to face the bitter reality of life in a military comfort station.

Women Who Were Sold

The Kitamuras, a husband-and-wife team of comfort station operators, related a typical story of buying women when they were taken prisoner by the American army in Burma. Their depositions are included in the English-language publications "Japanese Prisoner of War Interrogation Report" (No. 49), compiled by the U.S. Office of War's Psychological Warfare Team attached to the U.S. Army Forces in the India-Burma Theater, and "Psychological Warfare Interrogation Bulletin" (No. 2), produced by the South-East Asia Translation and Interrogation Center.

This Japanese couple bought twenty-two unmarried Korean women in 1942. They paid the girls' parents between 300 and 1,000 yen, depending on the girls' characters, appearance, and ages (200-300 yen, according to the former report). Before the Kitamuras were captured by the Americans, two of those girls were killed in a bombing raid. The remaining twenty women stated that their ages at the time they were sold ranged from sev-

enteen to twenty-nine, with twelve girls under the age of twenty-one. It seems that they were not told that their work would entail sexual services. U.S. Army Sergeant Alex Yorichi made the following remarks during the first interrogation of the prisoners.

The nature of this "service" was unspecified but it was assumed to be work connected with visiting the wounded in hospitals, rolling bandages, and generally making the soldiers happy. The inducement used by these agents was plenty of money, an opportunity to pay off the family debts, easy work, and the prospect of a new life in a new land—Singapore.²⁶

It is clear that, for many women who were sold and forced to become comfort women, the economic fetters of a sum advanced against their labor and deception about the nature of the work were intertwined.

There is just one other similar case of a woman being sold among the testimonies collected by the Korean Council. Park Sun-e (fictitious name) was born the third daughter of an independent farming family and finished only two years of elementary school.²⁷ She married at age sixteen, but the couple was so poor that they could not make a living, so Park ran away.²⁸ When she married again at age eighteen, her husband was wealthy and the son of a good family but was often violent. When her child was three years old, Park took her to an "employment agency" and sold her.²⁹ When the child was transferred to another "employment agency" in Seoul, Park's debt already amounted to a huge sum.³⁰ Just as she was thinking that she wanted to pay off her debts and live with her child, she heard about good jobs "washing soldiers' uniforms in hospitals at the front and treating injured soldiers." She was told that if she worked for three years she would be able to pay off her debts and maybe even save some money, so she accepted.³¹ She went by ship from Pusan to Shimonoseki and was then taken to Rabaul.³² Park Sun-e was twenty-three years old when she was led off, but her story shares with the previous examples the combination of trafficking in people and deception.

Cases of Women Led Off by Violent Means

If we limit our discussion of violence used to lead women off to cases of women taken from Korea, we have the following testimonies. Mun Ok-

chu was born in 1924.³³ Her father died young, and her mother was able to make ends meet by sewing and peddling goods. Occasionally, they were forced to get grain from her mother's parents.³⁴ Mun occasionally worked in a slipper factory managed by a Japanese man, but since it was not steady work, she sometimes hung around at home with nothing to do.³⁵ She often went to the home of a Korean friend who was given the Japanese name Haruko.³⁶ Her friend's family ran a cremation business, and before the bodies were burned there were often various ceremonies, so Mun was often treated to meals of the offerings made at these ceremonies.³⁷ This was during a time when she was hungry every day. She described how she was taken away in the fall of 1940 as follows. She was just sixteen at the time.

One day, I went over to Haruko's house to visit. As the sun was going down, I left her house and headed home. Before I'd walked very far, a Japanese man in a military uniform approached me. Suddenly, he grabbed my arm and pulled me, saying something to me in Japanese. That was a time when even hearing the word "policeman" was a scary thing, so I was led off without saying a word. . . . I thought I was being taken to the military police.³⁸

She was taken to a military comfort station in northeastern China. It is impossible to determine whether the Japanese man who kidnapped her was a soldier, a policeman, or a civilian dressed in khaki-colored clothing. But from the facts that the kidnapping occurred at sunset, that he was unaccompanied, and that he then passed her along to a procurer who appeared to be a civilian, there is a strong possibility that the kidnapper was a civilian. Of course, it is possible that these kinds of crimes went unnoticed or were ignored by the police because of the army's urgent requests for comfort women.

The Participation of the Government-General of Korea and the Korea Army

Since the Ministry of War ordered that the cooperation of the military police and local police be sought when comfort women were being rounded up, even in Japan, we can only assume that the cooperation between procurers and the military or local police in Korea and Taiwan was even closer.

It grew ever closer, especially after the start of the "Special Maneuvers of the Kwantung Army" in 1941. As we have seen, in preparation for the "Special Maneuvers," the Kwantung Army is said to have attempted to round up twenty thousand Korean comfort women. It appealed to the Government-General of Korea, and eight thousand Korean women are said to have been rounded up and sent to northeastern China. If this was the case, those women were gathered in a very brief period of time, which would have been impossible without extensive assistance from the Government-General.

There were three different methods or levels of impressing laborers: "recruitment" (*boshū*), "official mediation" (*kan assen*), and "requisitioning" (*chōyō*). In the rounding up of comfort women, the most common method was probably "official mediation," in which bureaucrats and the police played prominent roles.

