

THE 'COMFORT WOMEN' ISSUE, FREEDOM OF SPEECH, AND ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY:
A STUDY AID

Tessa Morris-Suzuki

THE ISSUE

On 1 December 2020, an article by Professor J. Mark Ramseyer was published online in the *International Review of Law and Economics*. The article, 'Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War', was scheduled for inclusion in the March 2021 edition of the journal but, following expressions of concern from scholars, the article was taken down from the journal's website for further examination. These events caused a major controversy amongst scholars. A copy of the article as it appeared on the journal's website is attached (Appendix 1).

The main contentions of this article are: (i) that wartime 'comfort stations' were run by private entrepreneurs, the Japanese military's only direct role being the maintenance of hygiene in the establishments; (ii) that 'comfort women' freely negotiated contracts with the 'comfort station' owners, reflecting their personal interests and following the 'basic game theoretic principles of credible commitments' (p. 7).

The article was strongly criticised by a number of student and other groups linked to Harvard Law School (<https://orgs.law.harvard.edu/kahls/statements/>) and by other groups and individuals (for example, <https://sites.google.com/view/feministsonramseyer/home>)

On the other hand, some groups have responded with criticisms of Ramseyer's critics, arguing that they are threatening freedom of speech by denying Professor Ramseyer the right to controversial opinions. The attached letter from a group of conservative Korean public figures, for example, has been widely circulated to various university groups and individuals in the US. It praises Professor Ramseyer's article, insisting that the article should be published in the journal, and argues that anyone who questions the journal's decision to publish is trampling on free speech (Appendix 2).

Professor Ramsayer's article provides a really important opportunity for a free and open debate. But that debate must begin by examining the ground-rules and

understandings of academic knowledge and research integrity that underpin debates between contending opinions. Are the participants in a debate following the same fundamental principles of research integrity and ethics? If there are no ground rules, then academic journals would have no basis for rejecting any paper submitted to them, and any statement of opinion – however lacking in logic or factual evidence – would have to be treated as equal to any other. We could then very easily end up spending much of the rest of our lives debating conspiracy theories or fake news which have no intellectual foundation whatever. To put it at its simplest and crudest, if there are no research standards, then we may as well all pack up and go home, because anything goes and any truth claim is just as good as any other.

So I welcome the opportunity for debate, and embrace the opportunity for academics, students and the broader community to have a thorough and frank discussion about crucial questions of free speech and academic integrity. This short document provides a few suggestions and questions as a starting point for such a debate, accompanied by illustrative materials from Professor Ramseyer's article and other writings on the 'comfort women' issue. The fundamental principles, it should be emphasised, apply not just to this article or historical issue, but across the board of research and scholarship.

FREE SPEECH AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY

We live in an age when the online and other media are flooded with conspiracy theories, pseudo-science, fake research findings etc. But it is also an age when free speech faces as many challenges as ever, if not more. The issue, then, is how we defend and uphold free speech, while also learning (and teaching others) how to assess the quality of information. How do we distinguish well-founded research and knowledge from research that lacks integrity? How do we identify knowledge claims that lack proper foundations? How do we protect free debate while preventing the abuse of academic credentials to disseminate misleading information? These are vital problems of our age.

SINCERITY AND INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH

Universities have developed a range of rules and principles about proper research practices and ethics. These are always a work in progress, and are an important topic for debate and improvement. You can find some helpful thoughts on the subject in a range of documents such as the US government Office of Research Integrity's guidelines on responsible publication: <https://ori.hhs.gov/content/Chapter-9->

[Authorship-and-Publication-Responsible-publication](https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/) or the *European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* (ALLEA 2017), which can be downloaded at <https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>

Below, I suggest some key principles that, I think, have come to underpin the notion of research integrity. This is my list, which I offer to you also for debate and improvement. In each case, I illustrate the principle by referring to issues arising from research on the ‘comfort women’ issue and from the debate about the Ramseyer article.

The European Federation of Academies of Humanities and Sciences (ALLEA 2017, p. 4) defines the underlying principles of research integrity as being reliability, honesty, respect and accountability. This means that researchers should genuinely want to find the answers to research questions, be as honest as possible about their own research motives, and be prepared to report unexpected findings if they discover that the data they are looking at contains information which they had not anticipated. They should try their best (within the human limitations that we all have) to convey their findings truthfully to others, and should certainly not consciously invent or misrepresent information about the data they have collected (e.g. by falsifying the results of experiments or stating that source material contains facts which it does not contain). Below I try to flesh this out in a bit more detail. The principles set out are the aims. No researcher is perfect and no one piece of research fulfils all the principles listed below perfectly. The issue is whether a piece of research falls so far below all (or nearly all) of these principles that it fails to meet fundamental standards of research integrity.

SOME KEY PRINCIPLES FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Defining the boundaries of the research topic.* Research integrity begins by telling yourself and others what topic you are researching, and defining the scope of the topic. Many topics are very large, so researchers will only look at one small corner of them. This can be very valuable – a single human being’s life history can tell us a lot about a whole historical era, for example. But a historian who writes about a single life should try to say something to readers about the extent to which this one person’s experience can be generalised to the wider history of their day.

In relation to the 'comfort women' history – What is the 'comfort women' issue? So-called 'comfort stations' were places where members of the Japanese military had sex with women during the Asia-Pacific War. The Japanese government's 1993 report 'On the Issue of Wartime "Comfort Women"' states that 'comfort stations were established in various locations in response to the request of the military authorities at the time', and adds: 'the countries or areas where it has been possible as a result of the study to confirm that comfort stations existed are: Japan; China; the Philippines; Indonesia; the then Malaya; Thailand; the then Burma; the then New Guinea; Hong Kong; Macao; and the then French Indochina'. (In this context, 'Japan' means the pre-war Japanese empire, including Okinawa, Korea, Taiwan and Karafuto [Southern Sakhalin]). It defines the 'comfort women's' known places of origin as 'Japan; the Korean Peninsula; China; Taiwan; the Philippines; Indonesia; and the Netherlands. Apart from Japanese, many of the comfort women transferred to the war areas were from the Korean Peninsula.'

The report notes that the earliest 'comfort stations' appear to date from 1932, and that 'many comfort stations were run by private operators, although in some areas there were cases in which the then Japanese military directly operated comfort stations.'

(for full document, see <https://www.awf.or.jp/e6/statement-03.html>)

Substantial further research has since extended our knowledge of the problem, but this provides a starting point.

During the war, the Japanese government and military used the term 'comfort station' (*ianjo*) or 'comfort facility' (*ian shisetsu*), but typically used terms such as 'bar maids' (*shakufu*) or 'special women' (*tokushu fujo*) to describe the women in these 'facilities'. Allied service-people who encountered the women during the war sometimes referred to them as 'comfort women' or 'comfort girls', and after the war the euphemism 'comfort women' became widely used in debates. From the 1990s a number of researchers began to use the term 'sex slaves', drawing on the internationally understood definition of 'slavery' as 'an umbrella term covering practices such as forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking' and referring to 'situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power' (see <https://www.un.org/en/observances/slavery-abolition-day>).

Questions for discussion – How well do the boundaries of the problem presented in Ramseyer’s research match the Japanese government’s 1993 definition of the ‘comfort women’ problem, or the definitions used by other key reports and documents on the issue?

Why does Ramseyer’s research make no mention of women from China, the Philippines, Indonesia or the Netherlands (nor of women from Malaya, East Timor and other places who are now also known to have been recruited into the system)?

Why does he largely cite pre-1932 sources to analyse a post-1932 problem, and what is the basis for his claim that information about the 1920s to early 1930s applies to the period of the Asia-Pacific War?

Given that the 1993 Japanese government report, like many other sources, says that the Japanese military directly operated some comfort stations, why does Professor Ramseyer state that the Japanese army ‘encouraged private entrepreneurs to establish semi-official brothels next to its bases’ (Ramseyer 2020 p. 1) but remain entirely silent about bases run by the military themselves (including the navy – see, for example,

<http://ajwrc.org/jp/modules/bulletin/index.php?page=article&storyid=682>)?

2. *Defining your own position in relation to your research.* Most researchers approach their work with some pre-existing belief and ideology, and many have political objectives, such as the wish to influence policy, support the work of social movements etc. It is important that researchers are open about their own positions. It can be argued that, if a piece of research is being done specifically to advance a policy position or movement etc., the author should make this clear to readers.

In relation to the ‘comfort women’ history – Immediately after publishing the article ‘Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War’, Professor Ramseyer went on to publish a media piece, ‘Recovering the Truth about the Comfort Women’ <https://japan-forward.com/recovering-the-truth-about-the-comfort-women/> in the online journal *Japan Forward*. Here, repeating sentences from his *International Review of Law and Economics* article, he shifted from his academically-worded conclusion about the application of game theory to wartime ‘comfort stations’ to the much more aggressively political statement that ‘the comfort-women-sex-slave story’ is ‘pure fiction’, that testimonies

from former ‘comfort women’ about forcible recruitment are lies, and the whole story has been driven by a left-wing South Korean lobby group bent on sabotaging Japan-South Korea relations in order to promote a ‘key North Korean political goal’. *Japan Forward* is a news/opinion site established by the neo-nationalist Japanese Sankei Media group to propagate its views and those of likeminded people to an English-speaking audience (see Nakai 2018, p. 3). The site is currently running a very energetic campaign on the ‘comfort women’ history, aimed at denying that any ‘comfort women’ at all were recruited by force or deception and denouncing women who testify to forcible recruitment as liars – see <https://japan-forward.com/?s=comfort+women>

Questions for Discussion – Should Professor Ramseyer’s have provided his readers and peer reviewers with more frank information about his personal position on the ‘comfort women’ issue and his aims in conducting this research?

3. *Demonstrating awareness of the existing research done by others in your field* - Good research needs to be based on a knowledge of the work that has been done already in the field of study. Researchers have very rarely read everything in their field, but they should have read a fair share of existing research, and it is helpful to readers if they start by mentioning some of the existing works that have informed their own research. Where they are strongly disagreeing with existing work in the field, they should provide some explanation of the reasons why they are doing so.

In relation to the ‘comfort women’ history –Appendix 3 (from a reading list published by Columbia University), contains one list of many existing works on the ‘comfort women’ issue in English (representing various viewpoints); there are many other lists, including <https://remembercomfortwomen.org/reading-list/> (please note that this list is from a former ‘comfort women’ support group, and lists works sympathetic to their cause); <https://www.awf.or.jp/1/reference.html> (a somewhat older list from Japan’s Asian Women’s Fund, including key works in Japanese). You can doubtless find more lists online.

Questions for Discussion –

See if you can find further lists of resources on the ‘comfort women’ issue.

Can you identify the position on comfort women issues of the creators of the lists, or their openness to presenting conflicting positions on a subject that is notable for controversy?

How many of the key existing research works on the 'comfort women' issue does Professor Ramseyer refer to in his article?

Does he explain his selection?

Does he indicate why his work disregards the conclusions of most other researchers of the topic?

4. Providing evidence for your research claims – The key findings of research need to be supported by verifiable evidence, which might include documents, oral testimony, material objects, combinations of all of these etc.

In relation to the 'comfort women' history – 'Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War' offers an analysis of the contracts signed between 'comfort women' and the owners or managers of 'comfort stations' during the Asia-Pacific War. Surprisingly, though, Professor Ramseyer does not provide any references to or quotations from any contract actually signed by a 'comfort woman' and her 'employer'. He provides no evidence that he has ever seen such a contract, and no oral or written testimony from anyone who had ever signed one of these contracts or witnessed one being signed.

Source material which he has read and cited (though without acknowledging this part of its content) describes a situation where 'contracts' were signed by women who had been recruited by deception (see 5.iii below), with a loan payment going to their debt-burdened families. Ramseyer assumes that all women signed contracts on the basis of informed consent while providing no evidence to support this assumption, and remaining silent about evidence which contradicts this assumption.

His article also ignores testimony of cases where women clearly did not sign 'contracts' of any sort (for example, O'Herne 1998; McGregor and Mackie 2018)

Question for Discussion – Does Ramseyer provide convincing evidence for the existence of 'comfort women' contracts founded on 'basic game theoretic principles of credible commitments'?

What percentage of the wartime ‘comfort women’ do you think might have signed such contracts?

5. *Using sources with honesty and respect* – Debates about historical, social and political issues rely on a range of resources, including official documents, private records, oral testimony etc. It is a basic principle of research that scholars should not deliberately misrepresent the content of the sources that they cite. It is also important that they think carefully about the nature of the sources and the context in which they were produced. In the case both of oral and written sources, we need to ask ourselves the questions: who produced the information in this document or interview etc. and why? Using multiple sources carefully and honestly is central to research integrity.