How did things develop after 1942? As the example of Taiwan demonstrates, the Southern Army probably just requested, through the Ministry of War, that the Korea Army round up comfort women. One piece of evidence supporting this assumption can be found in the statement of the Kitamuras, which appeared in the "Psychological Warfare Interrogation Report" (No. 2) discussed above.

The Kitamuras paid a huge sum of money for the twenty-two Korean women they bought. They reported paying between 300 and 1,000 yen per woman; if we assume an average of 500 yen per woman, the figure amounts to approximately 11,000 yen.³⁹ Business was so slow at the Seoul restaurant the Kitamuras managed that they decided to leave the restaurant's management to a sister-in-law and go to Burma. So how could they have possibly raised such an enormous sum of money? It is inconceivable that they came up with it themselves. They stated that the management of military comfort stations was mediated by the Headquarters of the Korea Army, so they may have been provided with considerable amounts of money from secret funds. Also, around the time they departed, the Headquarters of the Korea Army offered "to furnish any assistance they might require, such as transportation, rations, medical attention, etc." and gave them a letter (to this effect) addressed to various army units.⁴⁰ The Korea Army gave these procurers their most comprehensive support.

Conditions in the Last Years of the War

From 1943 onward, the mobilization of Koreans for war intensified sharply. According to Home Ministry documents, the number of Koreans impressed into labor service in 1943 through the mediation of the Government-General alone reached 138,438. In 1944, in addition to the 405,000 Koreans impressed by the Government-General and the 30,000 mobilized by the army, apparently there were another million "new necessary personnel." As the conscription system for Korean men had just gone into operation, the labor shortage became even more acute. In 1944, the Government-General decided to mobilize women on the pretext of "putting to practical use the idle labor power of women." It attempted to institute a comprehensive mobilization system encompassing all new school graduates and unmarried girls and women fourteen years of age and older. The Home Ministry reports that the following situation arose as a result of this program.

The dispatching of patriotic labor corps is not the same as impressment. Do not follow the example of those who flee from the general recruitment of labor or who take part in unlawful violent riots. The conscription of unmarried women is considered necessary. It is said that some of those mobilized will be made into comfort women and such, but these are absurd rumors. On account of these pernicious rumors, we can expect the labor situation to become increasingly difficult.⁴¹

From this document we learn that not only were all unmarried girls fourteen and older to be mobilized, but that the rumor that they would be made into comfort women was widespread in 1944.

Between April and August of that year, the first round of conscription examinations were conducted on Korean men. In August, the "female volunteer labor corps order" was issued to put single Korean women between the ages of twelve and forty to work in munitions factories, and this was enough to spread the rumor that all unmarried Korean women were to be made into comfort women. This rumor caused many young women to panic. Families of some economic means withdrew their daughters from

school and sent them into hiding in the countryside or hurriedly married them off. In families without means, the rumor gave rise to the following situations.

Kim De-son (a fictitious name) was separated from her parents while still a baby and grew up in her uncle's house. In September 1944, when she was just eighteen years old, her uncle told her that, "it is rumored that recently there have been many people taking away young women."⁴² One day, when she arrived home, he told her to hide up under the roof. She hid there for a week. She became very hungry, and when she finally came down to get something to eat, a Japanese man and a Korean man came by. The Korean man told her, "If you go to Japan and work for one year, you can save money." Thinking that this was better than being impressed into service as a comfort woman, she accepted the offer.⁴³

However, she was taken to Yangon in Burma. As the rumor that women in the "volunteer labor corps" would be forced to become comfort women spread, many single women from poor families thought getting a job was better than going into the labor corps. In this difficult situation, Kim De-son was deceived and forced to become a comfort woman.

Were There People Who Were Recruited of Their Own Free Will?

As a licensed prostitution system had been introduced into Korea, there were cases of licensed prostitutes becoming comfort women. Among the twenty women taken prisoner in Burma by the U.S. Army, the vast majority had no experience with prostitution, but there were a few who had been prostitutes. In Sergeant Alex Yorichi's report, he notes that only "a few had been connected with {the} 'oldest profession on earth' before."⁴⁴

Yet, as was the case in Japan as well, licensed prostitution was an important source of income for operators. Thus while there were instances in which operators brought their prostitutes with them to the battlefields, they were generally loath to part with their prostitutes. We can't say that unlicensed prostitutes never became comfort women, but this was probably rare because so many of them were afflicted with sexually transmitted diseases. For example, the Inchon branch of the Temporary Line of Communication Headquarters for the Korea Army, which was engaged in transporting troops from the Korea Army to the battlefields in China, reported

that, "Since 'social diseases' are wide-spread in Korea, it is essential that {soldiers} be instructed never to have contact with unlicensed Korean prostitutes." The Headquarters ordered all of the units in their barracks to strictly forbid any contact with unofficial Korean prostitutes.⁴⁵

Even if we assume that there were a considerable number of cases in which prostitutes who had finished their periods of service and paid off their debts became landlords, waitresses, or comfort station operators, cases in which women became comfort women of their own free will were rare. And even supposing that they were common, it must be emphasized that, under the system of de facto sexual slavery that went by the name of *kashiza-shiki* (licensed houses of assignment), many women were rendered incapable of making a living any other way. If these women had had opportunities to become workers, professionals, or self-employed businesswomen, there is no reason to expect that any would have chosen to become comfort women. Even when it appears that a woman chose that path of her own free will, that "choice" turns out to have been the result of some form of coercion originating in colonial policies, poverty, or unemployment.

So did the recruitment ad, "An Urgent Call for 'Military' Comfort Women," discovered by a high school teacher in Nagoya, Takahashi Shin, and others really demonstrate that women were recruited of their own free will?⁴⁶ This ad stated that they were recruiting tens of able-bodied people aged eighteen to thirty years old "for the Military Comfort Station." The *Mainichi Shinbō* {in which the ad appeared} was a Hangul newspaper (written in the Korean syllabary), so it was unquestionably directed at a Korean audience. We do not, however, find this same type of ad appearing in the paper again, either before or after these two dates. Thus it is impossible to assert that this method of recruiting was a common one. Also, since we can't assume that poor women read newspapers, we should see these ads as directed at brothel operators who had women in their employ. The conclusion we should draw from the fact that these ads appeared in the paper is that the Government-General sanctioned the dispatching of comfort women.

Orders Regarding Travel Permits

To what extent was the Government-General of Korea aware of the illegal activities engaged in by civilian procurers who were rounding up comfort women at the request of the army? Since the local police, in cooperation

with the military police, supported procurers when they were rounding up comfort women, the government could not have been unaware. According to criminal law as it was practiced in Korea, it was a serious crime to capture, kidnap, or traffic in people with the intent of sending them overseas or to transport kidnapped or purchased people overseas, so we would expect that the Government-General would have had to exercise strict controls {over travel}. But were these kinds of laws actually enforced?

On August 31, 1937, Vice Minister of the Foreign Ministry Horiuchi Kensuke required that the chiefs of police in each jurisdiction in Korea and Taiwan as well as in Japan issue travel permits to people traveling overseas to prevent "undesirable elements" from going to China in order to profit from the war. The application process for these travel permits generally proceeded as follows.

1. Japanese, Koreans, and Taiwanese hoping to travel to China from Japan or the colonies submit requests for identification papers to the local chief of police.
2. Upon receipt of these requests, the Chief of Police in Japan, Korea, or Taiwan will inquire into each person's nationality, current address, status, occupation, personal history, purpose in traveling, period of stay, and attitudes and behavior in the past. Identification papers will not be issued to people suspected of improper conduct.
3. Except for "people with legitimate reasons needing to get to China immediately," police are directed to withhold their approval of overseas travel.
4. The Chief of Police at the point of departure will not allow people without identification papers or passports to board ships headed for China.⁴⁷

Each woman forced to become a comfort woman was subjected to these inquiries. If the police had investigated in earnest how these women had been rounded up at this juncture, they could not have failed to discover illegal activities. This means that they issued identification papers to these women aware of the illegal activities of procurers.

Frequent Kidnappings

Police controls were extremely haphazard. Yun Myong-suk's research paints the following picture of police enforcement of the relevant laws.

In March 1939, the police of the Government-General of Korea apprehended a man for kidnapping. He had been traveling through farming villages along the Gyongsang Nambuk-to and the Jonra Nambuk-to, claiming that "if the daughters of impoverished farm families struggling to make ends meet" went to Seoul, there was good work for them there. Misleading the young women and their families, he would then sell the women to Korean brothels or to brothels in Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai, or Mudanjiang.⁴⁸ He was linked to an organized network buying and selling people, and the number of people he sold into slavery is said to have reached 150. One of his victims received 20 yen and was told to mark the travel documents with her fingerprint because the documents were necessary for her to find a job.⁴⁹

In another kidnapping incident detected around the same time, the kidnapper specialized in seventeen- and eighteen-year-old girls from Korean farming villages. In four years, he succeeded in deceiving approximately 250 girls and selling them in northern and northeastern China. It was also discovered that he had sheaves of blank forms granting him power of attorney for the women in order to acquire identification papers for them.⁵⁰ In a separate kidnapping incident discovered in July, official copies of family registers and other required documents had been forged with the cooperation of officials from the Pusan City Family Registry Office and the Notary Office.⁵¹ There were also cases of these kidnappers dispatching prostitutes overseas. Thus only the most egregious criminals were arrested. And in the case of the dispatch of comfort women, since the police had been urgently requested to cooperate by the army, they probably issued identification papers as long as the necessary documents were in order.

Cooperation with the Dispatch of Comfort Women

Not only were police inquiries haphazard, but the Government-General of Korea, responding to the situation in the field, actively encouraged and coordinated the dispatch of comfort women. Local police departments also

regulated the movement of comfort women and other travelers through the issuance of identification papers. In giving priority to the army's requests, the police could not also rigorously enforce regulations designed to prevent illegal activities.

During the period of full-scale war in China (1937-1941), the system of regulation operated as follows. First, consulates in each region of China conveyed the requests of the army units in their jurisdictions to the Foreign Ministry. The Foreign Ministry would then send these requests on to the Overseas Affairs Ministry, which would inform the Government-General of Korea. From the Government-General, these requests would be passed down to police departments and then on to provincial governors and police chiefs.