In relation to the ‘comfort women’ history – Here are just a couple of illustrative examples of the sources used by Professor Ramseyer, and of the way in which he has cited them.

- (i) On p. 6 of the article, Professor Ramseyer quotes from the memoirs of former ‘comfort women’ Mun Ok-Ju, as published in the ‘Korea Institute of History, 2016’. Despite the impressive-looking institutional title, the ‘Korea Institute of History’ is actually an anonymous neo-nationalist online blogger whose site is dedicated to denying the forced recruitment of ‘comfort women’. The blog provides no information about the person who runs it or its source of funding (see <https://www.blogger.com/profile/04924969566554966189>). The site does not contain Mun’s memoirs. Rather, it contains one page of selected extracts from her memoirs, carefully chosen to try to persuade readers that her experiences were pleasurable and well-paid. Incidentally, it also mis-spells her name (see <http://scholarsinenglish.blogspot.com/2014/10/former-korean-comfort-woman-mun-okku.html>) University of Toronto scholar Joshua Pilzer, who has studied testimony given by Mun in detail, writes that she described being forcibly abducted by Japanese military personnel in 1940 at the age of 16 and forced to provide sexual services to twenty to thirty Japanese soldiers a day (Pilzer 2014, p. 2). He quotes Mun, a courageous and resourceful woman, as saying that ‘on the rare occasions

when we had something to laugh about in our torturous life, and when we felt lonesome or miserable, we would sing in unison or hum together quietly' (Pilzer 2014, p. 18)

- (ii) Professor Ramseyer writes that the Japanese military 'encouraged private entrepreneurs to establish semi-official brothels next to its bases' (Ramseyer 2020, p.1), but that 'the Japanese military did not need additional prostitutes; it had plenty. Prostitutes have followed armies everywhere, and they followed the Japanese army in Asia' (Ramseyer 2020, p. 5). Thus he tells his readers that women and private brothel owners flocked to the war zones, with the role of the military in the 'comfort station' system being limited to its regular checks of the hygiene of women in the 'semi-official brothels'. This is at odds with the contents of the sources cited by Ramseyer himself, such as his reference 'Naimusho 1938', in Suzuki et al 2006, vol. 1, pp. 124-138 (incorrectly referenced by Ramseyer as Suzuki et al 2006, vol. 1, p. 124.) The information in that document shows that in late 1937-early 1938 private recruiters in various parts of Japan reported being urgently requested by the military command in Shanghai to help dispatch 2500-3000 Japanese women for work in 'comfort stations (in fact brothels)' being set up 'within the Shanghai Expeditionary Army' (Suzuki et al. vol. 1, pp. 130 and 134). Reports of this request – and of the fact that the women were to be transported from Japan in military vessels under the supervision Japanese military police (*kempei*) – clearly caused concern and even disbelief amongst some officials in Japan, one of whom expressed his anxiety that it was hard to maintain that this 'was not in contravention of the terms of international treaties on the trafficking of women' ('婦女売買に関する国際条約の趣旨にも悖ること無きを保し難き' – Suzuki et al. vol. 1 p. 125). But enquiries made by local authorities to the Japanese Consulate General in Shanghai confirmed the essence of the reports, including the central involvement of the Japanese military police and the Consulate's own military bureau in the scheme, and the recruitment of the women continued (Suzuki et al 2006 vol. 1, p. 136). In short, these documents provide compelling official testimony of the role of the Japanese military and other government agencies in initiating and overseeing the recruitment of Japanese women to serve in

‘comfort stations’ in China, but Ramseyer makes no mention of this aspect of the document’s content.

- (iii) On p. 6 of his article, Ramseyer gives a detailed account of the contract terms in ‘comfort stations’ in Malaya, and provides two sources for this information. One of these is the document ‘US Office of War Interrogation (1944), Interrogation Report no. 49’. You can find a copy of this document here:

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Japanese_Prisoner_of_War_Interrogation_Report_49

As was common in Allied military reports on encounters with ‘comfort women’ on the battlefield, the tone of this report is derogatory towards the women, but the report still contains important information and is widely known to researchers. Interrogation Report No. 49 does contain figures for the pay received by the women, but the figures are different from the ones cited in Ramseyer’s text, which are for Malaya, while this document is about Burma.

Significantly, this document does refer to contracts signed by the women, which might seem to support the core contention of Ramseyer’s article. But it states the following: *‘Early in May of 1942 Japanese agents arrived in Korea for the purpose of enlisting Korean girls for "comfort service" in newly conquered Japanese territories in Southeast Asia. The nature of this "service" was not specified 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. On the basis of these false representations many girls enlisted for overseas duty and were rewarded with an advance of a few hundred yen. The majority of the girls were ignorant and uneducated, although a few had been connected with "oldest profession on earth" before. The contract they signed bound them to Army regulations and to work for the "house master " for a period of from six months to a year depending on the family debt for which they were advanced... Approximately 800 of these girls were recruited in this manner and they landed with their Japanese "house master " at Rangoon around August 20th, 1942’*. In other words, the report shows that the signing of wartime ‘contracts’ did not mean that these women had freely chosen to work in ‘comfort stations’. ‘Contracts’, in this case at least, were signed even though women were recruited by trickery and transported to places from where they had no possibility of returning until they had paid off their

debt (and in many cases probably even after paying off their debt). Contrary to statements made by Ramseyer in his article (see particularly Ramseyer 2020, p. 5), only a few had previously worked as prostitutes, while most had not. Having read and cited this important document, Ramsayer fails to acknowledge or address this crucial part of its content directly at odds with his claims.

Question for Discussion – See if you (with help from Japanese or Korean speaking friends if necessary) can check more of the sources used in the Ramseyer article.

Consider possible reasons why Professor Ramseyer may have failed to mention the information about contracts contained in Interrogation Report no. 49.

Do you think he use his sources in a scholarly, honest and balanced way which genuinely conveys the content of the sources to his readers?

6. *Treating readers with honesty and respect* – The Office of Integrity’s Responsible Publication guidelines, like other statements on research standards, remind us that footnotes and bibliographies need to be fair and accurate, so that other researchers can verify a scholar’s conclusions and follow up sources for their own further research. It’s easy to make occasional mistakes with a page number or a date in a reference, but a systematic mismatch between the information in a book or article and the source material that it claims to be citing is cause for real concern.

In relation to the ‘comfort women’ history – Here are a few more instances of the sources used by Professor Ramseyer, and of the way in which he has cited them.

- (i) One basic rule of academic referencing is that you should cite page number/s that point readers to the information you are citing. A large proportion of the wartime primary sources quoted by Professor Ramseyer come from a two-volume collection of archival documents edited by Suzuki Yūko and others; but in the case of these documents, Professor Ramseyer simply provides the number of the first page of the document concerned – and some of these documents run to a dozen or more pages. In most cases, therefore, the information on the page cited

by Ramseyer bears no correspondence to the information he is supposed to be citing.

- (ii) He gives figures of 12 Korean ‘comfort women’ and 527 Korean ‘unlicensed prostitutes’ in Shanghai in 1938, and attributes these to a document reproduced on ‘p. 118’ of vol. 1 of the Suzuki et al. collection (actually pp. 118-120) and to Table 6 of a 2012 article by Takei Yoshikazu (Ramseyer 2020, p. 5, footnote 5). In an earlier 2019 article, he gave the same figures and said that they were for 1940 (Ramseyer 2019, p. 10), oddly citing pre-1940 official data as a source for 1940 statistics. He seems subsequently to have spotted the problem, because his 2020 article now tells us that these are 1938 figures. The figures he cites appear nowhere in either of the sources referenced. Takei (<http://iccs.aichi-u.ac.jp/archives/010/201205/4fc4385498c26.pdf>) contains no Table 6 and no figures for ‘comfort women’ or unlicensed prostitutes. The document from Suzuki et al. does not give a figure of 527 (nor any precise figure for the number of Korean unlicensed prostitutes in Shanghai), and gives a figure of 20 Korean ‘comfort women’ in the ‘comfort stations’ that it lists. (see Appendix 4).
- (iii) Ramseyer also writes that, in one month of 1938, 90 Korean women ‘petitioned’ the colonial government for permission to go to the Chinese city of Jinan ‘to work as unlicensed prostitutes’ (Ramseyer 2020, p. 5). The document he cites as his source (Suzuki et al. 2006 vol. 1, p. 143; Appendix 5) does not contain any mention of a petition or a request from any women, Korean or otherwise. What it contains is a letter from the colonial government of Korea reporting that 907 people (including 105 Korean women) had been issued with official documents for a journey to Jinan. There is no mention of ‘unlicensed prostitutes’ in the document. It speaks of ‘special women’ (*tokushu fujin*), a term used in documents of the time to refer to military ‘comfort women’ as well as women working in private brothels. The document also notes the issuing of documents to an unspecified number of others by the Japanese military police. In other words, Ramseyer converts a government document about the mass transportation of women to sexual service in Jinan into a ‘petition’ from women pleading to be ‘permitted’ to be unlicensed prostitutes.

- (iv) Professor Ramseyer states that ‘Some Korean comfort women in Burma worked on contracts as short as six months to a year’, and references this to a nineteen-page document in another five-volume archival collection (Josei no tame no Ajia Heiwa Kokumin Kikin ed. 1997), The document is confusingly referenced, but the reference appears to be to p. 19 of volume 1 of this collection. That page (attached, Appendix 6) contains no reference to Korean comfort women, Burma or six-months contracts. It is about the setting up of ‘comfort stations’ in North China in the 1930s. Interrogation Report no. 49, cited in 5(iii) above, does refer to contracts of six months to a year, but, as we have seen, states that these contracts were fraudulent.
- (v) Professor Ramsayer’s statement that *karayuki-san* earned ‘generally higher wages [overseas] than they could earn within Japan’ (Ramseyer 2020) is referenced to ‘p. 451’ of Park Yuha’s 2014 book *Teikoku no Ianfu*. Since the book only has 324 pages, it is impossible to identify the source of the information.

Question for Discussion – As above, see if you (with help from Japanese or Korean speaking friends if necessary) can check more of the sources used in the Ramseyer article.

Does Professor Ramseyer provide full and correct references which confirm his conclusions and allow other researchers to verify them and follow up sources for their own further research?

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

How would rate the article ‘Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War’ in terms of your own standards of research integrity?

Do you think this article should be accepted for publication in an academic journal?

What systems exist in your university to protect research integrity?

Who implements them, and how?

What sanctions do they impose on researchers who whose work fails fundamental tests of research integrity?

Could these systems and their implementation be improved?

What do you consider to be the best ways of maintaining research integrity and preventing research misconduct while also supporting the right to free speech?

References:

- McGregor, Katherine E. and Mackie, V, '[Transcultural Memory and the Troostmeisjes/Comfort Women Photographic Project](#)', *History and Memory: Studies in Representation of the Past*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 116-150.
- Nakai, Daisuke, 'Mass Media in Japan, Fake News in the World', *Reexamining Japan in Global Context*, Suntory Foundation Research Project Forum Report 13, 2018. Pp. 1-5
- O'Herne, Jan Ruff, *50 Years of Silence*, Watson's Bay NSW, Editons Tom Thompson, 1997.
- Pilzer, Joshua D., 'Music and Dance in the Japanese Military "Comfort Woman" System: A Case Study in Performing Arts, War, and Sexual Violence', *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, vol. 18, 2014, pp. 1-23.



Contracting for sex in the Pacific War

J. Mark Ramseyer¹

Harvard University, United States



ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 August 2020

Received in revised form 28 October 2020

Accepted 28 November 2020

Available online 1 December 2020

Keywords:

Prostitution

Indentured servitude

ABSTRACT

The protracted political dispute between South Korea and Japan over the wartime brothels called comfort stations obscures the contractual dynamics involved. These dynamics reflected the straightforward logic of the credible commitments so basic to elementary game theory. The brothel owners and potential prostitutes faced a problem: the brothel needed credibly to commit to a contractual structure (i) generous enough to offset the dangers and reputational damage to the prostitute that the job entailed, while (ii) giving the prostitute an incentive to exert effort while working at a harsh job in an unobservable environment.

Realizing that the brothel owners had an incentive to exaggerate their future earnings, the women demanded a large portion of their pay upfront. Realizing that they were headed to the war zone, they demanded a relatively short maximum term. And realizing that the women had an incentive to shirk, the brothel owners demanded a contractual structure that gave women incentives to work hard. To satisfy these superficially contradictory demands, the women and brothels concluded indenture contracts that coupled (i) a large advance with one- or two-year maximum terms, with (ii) an ability for the women to leave early if they generated sufficient revenue.