Let's examine the example of a comfort station in Wuhan. On September 14, 1938, with the invasion of Wuhan imminent, representatives from the army, the navy, and the consulate in Shanghai held a meeting and decided on a "General Plan for the Emergency Management of Imperial Subjects Dispatched to Hankow After the Invasion." This document reveals that the return to Wuhan of civilian merchants who served the army was given the highest priority, as was "the dispatch of people to set up military comfort stations." It also notes that travel permits for these people would be issued by army units or by the Special Duty Branch of the army and navy.⁵² These guidelines made their way to the Government-General of Korea by the aforementioned route, permission from the police in Korea was received, and comfort women were sent off. Song Shin-do, whose experiences are recounted above, was one of these women. Shortly thereafter, however, a saturation point was reached. At that point, the Consulate General issued the following notice on February 3, 1939.

At present there are 214 bar-restaurants, 19 "cafes," 17 tea houses, 8 high-class restaurants, 220 shops selling sundries. In addition, there are 20 military comfort stations (these figures represent the number of establishments with permission to operate from the line of communications unit, the military police, or this consulate. There are also businesses that haven't opened yet). The trend from now on will be for this number to increase exponentially with each ship that arrives,

and we request guidance on this issue. . . . As the aforementioned list of businesses shows, the market is already saturated. . . . You are advised not to allow haphazard travel to China by people yearning for open economic conditions. You are duly requested to make appropriate arrangements {to attend to this matter}.⁵³

By the start of 1939, large numbers of imperial subjects thronged to Hankow hoping to strike it rich, and the markets quickly became saturated. The number of military comfort stations reached as high as twenty. The above notice followed the same route through the bureaucracy. Hagiwara Hikozō, Chief of the Korea Section in the Ministry for Overseas Affairs, received the notice from the Foreign Ministry and sent a notice to the Chief of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Government-General of Korea, Matsuzawa Tatsuo, on February 20, 1939, stating that "recently, the governors from each prefecture in Japan received separate copies of a notice to this effect from the Foreign Ministry, so please make the appropriate arrangements."

Upon receiving this notice, the Chief of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Government-General of Korea sent a notice to the Chief of Police of the Government-General of Korea. Thus from March 1939, the dispatch of comfort women to the Wuhan region was controlled by the police.

COMFORT WOMEN DISPATCHED FROM TAIWAN

The Report on Investigations in Taiwan

According to a report on Taiwanese former comfort women, by the end of 1992, fifty-six women who reported that they were comfort women (or were reported by their families, in cases where the women had passed away or disappeared) are considered likely to have been comfort women after investigations by the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation. It has been confirmed that forty-eight of those fifty-six were, in fact, comfort women.⁵⁴ On the whole, these investigations are reliable. Yet even in the testimonies of women whose experiences as comfort women have been confirmed, there are still some problems, as in the case of one woman who testified

that there was a television on the ship that transported her.⁵⁵ It has been impossible, until recently, to conduct hearings with victims in Taiwan. So keeping the limitations of these materials in mind, I'd like to explore the report in greater detail.

Twenty-eight of the forty-eight comfort women in this study were rounded up between 1942 and 1943. Thus the period immediately after the start of the Asia Pacific War was most active (ten women were rounded up between 1938 and 1941, while six were rounded up in 1944 or 1945).⁵⁶ Twenty-four of the forty-eight were between the ages of sixteen and twenty when they were rounded up; seventeen were aged twenty-one to twenty-five, and six were older than twenty-five.⁵⁷ Even in Taiwan, the majority of women were minors. Twenty-two women, almost half of the total, were rounded up in the province of Taipei.⁵⁸

Excluding the three women rounded up on the continent and one rounded up in Korea (a Korean woman), twenty-two of the remaining forty-four women were deceived about the nature of the work they would be forced to do.⁵⁹ The vast majority of those deceived were told by procurers that they would be "transporting food for [military] cafeterias and bars, doing menial tasks, or working as waitresses and barmaids only, not selling your body," so the women accepted these offers.⁶⁰ Others were deceived by promises of nursing jobs or of work cleaning and cooking.

Ten of these forty-four women were rounded up by force, the second most common method of assembling future comfort women. According to a report on Taiwanese former comfort women, five women were assigned by government offices to serve as comfort women. Three women were coerced, under the pretext of becoming nurses, by their uncles or procurers or by the hospitals' chief nurses. There were also cases of women being coerced by stepfathers and procurers. In addition, there were two women who went to the front as nurses and worked as nurses for a period of time before being forced to become comfort women.⁶¹

There were three women who accepted the offer aware of the nature of comfort women's work, and one who was deceived by a broker and sold.⁶² It is unclear how the remaining six women were rounded up.⁶³

Nine of forty-four comfort women received advances of between 100 and 500 yen. If we interpret this as trafficking in people, then a total of ten women were sold. Three of those ten realized when they arrived at their

destinations that they would be made to perform sexual services and thought they would refuse to do it. But not having the money to repay the cash advanced to them, they had no choice but to resign themselves to the situation. Four women had signed contracts for periods of one year, one year and a half, or one year and eight months. The woman with the year-and-eight-month contract finished her contract and was replaced by another Taiwanese woman, so she was able to return home. But two other women said they were not allowed to return home even though they had completed their contracts.⁶⁴

One of the aforementioned women deceived by offers of work as a nurse came to Tokyo and gave the following testimony.⁶⁵ She worked as a nurse at a hospital for four years after graduating from public school (equivalent to Japanese elementary school, though attendance was not compulsory). She responded to the offer of a nursing job because future prospects at the hospital where she was working were not bright. Along with more than ten other women, she was sent to Timor. Though she thought she was going to work as a nurse, she was given an examination for sexually transmitted diseases and then raped by an officer before being put to work in a comfort station. She was seventeen years old at the time.