© 2020 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

As the Japanese army advanced and retreated across East Asia in the 1930s and 40s, it encouraged private entrepreneurs to establish semi-official brothels next to its bases. Venereal disease had wreaked havoc on its Siberian expedition in 1918, and it needed that risk under control. From the cooperating brothel owners, it demanded that the prostitutes undergo regular medical examinations. In exchange, it promised to forbid its men from patronizing brothels anywhere else.

To staff their brothels, the cooperating entrepreneurs hired women primarily from Japan and Korea. All else equal, the soldiers preferred Japanese women. Among the non-Japanese staff, they preferred the Koreans. Korea was part of the Japanese nation, after all (Japan had annexed the peninsula in 1910), and most Korean women spoke at least some Japanese. The army called the coop-

erating brothels comfort stations (ianjo). It called the prostitutes comfort women (ianfu).

Consider the contracting problem. To staff these brothels, entrepreneurs needed to recruit young women. They obviously needed to promise the women extremely high pay. Even in the best of circumstances, prostitution is harsh and dangerous work and exacts a major reputational penalty. Women will take the job only if they expect to earn income both high enough to offset these costs, and significantly higher than their next-best alternative.

For work in distant wartime locations, the entrepreneurs needed to promise pay substantially higher even than in the Tokyo or Seoul brothels. To the standard travails of prostitution, the comfort stations added the risk of warfare. They added the cost of living in a foreign environment. The women would be away from friends, allies, people to whom they could turn for help should the brothel try to cheat them. And they raised the difficulty of absconding should the brothel try to cheat, and the price of returning home if they stayed their term and retired at the end.

Although they needed to promise the women high pay, the entrepreneurs could not just offer a high monthly wage. They were hiring women to perform unpleasant work in impossible-to-monitor surroundings. If they promised a fixed monthly wage, they gave each woman an incentive to be sufficiently unpleasant that no one asked for her at the front desk. Necessarily, they needed a wage contract that rewarded effort.

E-mail address: ramseyer@law.harvard.edu

¹ Mitsubishi Professor of Japanese Legal Studies, Harvard University. I gratefully acknowledge the generous and helpful comments and suggestions of Elizabeth Berry, Yoshitaka Fukui, Il-Young Jung, Mitsuhiro Kimura, Yoshiro Miwa, Jason Morgan, Minoru Nakazato, Gregory Noble, Geoffrey Ramseyer, Jennifer Ramseyer, Frances Rosenbluth, Richard Samuels, Henry Smith, Frank Upham, and the referees and editors of this journal.

Somehow, the entrepreneurs needed to make their promises of high pay from this incentive-based wage contract credible. To entice a woman to take this contract, an entrepreneur needed to convince her that she would earn high wages. Yet she knew that he had every incentive to exaggerate her potential earnings, and he knew that she knew. Some women would have doubted their own capacity to generate high earnings. In some jobs, a woman might have experimented for a short period to learn how much revenue she could earn. Given the reputational hit she took simply for entering the occupation, she could not do that here.

To recruit women to brothels on the military front, the entrepreneurs and women faced contractual problems harder by orders of magnitude. Most obviously, the women faced all the dangers of war – fighting, bombing, and rampant disease. The women also faced far more serious risks of brothel non-performance. Should a brothel owner in Tokyo try to cheat on the contract, a prostitute could complain to the police. They would not all be sympathetic, but some would. She could sue the brothel owner in court for nonperformance. Some did exactly that, and won. She could walk out of the brothel, and disappear into the anonymity of the Tokyo metropolis. In a distant foreign country, she faced the risk that she might not be able to do any of this.

The entrepreneurs and the women addressed these problems with a multi-year indenture agreement that bundled an up-front advance, additional cash compensation, a maximum term, and the right to quit early if a woman generated enough revenue. In the article that follows, I detail the economic logic to these contracts. I compare the sexual service contracts the entrepreneurs and women negotiated (i) for the comfort stations, with the contracts they negotiated (ii) for domestic Japanese brothels, (iii) for domestic Korean brothels, and (iv) for the non-comfort-station war-time brothels across Japanese-governed East Asia.

I begin by outlining the contracts used in domestic Japanese brothels (Sec. 2.2). I compare them to the contracts used in Korea, and to the contracts used in the unofficial (non-comfort-station) brothels elsewhere within the Japanese empire (Secs. 2.3, 2.4). Finally, I turn to the contracts used by the comfort stations themselves (Sec. 3).

2. Prostitution in Prewar Japan and Korea

2.1. Introduction

The comfort stations operated as the overseas military analogue to the private brothels in Japan and Korea. Whether in Japan or in Korea, brothels hired, and women looked for work. The work at stake in these transactions involved sexual services, but the economic logic to the arrangements that the two parties – brothel and prostitute – negotiated reflected the resources and alternative opportunities that both sides understood each other to hold. Recruiters and brothels could lie, but prostitutes could shirk or take the money and run. The women understood that the recruiters and brothels could lie, and understood too that they could shirk or disappear. The brothels could replace them with other women, but the women could find other work too, however low-paying. Yes indeed, parents did sometimes sell their daughters and brothels did sometimes trap women or keep them virtually imprisoned. But the economic logic (detailed below) to the contractual arrangements reflects the fact that brothels could not – and did not – trap or imprison all or even most of the women.

The contracts themselves reflect the intelligence and resourcefulness of the women involved. They were people with few attractive alternative economic opportunities, but they had some – and the terms of the contracts suggest they knew they had some. They chose prostitution over those alternative opportu-

nities because they believed prostitution offered them a better outcome. Recruiters could lie. Brothels owners could cheat. Parents could abuse their children and steal the advance payment that the women earned. But the contracts suggest that the women knew that recruiters could lie, knew that brothel owners could cheat, and did not quietly defer to abusive parents.

2.2. Japan

1. *Licensed prostitutes.* – (a) *The contracts as stated.* Prostitution had been a licensed industry in pre-war Japan (see generally Ramseyer, 1991). In 1924, 50,100 licensed prostitutes (shogi) worked out of 11,500 licensed brothels in Japan (Fukumi 1928: 50–56, 178; Kusama, 1930: 14–26). Most commonly, the licensed prostitutes worked under multi-year indenture contracts.²

- (a) The brothel paid the woman (or her parents) a given amount upfront, and in exchange she agreed to work for the shorter of (i) the time it took her to pay off the loan or (ii) the stated contractual term
- (b) The mean upfront amount in the mid-1920s ranged from about 1000 to 1200 yen. The brothel did not charge interest.
- (c) The most common (70–80 percent of the contracts) term was six years.
- (d) Under the typical contract, the brothel took the first 2/3 to 3/4 of the revenue a prostitute generated. It applied 60 percent of the remainder toward the loan repayment, and let the prostitute keep the rest.

I know of no source detailing how often the upfront payment went to the woman herself, how often it went to her parents who kept it for her behalf, and how often it went to abusive parents who kept it for themselves. Note, however, that prostitutes were not prisoners. In cities like Tokyo, they could easily leave their brothels and disappear into the anonymous urban environment. If they did, the brothel would then sue their parents on the cash advance (a prostitute's father typically signed the contract as guarantor). That this only happened occasionally suggests (obviously does not prove) that most prostitutes probably chose the job themselves; they probably did so because – in their minds – it made the best of a bad situation.

(b) *The contracts as applied.* In practice, the prostitutes repaid their loans in about three years and quit. Surely, historians sometimes insist, the brothels must have manipulated the charges for food and clothing to keep prostitutes mired in perpetual debt. At least on a large scale, however, they did not do this. Probably, the brothels – established institutions with a large capital investment – realized that cheating on their initial contract would raise their future recruitment costs. Not only did the brothels specifically promise a woman she could quit debt-free at the end of six years regardless of the revenue she generated, they generally kept their promise.

If brothels manipulated charges or otherwise cheated on their terms to keep prostitutes locked in debt, the number of licensed prostitutes should have stayed reasonably constant at least up to age 30. The minimum age for licensed prostitutes was 18. In 1925, there were 737 licensed Tokyo prostitutes aged 21, and 632 aged 22. There were only 515 aged 24, however, 423 age 25, and 254 age 27 (Fukumi, 1928: 58–59).

Similarly, if brothels were keeping prostitutes locked in debt slavery, the number of years in the industry should have stayed constant beyond six. Yet of 42,400 licensed prostitutes surveyed,

² For the details of these contracts, see Fukumi (1928: 70, 97–99, 115–16, 220), Kusama 1930: 206, 211, 283), Okubo (1906), Ito (1931: 229), Chuo (1926: 412–15).

38 percent were in their second or third year, 25 percent were in their fourth or fifth, and only 7 percent were in their sixth or seventh (Ito, 1931: 208–11; Kusama, 1930: 281). On a workforce of about 50,000 licensed prostitutes, 18,800 women registered as new licensed prostitutes in 1922 and 18,300 de-registered (Yamamoto, 1983: 388; Ito, 1931: 211–13). Consistent with a general tenure of about three years, in other words, one third of the work force replaced itself every year (Keishi, 1933: 96–98; Kusama, 1930: 227–28).

(c) *An example.* Consider some simple calculations (Keishi, 1933: 96–98; Kusama, 1930: 227–28). In 1925, customers made 3.74 million visits to the 4,159 licensed prostitutes in Tokyo. Aside from payments for food and drink, they spent 11.1 million yen. Of this amount, prostitutes kept 31 percent, or 3.4 million yen – 655 yen per prostitute. Under the standard arrangement, the prostitute would have applied 60 percent of this amount (393 yen) toward the repayment of her loan, and kept the rest (262 yen). She would have repaid her initial loan of 1200 yen in about 3 years. The average adult factory wage (both sexes; room and board not provided) in 1925 was 1.75 yen per day, and in 1935 was 1.88 yen per day (Shakai, 1936: 53; Ohsato, 1966: 68). To earn their income, the prostitutes in 1924 served a mean 2.54 customers per night (Keishi, 1933: 96; Kusama, 1930: 220–21; Uemura, 1929: 492–501). They worked about 28 nights per month (Keishi, 1933: 96–98).

2. *The contractual logic.* – (a) *Credible commitments.* This indenture contract in the licensed sector reflected the straightforward game theoretic logic of credible commitments (Ramseyer, 1991). Young women understood that prostitution was dangerous and harsh, and imposed a large upfront hit to their reputations. What is more, they understood that they incurred that reputational hit even if they quit after a very short period. Recruiters promised them very high wages, but they understood that recruiters had every incentive to exaggerate. Wholly apart from the recruiters' incentives to exaggerate, some women would simply have doubted their own ability to generate high revenue levels.

As a result, before a young woman agreed to work at a brothel she needed credible assurance that she would earn wages high enough to compensate her for the negative characteristics associated with the job. Were there no reputational hit to entering the industry, she could try the job for a few months to see how much she could earn. Given that she incurred the reputational cost even from a short stint, however, she could not readily verify the recruiters' claims.

The women forced recruiters to overcome this problem of promissory credibility by paying each prostitute a large fraction of her earnings upfront, and capping the number of years she would have to work. If the brothel paid her 1000 yen in advance and set the maximum term to six years, she knew the minimum she would earn. She also knew that if she repaid it earlier (as most prostitutes did), she would earn even higher effective monthly wages.

In turn, the brothel needed a way to create an incentive for its prostitutes to please their customers. The women performed harsh work in impossible-to-monitor environments. If brothels paid them a fixed wage (like an initial 1000-yen payment on a fixed six-year term), they had little incentive to try to please their customers. If a prostitute were sufficiently unpleasant that guests seldom requested her by name, so much the better.

By coupling a maximum six-year term with the ability to quit early, the brothel gave a prostitute an incentive to please her customers. The more customers requested her, the more revenue she generated. The more she generated, the sooner she could quit.

(b) *Loans.* Obviously, through these contracts the brothel extended to the woman or her parents a loan. If she or her parents needed that cash advance, the employment contract offered it. Young European men in the 19th century needed cash to pay their passage to North America; redemptioner contracts (a varia-

tion on indentures) offered that advance. So too here: the woman's promise to work facilitated a credit extension.

Two aspects of this labor market, however, suggest that the demand for a loans does not explain the use of these contracts in the sexual services market. First, very few other labor contracts included a loan with the contract. Suppose parents needed a cash advance. If a daughter could obtain a cash loan from a brothel, a son could have obtained a cash loan from a factory. Yet sons and daughters rarely took large cash advances upon signing employment contracts. Although some other employers did sometimes lend money to new hires, they did so only haphazardly, and only for relatively small amounts.

Second, the licensed brothels paid the cash advance to all new hires. Although some prospective prostitutes and some parents would have wanted 1200-yen cash loans, many would not. The money did not come free. The brothels did not charge a stated interest, but they obviously discounted the woman's earnings to present value. Were the brothels paying the large cash advances only in response to a demand in the credit market, they would have paid the indentures to some of their hires and not paid to others. The fact that they coupled the massive cash advances with all of their labor contracts suggests that some other contractual dynamic was at play.

3. *Unlicensed prostitutes.* – Below the licensed prostitutes in this sexual services market worked the independent, unlicensed prostitutes. Given the choice between the two sectors, most prostitutes preferred the licensed. From 1920 to 1927, of all the women who applied for work as licensed prostitutes in Tokyo, only 62 percent obtained jobs (Chuo, 1926: 381–82; Kusama 1930: 27–30, 36). Far from being job that no one wanted, positions in the licensed brothels were jobs with half again as many applicants as the brothels wanted to hire. Many of the unlicensed prostitutes were those women whom the licensed brothels had refused to hire (Kusama, 1930: 37). Historical records contain no reliable censuses of the unlicensed workers, but otherwise trustworthy observers put their number at about 50,000 in the mid-1920s (Fukumi 1928: 26–28, 32, 50–56, 178).

Because the unlicensed prostitutes nominally violated the law, they lacked the option of working for an established brothel. Brothels developed reputations. Given that illegal unlicensed prostitutes could not work for a brothel with a reputation for high quality service, the unlicensed prostitutes earned less money. Among female workers from the northern Akita prefecture in 1934, licensed prostitutes earned room & board plus 884 yen per year. Bar maids (shakufu; the general euphemism in this literature for unlicensed prostitutes) made 518 yen, waitresses made 210 yen, and other women workers made 130 yen (Shakai, 1935: 160–61).

The unlicensed sector also presented clients with higher risks. By law, licensed prostitutes underwent weekly medical examinations for venereal disease, and infected women could not return to work until they recovered. In 1932, 3.2 percent of licensed prostitutes in Tokyo had venereal or other infectious disease. The same study found a 9.7 percent rate among unlicensed prostitutes. Other studies confirm a 1–3 percent infection rate among licensed prostitutes, but find rates much higher than 10 percent among the unlicensed.³

4. *Karayuki.* – As Japanese businessmen moved abroad for work, young women followed. There in the foreign countries, the women worked as prostitutes for the Japanese clientele. *Karayuki-san*, Japanese called them: women heading abroad (Nihon, 1920). Given the usual preference among expatriate Japanese men for Japanese women, they earned substantially higher wages than their

³ Keishi (1933: 143–44), Uemura (1918), Kusama (1930: 288, 291), Fukumi (1928: 93, 168–69), Chuo (1926: 433–35).

local competitors. Given the cost of relocating abroad, they earned generally higher wages than they could earn within Japan (Park, 2014: 451).

The expatriate prostitutes tended to come from two discrete communities on or near the southern island of Kyushu: Shimabara and Amakusa. That most of them came from a few small communities is crucial: it makes implausible any notion that they had been tricked by duplicitous recruiters. Trickery works when the target audience does not know what is at stake. When young women (or girls) from small, closed communities leave for several years and then return, they report what happened. Word travels, and others in the community learn what the trip entails.

Author Tomoko Yamazaki (1972) traveled to Amakusa to explore this history. There, she befriended an elderly emigrant prostitute named Osaki. Osaki had indeed worked many years abroad, but hers was not a story either of paternal oppression or of sexual slavery. Osaki had been born in a small village to a family who already had a boy and a girl. A few years after her birth, her father died. Her mother then found a new lover. As he had no interest in her very small children, she abandoned them and married him anyway. The three children survived together in a tiny shack, and scrapped together what they could to eat. Other women in the community had worked as prostitutes abroad, and had returned with substantial sums of money. In time, her older sister left to work abroad as a prostitute herself.

When Osaki turned ten, a recruiter stopped by and offered her 300 yen upfront if she would agree to go abroad. The recruiter did not try to trick her; even at age 10, she knew what the job entailed. She discussed it with her brother, and decided to take the work to help him establish himself in farming. She travelled to Malaysia, and worked as a maid for three years. She was happy, she recalled. Her family fed her white rice and fish every day, which was more than the three abandoned children had been able to scavenge in Amakusa.

At age 13, she began working for the family as a prostitute. Because of the cost of passage and three years of room and board, she now owed 2000 yen. Under the new terms, customers paid 2 yen for a short stay and 10 yen for an overnight visit. The brothel owner kept half the amount, and provided room and board. Out of the remaining half, she paid down her outstanding balance and bought cosmetics and clothing. If she worked hard, she found that she could repay about 100 yen a month.

Before Osaki had finished repaying her loan, her owner died and she found herself transferred to a brothel in Singapore. She disliked her new owner, so one day she and some of the others went down to the harbor and bought a ticket back to Malaysia. The point is important: even overseas, women who disliked their jobs at a brothel could – and did – simply disappear.

Osaki found a new brothel. She liked the couple who owned it (and they negotiated her release from the earlier brothel), and in time took to calling the wife mother. There she stayed until an expatriate Britisher made her his mistress. Later in life, she returned to her home in Amakusa.

2.3. Prostitution in Korea

1. *The phenomenon.* – As Japanese emigrants began to move to Korea, they established in their communities structures akin to the licensed brothels at home. Japan formally annexed Korea in 1910, and the new government imposed uniform licensing rules for brothels across all Korea in 1916. It set the minimum age for prostitution at 17 (not 18 as on the Japanese islands), and required regular medical examinations (Fujinaga, 1998, 2004; Kim and Kim 2018: 18, 21).

Although both Koreans and Japanese could use the new licensing system, the Japanese did so more readily. By 1929, for example,

1,789 Japanese licensed prostitutes worked in Korea but only 1,262 Koreans. The Japanese prostitutes entertained 450,300 guests, where the Koreans entertained 110,700 (252 guests per year for the Japanese prostitute, 88 for the Korean). By 1935 the number of Japanese licensed prostitutes had fallen to 1,778 but the number of Koreans still had risen only to 1,330 (Kim and Kim 2018: 18, 21; Fujinaga, 2004).

Plenty of Korean women worked as prostitutes, but they simply did not work within the licensing structure. In 1935 Korea, government records report that 414 Japanese women worked as bar maids and 4,320 as cabaret workers (both euphemisms for unlicensed prostitutes). Of Korean women, 1,290 worked as barmaids and 6,553 as cabaret workers.⁴

2. *The contracts.* – (a) *Prices.* To recruit their licensed prostitutes, Korean brothels used indenture contracts much like those in Japan. Prices, however, reflected the lower standard of living in Korea. Over the economy as a whole, from 1910 to 1940 the ratio of Japanese to Korean wages varied from about 2.5 to 1.5. Korean men in the 1930s earned about 1–2 yen per day (Odaka 1975: 150, 153).

Within this Korean market, Japanese prostitutes charged more than Korean prostitutes. Japanese customers were generally wealthier than Korean customers, after all, and Japanese customers tended to prefer Japanese women. By one account, in 1926 Korean prostitutes charged 3 yen for an assignation; Japanese prostitutes in Korea charged 6–7 yen. Customers spent an average 3.9 yen on a visit to a Korean licensed prostitute; they spent an average of 8 yen on a visit to a Japanese licensed prostitute in Korea (Kim and Kim 2018: 26, 89, 96; Nihon yuran, 1932: 461). In one (apparently poorer) Korean community in 1929, Japanese licensed prostitutes generated annual revenues of 1,052 yen; Korean licensed prostitutes generated 361 yen (Nihon, 1994).

The higher Japanese revenues resulted in higher upfront cash payments to the Japanese prostitutes working in Korea than to the Korean prostitutes. One source (see Kim and Kim, 2018: 96) described Korean licensed prostitutes receiving advances of 250–300 yen (and occasionally 400–500 yen) on three year contracts; Japanese licensed prostitutes received 1,000–3,000 yen (note the higher amounts than in Japan). Another source calculated the average upfront payment to Korean licensed prostitutes at 420 yen, while the Japanese licensed prostitute received 1,730 yen (Nihon, 1994: 63).

(b) *Contractual term.* Consistent with the experience of prostitutes in Japan quitting within six years, Korean licensed prostitutes left the industry by their mid-20s. In one study, 61 percent of Korean licensed prostitutes were 20–25 years old; only 16 percent were over 25 (Kim and Kim, 2018: 97; see Ito, 1931: 172–94). In another, 680 of the 1,101 licensed prostitutes in the Seoul area were age 20–24, but only 273 were 25–29. Of that group of 1,101, 294 were in their fifth year of service; 65 were in their sixth, and 17 in their seventh. On the base population of 1,101, 317 entered in 1924, and 407 quit (Michiya, 1928).

2. *Korean prostitution abroad.* – Like the Japanese karayuki, young Korean women too travelled abroad. Crucially, Korean women went abroad to work as prostitutes long before several Shanghai brothels became the first licensed “comfort stations” in 1932. The comfort stations, in other words, did not begin the practice of Korean young women working abroad as prostitutes. The young women had been working abroad as prostitutes for decades before.

Already by the 1920s, Korean women were travelling to Manchuria to work as prostitutes (Fujinaga, 1998). In 1929, 196

⁴ , Chosen (1906–42), Nihongun (2020).

Korean women worked in Taiwan as licensed or unlicensed prostitutes (Fujinaga, 2001; Taiwan, 1932), and in 1924 67 Korean women worked in Dailin (Fujinaga, 2000: 219). Presumably, some served a Japanese clientele, some served a Korean clientele, and some served a Chinese clientele.

And long after those first comfort stations, Korean women continued to travel abroad to work as unlicensed prostitutes as well – again, for a wide variety of customers. In 1937, for example, the Tianjin immigrants association reported 81 unlicensed prostitutes from Korea. During one month in 1938, 90 Korean women petitioned the (Japanese-controlled) Korean government for permission to travel to the Chinese city of Jinan to work as unlicensed prostitutes (Kitashina, 1938). And while 12 Korean women worked in comfort stations in Shanghai in 1940, 527 worked as unlicensed prostitutes.⁵

2.4. Recruitment in Japan and Korea

1. *Japan.* – Many reformers sought to ban prostitution in prewar Japan, but virtually none complained about recruiters abducting young women into brothels. Young women from poor communities routinely left town to work as prostitutes, but they rarely claimed that any recruiter or brothel had forced them to take the job. Neither did many reformers complain that recruiters tricked young women into working for brothels (Senda, 1973: 89). Instead, when Japanese reformers complained about how women had become prostitutes, they complained about the parents: that parents had effectively sold their daughters into prostitution. They had not wanted to go, some women reported. But their parents had induced them to agree in order to collect the indenture advance.

For the network of overseas comfort stations, the Japanese government drafted recruiting regulations designed to select only prostitutes already in the industry (Gun'ianjo, 1938; Shina, 1938). The government – the regulations imply – realized the political risks it was running. Reformers within Japan had been fighting for decades to ban prostitution. The last thing it needed were accounts of naive young girls duped by mercenary and dishonest recruiters into a multi-year stint in a Shanghai brothel.

To avoid this morass, the Home Ministry issued clear instructions (Gun'ianjo, 1938; Shina, 1938):

- (a) For women traveling for the purpose of prostitution, approval shall be granted only to those women heading to North and Central China who are currently working as licensed or effective prostitutes, who are 21 years old or older, and who are free of venereal and other infectious diseases . . .
- (b) When receiving the identification documents detailed in the preceding section, the women should understand that they should immediately return to Japan upon the conclusion of their provisional contract or when that completion is no longer necessary.
- (c) Women intending to travel for the purpose of prostitution must apply to the police office for their identification documents in person.

The Ministry told recruiters to hire only women who already worked as prostitutes. To insure that the women knew what they were agreeing to do, it told police not to issue travel documents unless each woman applied in person with her contract. And at the time of the interview, it demanded that the police tell each applicant to return immediately when her contract expired.

2. *Korea.* – Korea had a problem distinct from any in Japan. It had a large corps of professional labor recruiters, and those recruiters had a history of deceptive tactics. In 1935, Korean police records counted 247 Japanese and 2,720 Korean recruiters. To be sure, these men and women (and they included both men and women) recruited workers for factories as well as brothels (Nihon, 1994: 51; Yamashita, 2006: 675). But throughout the prewar decades, newspapers reported recruiter fraud related to the sex industry.