In the case of Taiwan as well, the fact that half of the women rounded up were minors is important. As in Korea, many women in Taiwan were led off under false pretenses. It is characteristic of the Taiwanese case that nine women acknowledged that they received cash advances. These women were not, however, told that they would be working as comfort women. Aside from these nine women, there were three who responded to offers knowing that they would work as comfort women. One did so in order to pay off loans; another did so rashly, without really thinking about it; and one did so in order to "buy furniture for when she got married."⁶⁶ Even these three women, had they had other options to make a living, would probably not have become comfort women.

These forty-four Taiwanese comfort women were sent to Hainan Island (thirteen women), the Dutch East Indies (ten), the Philippines (eight), Burma (six), Guangdong Province (five), Singapore (four), the Portuguese colony of Timor (two), and Okinawa (one) (these figures include some overlapping in cases where women were moved from one place to another).⁶⁷

THE CASE OF CHINA

Methods of Rounding Up Comfort Women in Occupied Territories

What were conditions like in the occupied territories of China, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific? We still don't have much testimony from former comfort women in China, so here I will focus on the recollections of former soldiers. When rounding up comfort women from among the local population, the rear staff or adjutants of the army, division, brigade, or regiment would receive orders from the Expeditionary Forces and execute them with the manpower of the line of communications unit, the accounting section, or the military police. In the occupied territories, unlike in the colonies, the army gave the orders directly. Let's examine several examples.

On April 21, 1941, the 48th Division of the Taiwan Army occupied Foochow. The division didn't bring along its comfort women, so the division staff ordered the line of communications unit to set up a military comfort station.⁶⁸ The line of communications unit asked the chief of the military police in Foochow for his cooperation. They offered influential local people rewards and had them round up women.⁶⁹

On May 25, 1944, after the invasion of Luoyang, a second lieutenant in the Accounting Section of the 3rd Tank Division was summoned by the rear staff and ordered to "refurbish a civilian house immediately and create a comfort station for the troops. Then come to Luoyang and gather up some women." Thinking to himself, "you've got to be kidding," he loaded two or three bags of salt onto a truck and went to Luoyang. There he went to two or three establishments and gathered a dozen or so women.⁷⁰ This same officer was in charge of rounding up comfort women in Hengyang as well during the summer of 1944. He bought fifteen Chinese women from brothel owners for several bags of salt.⁷¹

In the fall of 1944, Japanese troops triumphantly entered Baoqing in Hubei Province. Military Police Warrant Officer Yamada Sadamu, who was appointed chief of the military police unit in Baoqing, was asked by the rear staff of the 116th Division to round up comfort women in order to prevent rapes by military personnel. He ordered a Sergeant Major to gather a dozen or so women and turn them over to an adjutant.⁷²

In June 1945, the 2nd Independent Mountain Artillery Regiment was massed in the area around Hongqiao in Hubei Province. Hirahara Kazuo, Commander of the 1st Battalion (after the war, he became a Major General in the Ground Self-Defense Force), ordered the establishment of a military comfort station after hearing the opinions of subordinates. The Accounting Section then gathered together six Chinese comfort women. Hirahara describes conditions at the time as follows.

The largest problem with establishing comfort stations was that the army's paper money suffered a steep decline in value. So the comfort women could not make ends meet with the army money they received from soldiers' monthly salaries. Then we set up a system whereby the Accounting Section at the Battalion Headquarters provided comfort women with daily necessities in return for the army money they earned. I remember that the bulk of the daily necessities given to comfort women were food items or cloth commandeered in the occupied areas. Worried that among the soldiers sent out to requisition these items there were individuals who looted Chinese paper money and valuables to give to the comfort women they visited, I ordered that the goods doled out to comfort women by the Accounting Section be decidedly generous.⁷³

It seems clear once again that the battalion commander gave the order to set up a comfort station, and the entire operation was run by the battalion's Accounting Section. It is also important to note that the army provided such daily necessities as food and clothing.

Ordering Village Notables to Gather Women

Next, let's look at the actual nature of the coercion employed. According to the recollections of Battalion Commander Hirahara, the former commander of the garrison stationed in Liangshitang requested that the head of the local organization for maintaining public order provide women. When Hirahara learned of this, he thought, "As a small garrison, we didn't have the ability to manage a comfort station on our own, so we hoped to have the cooperation of the Chinese side. But in some cases, this may have been

coerced.”⁷⁴ This statement implies that while military units the size of battalions and larger were capable of managing comfort stations and rounding up comfort women by themselves, smaller units did not have that capability. As a result, these smaller units sometimes resorted to rounding up women by force. The suggestion that there was a tendency at the lower reaches of the army to use force merits our attention.