Back in 1918, the Japanese language daily in Seoul (Keijo nippo, 1918; Senda, 1973: 89) complained of a massive increase in the number of cases where a delinquent entices a woman to Seoul and, after playing all sorts of tricks on her, sells her off to one of the 'dubious restaurants.' In the late 1930s, Korean newspapers reported a ring of 11 recruiters who attracted over 50 young women into prostitution (Toa, 1937). They reported one astonishingly skillful couple who had deceived over 100. Apparently, the couple promised parents that they would find a job for their daughters in Seoul factories, paid the parents 10 or 20 yen, and then forwarded the daughters to overseas brothels for 100 to 1,300 yen each (Toa, 1939; Yamashita, 2006: 675).

Note, however, what this problem was not. It was not that the government – either the Korean or the Japanese government – forced women into prostitution. It was not that the Japanese army worked with fraudulent recruiters. It was not even that recruiters focused on the army's comfort stations. Instead, the problem involved domestic Korean recruiters who had been tricking young women into working at brothels for decades.

3. The comfort stations

3.1. Venereal disease

The reams of Japanese government documents about the comfort stations from the 1930s and early 1940s make clear that the government established the institution to fight venereal disease. To be sure, it had other reasons too. It wanted to reduce rapes. And one strange 1939 army document from North China suggested that comfort stations would help the army fight communism within its ranks (Kitashina, 1939). Primarily, however, the military set up the stations to fight venereal disease: by definition, a comfort station was a brothel that had agreed to follow the military's stringent sanitation and contraceptive procedures.

The Japanese military did not need additional prostitutes; it had plenty. Prostitutes have followed armies everywhere, and they followed the Japanese army in Asia. Instead, the Japanese military needed healthy prostitutes. During the army's Siberian expedition in 1918, the commanders had found large numbers of their soldiers disabled by venereal disease.⁶ As the army expanded across China in the 1930s, it found that there too the local prostitutes were heavily infected. If its soldiers were going to patronize brothels, it wanted them patronizing brothels that kept the debilitating diseases in check.

To minimize that risk of disease, the army took several steps. It licensed those brothels that agreed to meet its standards – and named them comfort stations. It required prostitutes at the licensed brothels to undergo weekly medical examinations. If they became infected, it banned them from serving customers until fully recovered. It ordered all customers to use condoms (provided free either by the army or by the brothel), and forbade prostitutes from serving anyone who refused to do so. It required all prostitutes and customers to wash with disinfectants immediately after sex. And

⁵ Takei (2012: tab. 6), Zai Jokai (1938, 1937).

⁶ , see estimates of days lost, Yamada and Hiram (1923: 269).

it banned its soldiers from patronizing any brothels other than the licensed institutions.⁷

3.2. Contract duration

Although the comfort stations hired their prostitutes on contracts that resembled those used by the Japanese licensed brothels on some dimensions, the differences were important. To leave the countryside for work at a Tokyo brothel, a woman wanted some confidence that she would earn wages high enough to offset the risks and harshness of the job, and the hit to her reputation. To leave for a brothel on the military front, she incurred different vastly greater risks. Most obviously, she faced all the dangers of war – whether fighting, bombing, or the rampant disease on the front. She also faced far more serious risks of brothel non-performance. Should a brothel owner in Tokyo try to cheat on the contract, a prostitute might complain to the police. On the front, she would find no police except those that worked for the army. In Tokyo she might sue the brothel owner in court for nonperformance. On the front, she had no such option. In Tokyo, she could walk out of the brothel, and disappear into the anonymity of the Tokyo metropolis. On the front, she might be able to do this – but it all depended on where more specifically the brothel might be.

Translating the Tokyo brothel contracts to the front, in other words, required changes. The most basic contractual difference: a much shorter contractual term. Reflecting all these risks that followed from the brothel's location on the front, the contracts usually specified only two-year terms. Recall that the Japanese contracts typically provided six-year terms, and the Korean contracts three-year terms. Some Korean comfort women in Burma worked on contracts as short as six months to a year (e.g., [Josei, 1997: 1–19](#)).

3.3. Contract prices

For these short but potentially dangerous assignments, the brothels paid (annual) wages much higher than those at the Tokyo brothels. Typically, for the two-year job they paid several hundred yen up-front. Sample contracts for Japanese women recruited to Shanghai comfort stations in 1937 provided advances of 500 to 1,000 yen ([Naimusho, 1938](#)). Similarly, Home Ministry documents from 1938 report Japanese women travelling to the Shanghai comfort stations on 600–700 yen advances, with one woman receiving an advance in the 700–800-yen range, and two in the 300–500-yen range ([Naimusho, 1938](#)).

Note what this means: in compensation for the much higher risks involved, prostitutes at the comfort stations earned much higher pay. Domestic prostitutes in Korea and Japan already earned considerably more than they would earn in other employment. Recall that those in Japan earned 1000 yen to 1200 yen on six year terms. At the comfort stations prostitutes from Japan earned 600–700 yen on two-year terms.

3.4. Contract terms

Some of the other contract terms reflected the greater insecurity on the front as well. Take the 1943 military regulations regarding the stations in Malaya. Women in Japan considering a job in Malaya could reasonably wonder: will I be robbed; when the army retreats will I be able to carry my savings; if I die will my family have any access to my money? In response, the regulations required the brothel to open a (Japanese) postal savings account for each prostitute in her name. It then required the brothel to deposit in the

account 3 percent of the gross revenue the prostitute generated. In addition, the brothel was to pay the woman a fraction of the total gross revenue that turned on the amount of her outstanding debt. With 1,500 yen or more outstanding, she was to receive 40 percent of the revenue; if she had less than 1,500 yen, she was to receive 50 percent; and if she had no outstanding debt she was to take 60 percent. Of this share, the brothel was to apply 2/3 toward the remaining debt, and directly pay the prostitute the rest ([Maree, 1943](#); see also [U.S. Office, 1944](#)).

Upon completing the contractual term or (if earlier) repaying the loan, the women could go home. A Korean receptionist for comfort stations in Burma and Singapore kept a diary for several years ([Choe, 2017a,b](#)). Regularly, comfort women from his brothel completed their terms and returned to their homes. In the course of his research on comfort women, Kako Senda met a veteran who had helped to recruit women from Japan. Obviously, he had self-interested reasons to say what he said. But when [Senda \(1973: 26–27\)](#) asked him, "were there any women who actually paid back the 1,000 yen [advance] and went free?," "oh, there were," he replied. "There were lots. Among the ones who went with the first regiment, even those who were slowest paid it off in a few months and went free."

3.5. Prostitute savings

The amount that a prostitute earned beyond her up-front advance varied. Even by the contractual terms themselves, that amount depended on the revenue a prostitute generated. Scholars routinely suggest that that brothel owners must have cheated their prostitutes – and no doubt some did. People cheat each other in any industry.

Crucially, however, many brothel owners did indeed pay their prostitutes beyond that large up-front advance. The receptionist with the diary noted that the comfort women kept savings accounts. He noted that he regularly deposited money on their behalf in them. And he noted that he regularly sent money back to their homes on their behalf, and received telegrams confirming receipt ([KIH, 2016a](#); [Choe, 2017a,b](#)). Indeed, some comfort women earned and saved enough to establish comfort stations of their own ([Park, 2014: 111](#)).

Of all the Korean comfort women who left accounts, Mun Ok-ju seems to have done well most flamboyantly. She writes in her memoir ([KIH, 2016b](#)):

I saved a considerable amount of money from tips. . . . I knew that all the soldiers put their earnings in the saving accounts in the field post office, so I decided to put my money in the saving account. I asked a soldier to make a personal seal and put 500 yen in the account. . . . I became the owner of the savings passbook for the first time in my life. I worked in Daegu as a nanny and a street seller from the childhood but I remained poor no matter how hard I worked. I could not believe that I could have so much money in my saving account. A house in Daegu cost 1,000 yen at the time. I could let my mother have an easy life. I felt very happy and proud. The savings passbook became my treasure. . . .

It was fun to go shopping by rickshaw. I can't forget the experience of shopping in a market in Rangoon. There were lots of jewelry shops because many jewels were produced in Burma, and ruby and jade were not expensive. One of my friends collected many jewels. I thought I should have a jewel myself, so I went and bought a diamond.

I became a popular woman in Rangoon. There were a lot more officers in Rangoon than near the frontlines, so I was invited to many parties. I sang songs at parties and received lots of tips.

⁷ [Gunsei \(1942\)](#), [Shina \(1942\)](#), [SCAP \(1945\)](#), [Morikawa \(1939\)](#), [Mandalay \(1943\)](#), [U.S. Interrogation Report \(n.d.\)](#), [Hito gun \(1942\)](#).

3.6. The closing years of the war

The Japanese government mobilized Korean workers most aggressively during the last two years of the war, and scholars have sometimes suggested that those were the years it most aggressively recruited comfort women. In fact, the opposite is true. The closing years were not ones where the government was trying to staff brothels. Those were years it was moving prostitutes out of brothels and into munitions factories.

As the war turned bad for Japan, the military began running out of men. In 1936, 240,000 men served in the army. Once the army invaded China, that number climbed to 950,000 (1937). It hit 3.58 million in 1943, 5.4 million in 1944, and 7.34 million in 1945. Increasingly, the army called up reservists approaching age 40. By the end of the war, 60.9 percent of the men aged 20–40 had served in the military, and 2 million had been killed (Watanabe 2014: 1, 8).

The military was also running out of supplies (see generally Miwa, 2014). As the army called up its 30-something reservists and sent them to the front, it needed others to take their place in the mines and factories. It had not drafted its young Koreans (despite their being Japanese citizens) into the army. By 1944, however, it did begin sending large numbers of Korean men to those mines and factories. Simultaneously, it began sending young unmarried Japanese and Korean women into the factories as well.⁸

Brothels were the least of the government's worries. Steadily, brothels and high-end restaurants began to close. The army was shifting all plausible Japanese men from civilian production to the front. To replace them it was moving Korean men to Japan. It was moving both Japanese and Korean women out of homes and inessential jobs and into munitions production.⁹ Think Rosy the Riveter in Korea: the *Mainichi shimbun newspaper* (1944) published a letter from a woman hauling freight in Pusan harbor. Our country needs us, she exclaimed. Just because we're women doesn't mean that we can closet ourselves in our homes. Between the general austerity in the air and the loss of prostitutes to the factories, brothels steadily went out of business.¹⁰

4. Conclusion

The Japanese army had a problem. It did not lack for brothels. Prostitutes follow armies everywhere, and they had followed the Japanese army in the 1930s and 1940s. The problem was medical: these local prostitutes suffered from very high levels of debilitating venereal disease. If their soldiers were going to frequent brothels, the command at least wanted them in healthy brothels.

Toward that end – not toward better public health but toward maintaining a deadlier military force – the military imported the standard Japanese and Korean licensing system. Brothels and prostitutes registered with it. Designated physicians conducted weekly medical examinations. Brothels required condoms, and prostitutes were told to refuse clients who balked. Both clients and prostitutes were to wash with disinfectant after every encounter.

The contracts themselves followed basic game theoretic principles of credible commitments. Brothel owners (not the military) hired the bulk of the new prostitutes, and hired most of them from Japan and Korea. Realizing the incentive brothel owners had to exaggerate their future earnings, women wanted a large portion of their pay upfront. Brothels agreed. Knowing that they were headed for the front, women wanted a maximum service length. Brothels agreed. In turn, realizing the incentive the women had

to shirk within their unmonitored quarters, the brothels wanted terms that gave women an incentive to work hard. The women agreed. Together, the women and brothels concluded indenture contracts that coupled a large advance with one or two year terms. Until the last months of the war, the women served their terms or paid off their debts early, and returned home.