It was a common occurrence for garrisons to demand women for the use of garrison commanders. Saying that it was for the safety of the village, local notables often offered women. It was normal operating procedure to request the cooperation of local notables when comfort stations were being built. Since army orders could not be defied and in order to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, many of the women rounded up were not prostitutes; there were definitely cases of women being rounded up by force and without their consent.

Another example also comes from the 2nd Independent Mountain Artillery Regiment. According to the diary of a military physician attached to the 2nd Battalion, in 1940 in a village near Dongshi in Hubei Province on the banks of the Yangtze River, local women who were not prostitutes were rounded up. He describes their first medical examination for sexually transmitted diseases in the August 11 entry in his diary as follows.

Well, when it came time for her internal examination, she became more and more embarrassed and wouldn't take off her pants. The interpreter and head of the organization for maintaining order shouted at her, and she finally took them off. When I had her lie down on the bed and began conducting a pelvic exam, she frantically scratched at my hand. When I looked up, she was crying. It seems that she cried for a long time after leaving the room.

It was the same with the next young woman, and I got so upset I wanted to cry as well. I think it was the first time I experienced them being so embarrassed, but the purpose {of the examination} being what it was, it was probably natural for them to feel humiliated. Did they come along crying the whole way, being told by the village headman or the head of the organization for maintaining order that it was for the good of the village?

There may be some among them who accepted the offer because they were told they could make money, but when China loses the war, they will really be pitiful {for having sacrificed themselves for naught}. It's not pleasant to conduct these examinations. This kind of work doesn't appeal to me, and the awareness that I am trampling on their humanity is never far from my mind.⁷⁵

This excerpt indicates clearly what kind of women were being rounded up. This doctor recalls that “the battalion commander consulted with the village headman or the head of the organization for maintaining order, and asked them to round up comfort women locally,” but that “it was not a coercive request at all. Everything was left up to their discretion.”⁷⁶ To local residents, however, wasn't a request from the {Japanese} army tantamount to an order? We should consider these practices as the forced rounding up of women by the village headman or head of the organization for maintaining order, with the army pretending not to know. The women were then forced to work as comfort women.

Medical examinations of twenty-two women between the ages of fifteen and thirty-six concluded that four women were in good health, thirteen were in acceptable health, and five failed. Taking their appearances and attitudes into consideration as well, fifteen women were retained. Ten of those were assigned for soldiers' use, five would be used in the officers' club, and one was reserved for the exclusive use of the battalion commander. The operator who was charged with the task of managing these women was a Korean who had been brought along with the army as an interpreter. These Chinese comfort women were not popular with the soldiers because they did not understand Japanese, so they were replaced two months later with Korean comfort women whom the operator brought from Hankow. The doctor worried that when the army had withdrawn from the area, the (former comfort) women would be despised by the villagers, who would have forgotten the fact that they “had been sacrificed for the good of the village.”⁷⁷ He wrote in his diary that, though they only worked (as comfort women) for a short time, he was worried about their futures. “This story is not something completely removed from me; it upsets me personally.”⁷⁸

There is also the case of a noncommissioned officer from the 13th Railway Regiment, who built a temporary special comfort station south of Yancheng in Henan Province in the summer of 1944. This noncommissioned officer was ordered to set up a comfort station because military discipline had degenerated, so he went to Yancheng where the front lines headquarters was located. There, he was given custody of twenty-five Chinese comfort women and their supervisors, a total of thirty people. He put them aboard two trucks, assigned them bodyguards so they wouldn't flee, and brought them to the special comfort station.

The building housing the comfort station was an estate rented from the village headman. The noncommissioned officer divided the building into six separate establishments and the rooms inside into many small rooms, and then readied the comfort station for business. When the doctor came to perform medical examinations, however, he discovered that "to our surprise . . . every single one of [the good-looking women] was crippled."⁷⁹ Since it was a request from the army, which essentially amounted to outright coercion, the head of the organization for maintaining order had sacrificed these women. The women were all around twenty years old. On the first day, soldiers thronged to the comfort station, and officers came by at night. On the second day, it was so busy that the women pleaded to be given some rest because their bodies couldn't stand having to work from 10 in the morning until late into the night.⁸⁰

Impressment During "Subjugation" Operations

Another method of forcibly rounding up comfort women was direct gathering while soldiers were out on "subjugation" operations. Because there have been so few surveys asking former comfort women in China about their experiences, we don't know very much about these cases. But at present, we do have the following testimonies. Wan Aihua was born in Inner Mongolia in 1929. Her family was very poor, and she was sold at age four in Yu District in Shanxi Province. From the age of eleven she participated in resistance movements against the Japanese. In 1943, when arrested by the Japanese army for the third time (she was imprisoned for periods of twenty to twenty-six days), she was gang-raped.⁸¹ This was an instance of gang rape during a fixed prison term.

According to a report on Taiwanese former comfort women, among the forty-eight women interviewed, there were two Chinese women who had lived in Guangdong Province and one who had lived on Hainan Island. These women had been rounded up in those areas, and, given "no reason whatsoever," they were forced to go with soldiers.⁸² At present, very few testimonies by former comfort women in China have become available, but when surveys are made, it will likely become clear that many cases are similar to those in the Philippines, which we will examine next.