References

- Choe, Kilsung, 2017a. *Chosen shushin no choba nin ga mita ianfu no jijitsu* [The Truth About Comfort Women, as Seen by a Korean Receptionist]. Haato shuppan, Tokyo.
- Choe, Sang-Hun, 2017b. *Deal with Japan on Former Sex Slaves Failed Victims, South Korean Panel Says*. N.Y Times, Dec. 27.
- Chosen, sokakufutokeinempo, 1906. 1906-1942. *Zaicho kanren gyosha* [Related Industry Parties in Korea] (1906-1942), in Suzuki, et al. (2006).
- Chosen, sokakufu, 1944. *Kokumin choyo no kaisetsu* [Commentary on Citizen Mobilization], Oct. 1944, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-597).
- Chosen, norodosha, 1945. *Workers in Korea*, Mar. 10, 1945, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-563).
- Chuo shokugyo shokai jimu kyoku, reprinted in Ken'ichi Taniguchi, ed., *Kindai minshu no kiroku* [A Report of the Modern Populace] 3-412 (Shin jinbutsu orai sha) 1926. *Geishogi shakufu shokaigyo ni kansuru chosa* [An Investigation into the Placement Industry for Geisha, Prostitutes, and Bar Maids] (1926).
- Fujinaga, Takeshi, 1998. *Nichiro senso to Nihon ni yoru "Manshu" e no kosho seido ishoku* [The Russo-Japanese War and The Transplantation of The Licensed Prostitution System by Japan to "Manchuria"]. In: Katsurakawa, Mitsumasa (Ed.), *Kairaku to kei* [Recreation and Regulation] (Osaka daigaku sangyo kenkyujo).
- Fujinaga, Takeshi, 2000. *Chosen shokuminchi shihai to "ianfu" seido no seiritsu katei* [Control over the Korean Colony and the Establishment Process of the "Comfort Women" System]. In: VAWW-NET (Ed.), "ianfu" senji seiboryoku no jittai, I [The Reality of the "Comfort Women" and Sexual Violence in Wartime, I] (Ryokufu shuppan), at 196.
- Fujinaga, Takeshi, et al., 2001. *Shokuminchi Taiwan ni okeru Chosenjin sekkyakugyo to 'ianfu' no doin* [The Korean Entertainment Industry in Colonial Taiwan and The Mobilization of the 'Comfort Women]. In: Katsurakawa, Mitsumasa (Ed.), *Kindai shakai to baishun mondai* [Early Modern Society and the Prostitution Problem] (Osaka sangyo daigaku sangyo kenkyu jo).
- Fujinaga, Takeshi, 2004. *Shokuminchi kosho seido to Chosenjin josei* [The Colonial Licensed Prostitution System and Korean Women]. In: *Niccho yuko sokushin* (Ed.), *Nihon to Chosen no kankei shi* [History of the Relations Between Japan and Korea] (Agenda Project).
- Fukumi, Takao, 1928. *Teito ni okeru bai'in no kenkyu* [A Study of Prostitution in the Capital] (Hakubunkan).
- Gun'ianjo jugyofuto boshu ni kansuru ken [Regarding the Recruitment of Military Comfort Women], 1938. Army Ministry Infantry Bureau Proposal, to North and Middle China forces, dated March 4, Riku shimitsu No.745, vol. 10, 1938, in Josei (1997: 2-5).
- Gunsei kanbu bisaya shibu [Philippines], 1942. *Ianjo kitei sofu no ken* [Regarding transmittal of Comfort Station Regulations], Nov. 22, 1942, reprinted in Josei (1997: 3-187).
- Hakken no gyosha ga godo [Eight Firms Merge], Keijo nippo, Nov. 30, 1943, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-579).
- Hanto no kinro doin taisei [Labor Mobilization on the Peninsula], Keijo nippo, Aug. 27, 1944, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-595).
- Hata, Ikuhito, June, at 328 1992. *Showa shi no nazo wo tou* [Investigating the Puzzle of Showa History]. Seiron.
- Hatarakeru onna no hitoha hitori nokorazu hatarako [Women Able to work Should All Work], *Mainichi shimpo*, Sept. 23, 1943, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-568).
- Higuchi, Yuichi, 2005. *Soryokusen taisei to shokuminchi* [The Total War System and the Colonies]. In: Hayakawa, Norio (Ed.), *Shokuminchi to senso sekinin* [The Colonies and War Responsibility] (Yoshikawa kobun kan), at 53.
- Hito gun seikanbu. 1942. *Ianjo kitei sofu no ken* [Case Regarding the Transmission of Comfort Station Rules], Nov. 22, 1942, reprinted in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-383).
- Ito, Hidekichi, reprinted (Tokyo: Fuji shuppan 1982) 1931. *Sekitoka no kanojo no seikatsu* [The Lives of Women Under the Red Lights] (jitsugyo no nihon sha).
- Josei no tameno Ajia heiwa kokumin kikin, ed. 1997. *Seifu chosa: Jugun ianfu' kankei shiryosusei* [Government Investigation: Documents Relating to the Comfort Women Accompanying the Military] (Ryukei shosha).
- Keijo [Seoul] nippo, June 12 1918. quoted in Takeshi Fujinaga, *Shokuminchi Chosen ni okeru kosho seido no kakuritsu katei* [The Establishment Process for the Licensed Prostitution System in Colonial Korea], *Nijusseiki kenkyu*, Dec. 2004, evening ed.
- Keishi cho sakan kanbo bunsho ka. 1933. *Showa nan nen keishi cho tokei ichi ippan* [An Outline of Police Agency Statistics for 1932] (Sokan kanbo bunsho ka).
- KIH, available at: 2016a. Korea Institute of History. 2016. *Korean Comfort Station Manager's Diary*. Analyzed by Professor Choe Kilsung. Apr. 24, 2016. <http://scholarsinenglish.blogspot.com/2016/04/korean-comfort-station-managers-diary.html>.
- KIH, Apr. 20, 2016 2016b. Korea Institute of History. 2016. *Former Korean Comfort Woman Mun Oku-chu*.

⁸ Hatarakeru (1943), Romu (1943), Chosen (1944, 1945), Higuchi (2005: 53).

⁹ Senso (1943), Hanto (1944).

¹⁰ Senso (1943), Hata (1992: 330, 333), Hakken (1943).

- Kim, Pu-ja, Kim, Yon, 2018. *Shokuminchi yukaku [Colonial Pleasure Quarters]* (Yoshikawa kobunkan).
- Kitashina, hakenjimukan, 1938. *Sainan yuki ryokaku no seigen [The Limitation of Passengers Bound for Jinan]*, Mar. 1, 1938, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-143).
- Kitashina homen gun shireibu. 1939. *Kyosanto no waga guntai ni taisuru [Regarding the Communist Party and Our Military]*, April 5, 1939, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-148).
- Kusama, Yasoo, 1930. *Jokyu to baishofu [Waitresses and Prostitutes]* (Hanjin sha).
- Mainichi, shimbun, 1944. Feb. 26, 1944, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-562).
- Mandalay, command, 1943. *Ianjo kitei [Comfort Station Rules]*, May 26, 1943, reprinted at Josei (1997: 4-288).
- Maree, gunseikan, 1943. *Ianjo shisetsu [Comfort Facilities]*, Nov. 11, 1943, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-433).
- Michiya, Saiichiro, 1928. *Baishunronko [Studies in Prostitution]*, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-786).
- Minami Shina hakengun. 1939. *Eisei shun ho [Sanitation Dispatch]*, Aug. 1939, reprinted in Josei (1997: 2-79).
- Miwa, Yoshiro, 2014. *Japan's Economic Planning and Mobilization in Wartime, 1930s-1940s*. Cambridge University Press.
- Morikawa butaicho. 1939. *Morikawa butai tokushu iangyomu ni kansuru kitei [Morikawa Detachment Rules Regarding Special Comfort Industry]*, Nov. 14, 1939, reprinted at Josei (1997: 2-327).
- Naimusho, 1938. *Shina toko fujo [Women Passage to China]*, Feb. 18, 1938, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-124).
- Nihon yuran sha, ed. 1932. *Yukaku annai [Guide to Pleasure Quarters]* (Nihon yuran sha). Taiwan sotokufu. 1932. *Sekkyaku gyosha su [Number of Entertainers]*, Dec. 1932, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-858).
- Nihon no shokuminchi shihai to kokkaiteki kanri baishun [Japan's Colonial Control and the National Management of Prostitution], Chosenshi kenkyukai ronbun shu, 32: 37 (1994).
- Nihon Kirisuto kyo fujin kyofu kai. 1920. *Kaigai shugyofu mondai, I [The Overseas Prostitution, I]* (Nihon kirisuto kyo), reprinted (Jobundo, 2010).
- Nihongun, 2020. "ianfu" kankei shiryō shusei [Collection of Materials Relating to the Japanese Military "Comfort Women"] (Akaishi shoten).
- Odaka, Konosuke, 1975. *Nihon tochika ni okeru Chosen no rodo keizai [Korean Labor Economy Under Japanese Control]*. Keizai kenkyū 26, 145.
- Ohsato, Katsuma, ed. 1966. *Meiji iko honpo shuyo keizai tokei [Principal Economic Statistics for Our Nation Since the Meiji Period]* (Bank of Japan).
- Okubo, Hanayuki. 1906. *Kagai fuzoku shi [A Record of the Customs of the Reg - light District]* (Ryubun kan, 1906), reprinted (Nihon tosho sentaa, 1983).
- Park, Yu-Ha, 2014. *Teikoku no ianfu [Comfort Women of the Empire]* (Asahi shimbun shuppan).
- Ramseyer, J.Mark, 1991. *Indentured prostitution in imperial Japan: credible commitments in the commercial sex industry*. *J. Law Econ. Org.* 7, 89.
- Romu kanri no kyoka e [Toward Strengthening Labor Management], Keijo nippo, Sept. 23, 1943, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-567).
- SCAP, 1945. *Research Report: Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces*, Nov. 15, 1945, reprinted in Josei (1997: 5-139).
- Sendai, Kako, 1973. *Jugun ianfu [Military Comfort Women]* (Futaba sha).
- Senso he hanto romu wo gyosho [Focus Peninsular Labor on War], Keijo nippo, Oct. 9, 1943, in Suzuki, Yamashita & Tonomura, supra note, vol. 2, at 569 (limiting employment of women in sekkyaku industry in Korea).
- Shakai, jigyoukenkyujo, 1936. *Shuro shone shojo rodo jijo chosa [Survey of Working Conditions of Working Boys and Girls]* (Chuo shakai jigyo kyokai).
- Shina toko fujo no toriatsukai ni kansuru ken [Regarding the Handling of Women Bound for China], Feb. 23, 1938, Home Ministry, Police Bureau, Hatsukei No. 5.
- Shina haken gun. 1942. *Showa 17 nen 7 gatsu fukukankai doseki jo iken [Opinions Expressed at the July 1942 Vice Officers Meeting]*, Oct. 3, 1942, reprinted in Josei (1997: v. 3, 7).
- Taiwan, sotokufu, 1932. *Sekkyaku gyosha su [Number of Entertainers]*, Dec. 1932, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-858).
- Takei, Yoshimasa, available at: 2012. *Nicchu senso ki Shanhai no chosen jin shakai ni tsuite [Regarding the Korean Community in Shanghai During the Japan-China War]* (Nicchu senso shi kenkyukai). <http://iccs.aichi-u.ac.jp/archives/010/201205/4fc4385498c26.pdf>.
- Toa, nippo, Nov. 5 1937. *Shojo yuin dan kyukei [Gang to Entrap Young Women Sentenced]*, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-829).
- Toa, nippo, Mar. 7 1939. *Shinpan momoiro hakuku kyo*. in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-829).
- U.S. Interrogation Report. N.D. No name, No number, No date, reprinted in Josei (1997: 5-111).
- U.S. Office of War Information, 1944. *Interrogation Report No. 49*, Oct. 1, 1944, in Josei (1997: 5-203).
- Uemura, Yukitada, 1918. *Urare yuku onna [Sold Women]* (Daito kaku), reprinted in *Kindai fujin mondai meichosaku shu zokuhen [A collection of Famous Authors on Women's Issues – Continued Series]*, 5-57 (Nihon tosho sentaa, 1982).
- Uemura, Yukitada, 1929. *Nihon yuri shi [A History of the Japanese Pleasure Quarters]* (Shun'yo do).
- Watanabe, Manabu, 2014. *Dare ga heishi ni nattan ka (1) [Who Became a Soldier (1)]*. *Shakai gakubu kiyo* 119, 1.
- Yamada, Hiromichi, Hiramasa, Sahashi, 1923. *Tokei yori mitaru karyubyo [Venereal Diseases Seen Through Statistics]* (Nanzan do).
- Yamamoto, Shun'ichi, 1983. *Nihon kosho shi [A History of Licensed Prostitution in Japan]* (Chuo hoki shuppan).
- Yamashita, Yoshie, 2006. *Chosen ni okeru kosho seido no jisshi to so no tenkai [The Realization and Development of the Licensed Prostitution System in Korea]*, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 2-675).
- Yamazaki, Tomoko, 1972. *Sandakan hachiban shokan [Sandakan Number 8 Brothel]* (Chikuma shobo).
- Zai Jokai, soryojikan, 1937. *Zai Jokai soryojikan ni okeru tokko keisatsu jimū jokyō [Circumstances of the Special Police Matters for the Shanghai Consulate]*, Dec. 1937, in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-74).
- Zai Jokai, soryojikan, 1938. *Showa 13 nenju ni okeru zairyo hojin [Resident Japanese in 1938]* (1938), in Suzuki, et al. (2006: 1-118).