During the Asia Pacific War, the number of Chinese comfort women sent from China to Southeast Asia was not insignificant. For example, two of the three Chinese former comfort women currently living in Taiwan were sent to Burma. In that period, China was the next largest supply base for comfort women after Korea and Taiwan.

THE CASE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Rounding Up of Comfort Women by the Military

One characteristic of the rounding up of comfort women in Southeast Asia, as in China, was the prominent role played by the military. In the early phases of the invasion of Southeast Asia, army line of communications units were in charge of rounding up comfort women. According to the testimony of a soldier attached to the line of communications unit of the 25th Army (in charge of operations in Malaysia), three line of communications officers stationed in Shingora (the spot where the army landed on the Malay Peninsula) were ordered to go to Bangkok, Thailand.⁸³ There they had resident Japanese businessmen round up twenty-three prostitutes. They returned to Malaysia with three Thai women who passed the medical examinations for sexually transmitted diseases and took charge of setting up military comfort stations in various regions.⁸⁴

The navy itself was also connected with the rounding up of comfort women. The officers in charge of the comfort stations directly managed by the navy in the cities of Kendari, Amuito, and Baubau in the south of Sulawesi Island in Indonesia rounded up comfort women.⁸⁵ In twenty-three comfort stations supervised by the Civilian Affairs Branch, the round-

ing up of comfort women and negotiation of their employment contracts were conducted by civilian military personnel and members of civilian business groups; then the women were sent along to the various military comfort stations.⁸⁶

Rounding Up Comfort Women in Singapore

There was an ad in the Chinese-language newspaper, *Shōnan Nippō*, "calling for hostesses" (March 5–8, 1942). The ad stated that several hundred "hostesses" aged seventeen to twenty-eight from all ethnic groups were being sought. The pay amounted to more than \$150, and those engaged in the "shameful calling" were eligible to apply. Interested parties were told to come to the Raffles Hotel.⁸⁷ This was a hotel for officers run by the local line of communications unit. According to the recollections of Fusayama Takao, an officer in the Signal Corps of the Imperial Guard Division (who became a member of the Japan Academy after the war), a military comfort station was opened on February 27. The ad in the *Shōnan Nippō* was probably linked to this event. At any rate, when those in the Headquarters of the 25th Army in charge of the rear staff began recruiting women, many women who had previously had English soldiers as partners responded.⁸⁸ In Singapore, comfort women were openly recruited immediately after the occupation. Women having difficulty making ends meet, such as prostitutes, were the first to respond.

These women thought that having one partner per day would be all right, but they cried out in distress when soldiers formed lines and pressed in on them. When they had had intercourse with four or five soldiers, the soldier in charge of the comfort women tried to put a stop to it. But this caused rioting, so he reluctantly "tied the womens' arms and legs to their beds" and forced them to continue.⁸⁹ Such was the coercion that occurred.

The Coercion of Local Notables

As we saw in chapter 2, before the invasion of Southeast Asia, the army's Central Command had prepared a plan for the construction of comfort stations that would put an end to rapes and prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Village headmen were to be charged with the task of rounding up comfort women.

Instances in which local notables were ordered to round up women can be seen throughout Southeast Asia. In May 1942, as a result of an attempted rape committed by a soldier from a company stationed in Aritao in Nueva Vizcaya on the island of Luzon in the Philippines, an adjutant in the Bay-ombong Battalion ordered that comfort stations be set up for each company. Shimotsu Isamu, a first lieutenant attached to the Battalion Headquarters, traveled around accompanied by an interpreter, meeting with town managers and gathering women. He conducted interviews with the women who had been rounded up and checked on their backgrounds, finally accepting some fifty-odd young, healthy women.⁹⁰

In June 1944, immediately after arriving in the Philippines, the second lieutenant who served as paymaster for the 126th Field Airfield Construction Unit (which had begun building an airfield near the Davao Penal Colony in the Lasang region on the island of Mindanao) visited local notables in Mindanao, taking with him cloth for making dresses. He asked for their aid in rounding up comfort women. One week later, six women were brought to him, and he opened a military comfort station.⁹¹

In Kuwarapira in Malaya, a company commander in the 11th Infantry Regiment summoned representatives of the chiefs of the local organizations for maintaining peace (who were ethnic Chinese) and ordered them to gather some women. At this time, there were massacres of ethnic Chinese people wherever the Japanese army went, so the representatives, terrified that they would be massacred if they refused, gathered up eighteen widows and other women and turned them over to the commander. The women cried and pleaded with the representatives to allow them to return to their homes.⁹² This can only be called coercion.