Further reading

Suzuki, Y., et al., 2006. *Nihongun "ianfu" kankei shiryō shusei [Collection of Materials Relating to the Japanese Military "Comfort Women"]*, 1. Akashi shoten, Tokyo.

Harvard Professor's Paper on 'Comfort Women': Perfect Opportunity to Raise a Serious Discussion on the Subject

South Korean media is at work again, going on their witch-hunt against Professor John Mark Ramseyer of Harvard Law School, who published a paper titled "Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War." The Korean Student Association of Harvard University released a statement, which has since collected many signatures, criticizing Professor Ramseyer and demanding his apology as well as the retraction of his paper. Meanwhile, South Korean media has been gleefully broadcasting this situation, dismissing Professor Ramseyer's academic paper as "nonsense."

For a long time, activist groups such as the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (The Korean Council) have been propagating the hypothesis that comfort women were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese military. Academic debate and verification about this were attempted in Korea by several academics, including Professor Yoocha Park, Professor Younghoon Lee, and Professor Seokchoon Lew. But their efforts were always thwarted by thoroughly anti-Japanese, nationalist activist groups and media and by the judiciary that complied with their agenda. As such, we cannot express enough how deeply concerned we are that this controversy over Professor Ramseyer's paper might go down the exact same track, as we have observed over the years in South Korea.

1.

First of all, what we would like to point out is that Professor Ramseyer's paper was officially approved to be published by the *International Review of Law and Economics*, a renowned international academic journal, after his paper received appropriate evaluations including peer review. The paper was recognized for its originality by experts in international academia, and the subject of the paper was acknowledged as worthy of academic debate. So why are external agents, who have nothing to do with academia, talking of the paper being 'nonsense' and trying to prevent any discussion from taking place?

Contrary to all the fuss that Korean media is making, Professor Ramseyer's paper is actually not about proving 'comfort women' are prostitutes. Using the concept of "credible commitments" in game theory, the paper delves into unique types and terms of contracts between the 'comfort station' owner and the 'comfort women', which cannot be explained from the perspective of sex slave theory. From the law and economics perspective, it investigates why the owner and the women involved in domestic prostitution in Japan and colonial Joseon (Korea) signed long-term contracts that allowed them to exchange large sums of wage advances and why a unique method of profit distribution was formed between them. Moreover, it discusses that in the case of comfort women, since they were dealing with wartime soldiers, not just with any soldiers at ordinary times, all conditions such as their advance payments, wages, and periods differed from the conditions for ordinary prostitutes who dealt with civilians.

From an economic point of view, it is understandable that Professor Ramseyer presupposes that contracts of comfort women were voluntary in nature. This is because, in economics, coercive measures, such as forced mobilization, are viewed as irrational options that cost a lot more than market transactions. Not only does the paper explore the working conditions of prostitutes under the authorized prostitution system in Japan, but it also explains in detail how the process of becoming a comfort woman was different for those from colonial Joseon than for those from mainland Japan. It also presents specific data that shows that the tyranny of pimps was particularly harsh in colonial Joseon.

Follow-up articles and academic debates in the future will be able to gradually decide if Professor Ramseyer's arguments were thorough enough or if they had any serious academic flaws. To a certain extent, academics in ivory towers remain independent from society and should be able to have fierce discussions even on subjects that are considered taboo by society, such as the "comfort women issue." Such a process contributes to raising the intellectual level of society as a whole. Open and rigorous debates constitute the basis of a sound academic process.

2.

In this regard, we are particularly shocked at the anti-academic behavior of many Harvard students of Korean heritage, who are demanding an apology from Professor Ramseyer for his article and are abruptly requesting that his paper be retracted from the

journal. We cannot help but point out and criticize this type of behavior reminiscent of the 'Cultural Revolution' in China.

'Retraction' is a final disciplinary action taken after an investigation is carried out by a journal or when serious misconduct is found in a thesis. What the students are trying to do is trample on the very value of academic freedom over an issue about which one can have different opinions and perspectives, even before a vigorous discussion has taken place regarding the subject of the paper. How will the international academia and scholars react to this situation?

At this time, other than the article written by a student of Korean heritage published in Harvard's student newspaper *The Harvard Crimson*, not too many articles in international media are currently addressing the controversy over Professor Ramseyer's paper. It's partly because the subject requires specialized knowledge, but more importantly, it's because foreign media has an unspoken understanding that this issue is basically a matter that needs to be settled by academic practices and logic.

In that respect, we wonder if the anti-academic behavior of Korean students at Harvard will only invite criticism from international media, giving them another reason to undermine Korea. If there are adults who prompted students to act this way, they should also take the time to reflect on their irresponsible behavior.

3.

At the same time, we ought to be extremely wary of the fact that Professor Ramseyer's personal life is under more scrutiny than the actual content of his paper. For instance, those criticizing him focus on the fact that he stayed in Japan for a long time during his childhood, that he is a Mitsubishi professor, and that he received a medal from Japanese government.

Of course, pointing out a possible conflict of interest for a scholar making claims that have social implications is not, in itself, wrong. However, such inspection must be equally carried out for those on the other side, who are criticizing Professor Ramseyer.

It's because 'academic freedom' is supposed to guarantee fair treatment and procedures, even to those who make unpopular or uncomfortable claims.

In this regard, we should equally recognize the fact that Professor Ramseyer is a scholar at the most prestigious law school of America and has been widely recognized in academia for his academic achievements.

4.

In international academia, there have been various discussions even on the most fundamental problem concerning the comfort women, such as whether 'forced mobilization' actually took place and whether the concept of 'sex slave' is an appropriate term or not.

Only in South Korea has the debate about the issue remained stagnant for more than ten years. The rigid position of activist and civic groups, which are not at all or only remotely related to academia, and that of international organizations, which only accept unilateral claims lacking academic depth, became the main authority on the issue and hindered any serious conversation from taking place.

If we, South Korea, ever wish to participate in the conversation on comfort women among international scholars, we must develop and present arguments strictly built on facts and logic and stop using reckless activism and impertinent, false 'fact checks'.

In order to do that, we should be able to have discussions on the subject without censorship. We cannot keep treating the hypothesis of sexual slavery in the Japanese military as some sort of a sacrosanct realm that is perfectly error-free.

As we, the Republic of Korea, are one of the parties directly involved in the issue, the obligation for us to allow rigorous conversations about comfort women proves to be all the more important than ever.

February 9th, 2021

Signed by

- Kyujae Jeong (Busan mayoral candidate, Freedom United Party, April 7, 2021 By-election)
- Daeho Kim (Seoul mayoral candidate, Freedom United Party, April 7, 2021 By-election)
- Dongshik Ju (Representative, Citizen's Solidarity for Regional Equality in Korea)
- Minho Han (Representative, Citizen's Movement for Unveiling Confucius Institutes of China)
- Younghoon Lee (Principal of Syngman Rhee School & Retired Professor of Economics, Seoul National University)
- Seokchoon Lew (Retired Professor of Sociology, Yonsei University)
- Ikjong Joo (Researcher & Lecturer, Syngman Rhee School)
- Anki Joung (Former Research Professor of Economics, Korea University)
- Wooyoun Lee (Senior Researcher, Nakseongdae Institute for Economic Research)
- Byungheon Kim (Representative, Korean History Textbook Research Center)
- Deokhyo Choi (CEO & Journalist, Korea Human Rights News,)
- Uiwon Hwang (CEO & Journalist, Mediawatch)
- Gisu Kim (Lawyer & Co-representative of Solidarity of Lawyers for Freedom and Unification)
- Donghwan Lee (Lawyer & President of Chungcheong Chapter of Lawyers for Human Rights and Unification of Korea)
- Soyeon Kim (Lawyer & President of Daejeon Chapter of Lawyers for Human Rights and Unification of Korea)

APPENDIX 3 – A LIST OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE “COMFORT WOMEN” SOURCES (from material compiled by Columbia University Law School)

A List of Sources

- Barkan, Elazar. "Sex Slaves: Comfort Women and Japanese Guilt." In *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.
- Brooks, Roy L. *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The Controversy over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- Chai, Alice Yun. "Korean Feminist and Human Rights Politics: The Chongshindae/Jugunianfu ("Comfort Women") Movement." In *Korean American Women: From Tradition to Modern Feminism*, eds. Young L. Song and Ailee Moon. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998.
- Choi, Chungmoo, ed. *The Comfort Women: Colonialism, War, and Sex*. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Chong, Yong-hwan. *Reconciliation for Whom? Comfort Women of the Empire as Invented History*. Soul-si: Purun Yoksa, 2016.
- Chung, Hyun-Kyung. "'Your comfort versus my death': Korean comfort women." In *War's Dirty Secret: Rape, Prostitution, and Other Crimes against Women*, ed. Anne Llewellyn Barstow. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2000: 13-25.
- Dolgopol, Ustinia and Snehal Paranjape. *Comfort Women: An Unfinished Ordeal. Report of a Mission*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Commission of Jurists, 1994.
- Dudden, Alexis. *Troubled Apologies – Among Japan, Korea and the United States*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Gustafsson, Karl. *Transnational Civil Society and the Politics of memory in Sino-Japanese Relations: Exhibiting the "Comfort Women" in China*. Lund: Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, 2014.

- Hata, Ikuhiko. "No Organized or Forced Recruitment: Misconceptions about Comfort Women and the Japanese Military." Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact (2007). Available at: http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/31_S4.pdf
- Hata, Ikuhiko. "The Flawed U.N. Report on Comfort Women." In *Women and Women's Issues in post World War II Japan*, ed. Edward R. Beauchamp. New York: Garland, 1998.
- *Henson, Maria Rosa. *Comfort Woman: A Filipina's Story of Prostitution and Slavery Under the Japanese Military*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999.
- Hicks, George. *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994.
- Hicks, George. "The Comfort Women." In *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, eds. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- *Howard, Keith, ed. *True Stories of the Korean Comfort Women: Testimonies*. London: Cassell, 1995.
- Hyun, Dae-song. *The Historical Perceptions of Korea and Japan: Its Origins and Points of the Issues Concerning Dokdo-Takeshima, Yasukuni Shrine, Comfort Women, and Textbooks*. Gyoha-eup Kyeonggi-do, Korea: Nanam, 2008.
- *International Symposium on Filipino Comfort Women: Papers and Proceedings*. Diliman, Quezon City: Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines Law Center, 1994.
- Kim-Gibson, Dai Sil. *Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women*. Parkersburg, Iowa: Mid-Prairie Books, 1999.
- Kimura, Maki. *Unfolding the "Comfort Women" Debates: Modernity, Violence, Women's Voices*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- *Media Joho Translation Committee, trans. *Can You Hear Us? The Untold Narratives of Comfort Women*. Seoul, Korea: The Commission on Verification and Support for the Victims of Forced Mobilization under Japanese Colonialism in Korea, 2014.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea. *Documents on the Victims of Sexual Slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army During the Second World War. United Nations Reports and Relevant Documents.* 2014.
- Naoko, Kumagai. *The Comfort Women: Historical, Political, Legal and Moral Perspectives.* Translated by David Noble. Tokyo: International House of Japan: 2016.
- Nihon Bengoshi Rengokai. *Recommendation on the Issue of "Comfort Women." Supplementary Explanation of the Recommendation on the Issue of "Comfort Women."* Tokyo (?):Japan Federation of Bar Associations, 1995.
- Nihon Bengoshi Rengokai. *Recent Development of JFBA's Activities on the Issue of "Comfort Women."* Tokyo: Japan Federation of Bar Associations, 1998.
- Norma, Caroline. *The Japanese Comfort Women and Sexual Slavery During the China and Pacific Wars.* London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.
- Pilzer, Joshua D. *Hearts of Pine: Songs in the Lives of Three Korean Survivors of the Japanese Comfort Women.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- *Qiu, Peipei. *Chinese Comfort Women: Testimonies from Imperial Japan's Sex Slaves.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- *Ruff O'Herne, Jan. *50 Years of Silence.* Sydney: Editions Tom Thompson, 1994.
- Sajor, Indai Lourdes, ed. *Common Grounds: Violence Against Women in War and Armed Conflict Situations.* Quezon City, Philippines: Asian Center for Women's Human Rights, 1998.
- Sancho, Nelia. *War Crimes on Asian Women: Military Sexual Slavery by Japan during World War II: The Case of the Filipino Comfort Women, Part II.* Manila: Asian Women Human Rights Council, 1998.
- *Schellstede, Sangmie Choi, ed. *Comfort Women Speak: Testimony by Sex Slaves of the Japanese Military.* New York: Holmes & Meier, 2000.