Women Led Off by Fraudulent Means

There were huge numbers of women led off by fraudulent means. Francisca Napeza Austari, born in Laguna on the island of Luzon in the Philippines, was recruited this way. Sometime in December 1942, she was approached by a *Makapili* (a collaborator with the Japanese army) while washing clothes in a river. She was told, "If you work as a washing woman (for the Japanese army), your salary will be sent back to your family."⁹³ So she went along with four other women to the area where the Japanese

army was stationed. Two of the four were only twelve years old, and they were told that they were too young to wash big, heavy clothes and were sent home. The remaining three were forced to become comfort women. At the time, Francisca Napeza Austari was eighteen years old.⁹⁴

A soldier in the 1st Company of the 32nd Transport Regiment in Tarakan, on the island of Borneo in Indonesia, was told by a comfort woman named Lena in the comfort station there that she was promised that she would be made an office worker in a fisheries company. She was then brought from Menado, on the island of Sulawesi, to Galera and forced to become a comfort woman.⁹⁵

Seizing Women by Force in the Philippines

In the Philippines, large numbers of former comfort women have gone public with their stories. One fact that has come to light through their testimonies is that an extremely large number of women were forcibly seized by the Japanese army. According to the "Written Complaints," almost all of the forty-six victims were forcibly seized by the Japanese army. The youngest among them was ten years old, the oldest was thirty, and a total of thirty-three were minors (in their teens). The following are typical cases gathered from the testimonies of the women I interviewed.⁹⁶

Maria Rosa Luna Henson's father was a large landowner in Angeles on the island of Luzon. Her mother was his maid. In 1942, after the Japanese invasion, when Maria was gathering firewood in an evacuated village, she was raped by a Japanese soldier. She was fourteen years old at the time. The following year, she was riding in a cart pulled by a water buffalo with some members of a guerrilla group resisting the Japanese occupation when they were stopped at a Japanese army checkpoint in the city of Angeles. She was the only one in the group taken away. She was imprisoned in a hospital used as a barracks by the Japanese army. Then she was moved to a building that had once been a rice mill and forced to have intercourse with Japanese soldiers. Since she was subjected to examinations for sexually transmitted diseases once a week, it is probably safe to consider this set-up a military comfort station.

Rosita Pacardo Nacino was born in Iloilo on the island of Panay. In 1942, during the Japanese occupation, her mother died. The following year,

her father died of starvation. She was working in a candy factory, but she quit in 1944 to go live with her grandmother in Estancia. Not far from her grandmother's house, she was taken captive by Japanese soldiers. There was a Japanese army barracks about twenty minutes from the house. Rosita Pacardo Nacino was taken to an old ice factory in Estancia, where she was raped by officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers, one after another. She was imprisoned in that factory for about one month, and it seems that there were about fifteen other women imprisoned there as well.⁹⁷

These sorts of incidents are one reason for the outbreak of guerrilla activities against the Japanese army. In the Philippines, where the Japanese army regarded the Filipino population as enemies, incidents of the forcible seizure of women were particularly numerous.

Seizing Women by Force in Indonesia

The forcible seizure of women was not uncommon in Indonesia as well. According to Ōmura Tetsuo's research, which is based on Dutch military documents, in the first half of 1943 in the city of Pontianak on the island of Kalimantan, the commander of the naval detachment issued an "order banning the keeping of concubines" by Japanese residents, in addition to ordering the forced internment of local residents who had sexual relations with Japanese. Women rounded up by the Naval Special Police Corps were put to work in three comfort stations reserved for naval use and five or six comfort stations reserved for civilian use.⁹⁸

In 1944, Japanese comfort women on the island of Anbon Pulau were sent to the rear because of the worsening war conditions. In August, comfort stations with local women were also closed. According to the recollections of an officer in the Naval Special Police Corps, however, military personnel continued to commit crimes, so military comfort stations were set up once more on the advice of the senior staff of the Headquarters for the 4th South Fleet (more accurately, this was probably the 25th Special Naval Base Headquarters). A list of women with experience as comfort women, prostitutes, women rumored to be prostitutes, and women who wanted to become comfort women was drawn up. There were negotiations with these women, but "a certain degree of coercion was inevitable."⁹⁹ Since it was considered unseemly for the Special Police Corps, who were

in charge of maintaining order, to take too prominent a role in rounding up comfort women, their role was limited to cooperation. An adjutant took charge of these tasks, and the Political Affairs Corps (the civilian police) rounded up the women. According to the account related to this officer by the civil administrator charged with carrying out these instructions, when the women whose names were on the list were assembled and put aboard a ship in Saparua, local residents rushed to the port and screamed, "Give back our daughters! Give back our daughters!"¹⁰⁰ The women rounded up were Eurasian (in this case, women of mixed Caucasian and Indonesian ancestry) and Indonesian.

Let's consider another case that overlaps somewhat with the previous one. According to the recollections of Sakabe Yasumasa, the paymaster officer attached to the 25th Special Naval Base Headquarters, after the Japanese comfort women on the island of Anbon were sent home, the staff of the Headquarters drew up a plan to open four new comfort stations with one hundred comfort women "procured locally."¹⁰¹ The plan was to issue a proclamation declaring that "Japanese military personnel involved in rapes will be severely punished," to "encourage the divulging of secret information" by local residents, and, with the help of the local civilian police, to gather together women "who will become friendly with Japanese military personnel." Attractive women among that group who were not infected with sexually transmitted diseases would be chosen to work as comfort women. Sakabe describes how he "felt depressed listening to the voices of the young Indonesian women crying out over and over again at the club."¹⁰²

All across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, there were numerous cases of the forcible seizure of local residents for use as comfort women. Furthermore, in the case of Indonesia, there were also women being taken overseas to other islands, Burma, or the Philippines. Indonesia ranked after Korea, Taiwan, and China as a source of comfort women.