- Schmidt, David A. *Ianfu: The Comfort Women of the Japanese Imperial Army of the Pacific War: Broken Silence*. Lewiston, NY: Edwn Mellen Press, 2000.
- Soh, C. Sarah. *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Son, Elizabeth W. *Embodied Reckonings: "Comfort Women," Performance, and Transpacific Redress*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018.
- Stetz, Margaret and Bonnie Oh, eds. *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2001.
- Tanaka, Yuki. *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- Tanaka, Toshiyuki. *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the U.S. Occupation*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Ueno, Chizuko. *Nationalism and Gender*. Translated by Beverly Yamamoto. Melbouse: Trans Pacific Press, 2004.
- Yoshimi, Yoshiaki. *Comfort Women. Sex Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II*. Translated by Suzanne O'Brien. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- *The Truth of the Japanese Military "Comfort Women."* Seoul: Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2007.
- United States Congress House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment. *Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Tenth Congress, First Session, February 15, 2007*.
- *War Crimes on Asian Women: Military Sexual Slavery by Japan During World War II: The Case of the Filipino Comfort Women*. Manila: Asian Women Human Rights Council, 1998.

第1編 日本軍「慰安婦」・労務「慰安婦」関係資料

17、官公吏		16、業種商		15、銀行、会社事務員		14、新聞雑誌		13、刀剣修理業		12、豆腐製造業		11、娼妓、酌婦、娼妓、其他		10、旅館、料理、娼妓、慰安所		9、米穀酒類商		8、撞球場		7、写真業		6、浴場理髮業		5、喫茶店(カフェ)	
女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男
40		2				2		1		4		150		17		2		1		20		9		10	
4		1	1	102										8	19	1				1	8	3	10	4	
44		3	1	102		2		1		4		150		8	38										
		1				3				1		245			32					1	1	30	14	10	14
																					10	4	1	7	
														16	33										
		1				3				1		245		16	65										
44		4	1	102		5		1		5		395		24	103							23	4	16	21
																4				1	1	53	18	26	35

支那事变ニ由ル当地情勢ハ従来ノ漸減策ヲ持続シ得ザル

年ニ比シ七十三名ノ増員トナレリ而シテ一設備者ナリ、

昭和三十八年

昭和十三年中ニ於ケル在留邦人ノ特種婦女ノ状況及其ノ取締並ニ租界当局ノ私娼取締状況

在上海総領事館

昭和三十八年中ニ於ケル在留邦人ノ特種婦女ノ状況及其ノ取締並ニ租界当局ノ私娼取締状況

(在上海総領事館警察署沿革誌ニ依ル)

一、娼妓

上海ニ於ケル娼妓ノ保護取締及待遇ノ改善等ニ関シテハ常ニ細心ノ注意ヲ払ヒ居レル処曩ニ昭和四年五月当業者ヲシテ株式組織ノ檢番ヲ設置セシメ檢番料理店置屋及抱主娼妓間ニ於ケル賃貸契約稼業期間収得金ノ分配給与等ニ関シ命令ヲ以テ娼妓ノ待遇改善ヲ図ルト共ニ更ニ客年末一部命令内容ヲ改善シ今日ニ及ビタルガ娼妓ニ対スル待遇等ノ実情ハ寧口内地ノ夫レニ比シ遙ニ改善ノ域ニ達シ居ルト謂ヒ得ベシ昭和十二年八月日支事变ノ戦禍上海ニ波及スルヤ一時全部ノ避難引揚ヲ見タルガ同年十二月頃ヨリ漸次復帰シ現在料理店置屋二十七軒娼妓数二百五十七名ニシテ前年末ニ比シ四軒ノ増加数ニ於テ六十名ノ増員トナレリ又娼妓ノ総稼高ハ前年事変引揚ノ關係上二十三万一千余弗ナリシガ本年十一月末日現在ニ於テハ八十五万九千八百余円ニ上レリ此等料理店置屋及娼妓等ニ

(後略)

支那事変ニ由ル当地情勢ハ從來ノ漸減策ヲ持續シ得ザル事情アルニ顧ミ設備其ノ他ノ条件ヲ付シ増加ヲ認許スルコトトシ三十二年末現在料理店及置屋二十七軒芸妓二百五十七名ニ上リ前年ニ比シ六十名ノ増員ヲ見タリ

一、酌婦

在留邦人経営ノ貸席ハ内地公娼制ニ依ル乙種芸妓(娼妓)ヲ抱ヘ明治四十年七月貸席ヲ開業シタルモノナルガ昭和四年六月上海公安局ハ管下全般ニ亘リ支那人公娼廃止ヲ佈布スルト共ニ支那街ニ在リシ邦人業者ニ対シテモ閉鎖ヲ強要スル等ノ態度ヲ示シ一方之ニ呼応シテ本邦人ヲ以テ組織スル婦人矯風会上海支部モ公娼制ニ極力反対ヲ唱ヘ外務省ニ陳情スル等ノ運動ヲ為シ社会問題トシテ取り挙げラレタル事アリ国際都市ニ於ケル邦人ノ体面ト社会風教上常ニ問題視セラルルニ顧ミ当館ニ於テモ同年公娼廃止ニ代ルベキ弁法トシテ料理店酌婦制度ヲ設ケ爾來抱酌婦ノ改善ヲ計リ来リタル処昭和七年上海事変勃発ト共ニ我ガ軍隊ノ当地駐屯増員ニ依リ此等兵士ノ慰安機関ノ一助トシテ海軍慰安所(事実上ノ貸席)ヲ設置シ現在ニ至リタル然ルニ本業者モ今次事変勃発ト共ニ一時内地ニ避難シタルガ客年十一月頃ニハ常態ニ復シ其ノ後在留邦人ノ激増ト共ニ瀝月、末広ノ貸席ヲ増シ十二月末日現在事実上ノ貸席十一軒(内海軍慰安所七軒ヲ含ム)抱酌婦百九十一名(内地人百七十一名朝鮮人二十名)トナリ前

十五万九千八百余円ニ上レリ此等料理店置屋及芸妓等ニ対シテハ常ニ保安風俗衛生上ノ取締ヲ勵行シ来リタルガ

年ニ比シ七十三名ノ増員トナレリ而シテ一般貸席四軒ハ殆ド居留邦人ヲ顧客トシ他ノ海軍慰安所七軒ハ海軍下士官兵ヲ専門ニ絶対地方客ニ接セシメズ且酌婦ノ健康診断モ陸戦隊及当館警察官吏立会ノ上毎週一回専門医ヲシテ実施セシメ居ルモノナリ尚其ノ他当館管内ニ陸軍慰安所臨時酌婦三百名アリ

(三、四・略)

五、私娼

上海ハ魔都ノ称アルガ如ク遊客ノ好奇心ヲ誘フ歓楽場所ニ存在シ就中一般人士ヲシテ矚目セシムルモノハ私娼ニシテ特ニ共同租界繁華街タル南京路両側ノ如キハ支那人私娼又ハ如何ハシキ「ダンサー」等野鷄ト称シテ出没シ猥褻極マル言辞ヲ弄シ又ハ赤露ノ革命ニ由リ本国ヲ逃レ流浪セル白系露人ノ私娼ハ其ノ数五、六百名ヲ算シ彼等ハ常ニ取締ノ隙ニ乗ジ各処ニ出没シテ行客ヲ曳キ支那事変後ノ現在ニ於テモ邦人居住地区虹口及楊樹浦方面ノミニテモ約百五十名ノ多キニ達シ居レリ之ニ次グ本邦人私娼モ事変前二百五十名内外ト称セラレタリシガ事変後戦時景氣ノ好況ニ由リ正業ニ転ジ其ノ数著シク減ジ現在百五十名内外ト認メラル而シテ此等私娼ハ其ノ大半ハ朝鮮人ニシテ内地人私娼ノ大部分ハ一戸ヲ構ヘ支那人車夫等ヲ客引ニ使用或ハ租界内ニ慰安機関ノナキ陸軍兵士ヲ対手ニ語学教授主人ガ第一線ニ勤メ居ル留守宅又ハ其ノ

他正業ヲ装ヒ密カニ売淫行為ヲ為シ居レルガ軼々居所ヲ替ヘ之方取縮上ノ苦心少カラザルモノアリ

〔後略〕

一九三八年

皇軍の九江入城及び領事館再開と九江在留邦人の状況*

在九江領事館

開館當時ニ於ケル状況左ノ通

一、邦人関係

十二月一日九江在留邦人ハ五百五十七名ノ多キニ達シタルガ其ノ大部ハ軍ヲ対象トスル飲食店、酒保、写真業、特種慰安所関係者ニシテ孰レモ一時的在留者ニシテ就中全人口ノ四〇%ヲ占ムル所謂特種婦人ノ如キハ軍ノ命令ニ依リ移動シ居レル状態ナルヲ以テ九江ノ復興乃至繁栄等ヲ樹立スルガ如キハ当分困難ナル実情ニアリ尚旧居留民ハ南潯鐵路関係者二名ヲ除キ他ハ殆ド復帰セルモ(概ネ單身)目下当地ハ廬山及南昌作戦上外支人ノ復帰ハ未ダ之ヲ許可セザルヲ以テ事変前ニ於ケルガ如キ商取引ヲ為スコト全然不能ナル為不得已軍人相手ノ所謂「缶詰品ノ販売」ヲ為シツツアル状況ニシテ可及的速ニ对支那人ノ開放ヲ期スルヲ望ム

開放セラレアリタル関係上早クヨリ邦人居住シアリテ事変前ハ一時其ノ数百三十余名ニ達シタルコトアリシモ打続ク時局不安ト排日ノ影響ニ由リ漸減シ昭

最モ繁華ナリシ大中路二面セル支那人商舖ヲ好意的ニ割等テ便宜ヲ図リツツアリ

又進出邦人ニ対シテモ同区域一帯ヲ日本人居住区域トシテ家屋ノ割当ヲ為シツツアリ支那人復帰ノ上ハ之ガ屋賃等ニ付近ク結成セラルベキ自治委員会方面ト協定ノ要アルベク目下特務機關ト協議中ナリ從テ当館トシテモ在留邦人統制上速ニ日本人会ノ復活ヲ必要トスル次第第二テ目下民会长及民会役員等物色中ナルガ外人復帰ヲ認めザル關係上対外的ニ相当機微ナル關係モアリ之ガ復活ニ付テハ慎重ヲ期シツツアリ

〔以下略〕

一九三八年

昭和十三年在南京総領事館蕪湖分館警察事務状況

昭和十三年在南京総領事館蕪湖分館警察事務状況

同警察署長報告摘録

目次〔略〕

〔前略〕

二、在留邦人ノ状況
当館管内ニ於テ現在邦人ノ在留スル地方ハ蕪湖、安慶、太平、馬鞍山、裕溪口、蕪湖及青島鎮ナルル也

郵船、中公司、華中鉄鉱公司等ノ会社員ノ外省内土産品ノ買付、輸出及本邦品ノ輸入商ノ如キ一般貿易業者、商店員、雜貨商並ニ主トシテ軍人相手ノ料理

第三章 慰安所政策展開期 (1937~1941年)

(四) 其ノ他稼業ニ関スル一切ノ事項ハ現地軍当局ノ指示ニ従フコト

ノ渡航ヲ認ムルコトト相成之ヲ引率スル者 (抱主) ヲ大阪、京都、兵庫、福岡及山口ノ各府県下ヨリ選定シ之ガ婦女ヲ募集スル為別紙ノ通右府県ニ通牒致置候ニ付テハ或ハ貴県下ヨリモ右渡航ニ参加スル婦女アリト思料スルニ付予メ御含置相成度為念申進候

南支派遣軍参謀
陸軍航空兵少佐 久門 有文
警保局長閣下

朝鮮総督府文書

一九三八年三月一日

濟南行旅客ノ制限撤廃ニ関スル件

北支派遣事務官 室田寅雄

昭和十三年三月一日

北支派遣事務官 室田寅雄

外務部長殿
濟南行旅客ノ制限撤廃ニ関スル件
昨年十二月初旬来山東省ニ於ケル情勢險惡トナリタルヲ以テ軍ニ於テ作戦上津浦線南行旅客ヲ禁止シタルガ濟南陥落

内務省警保局長

宛 府県長官 (大阪、京都、兵庫、福岡、山口ノ各府県ヲ除ク)

南支方面渡航婦女ノ取扱ニ関スル件
今般已ムヲ得ス南支方面ハ稼業ヲ目的トスル婦女約四百名

後本年一月十四日ヨリ一般旅客ノ濟南旅行ヲ許可スルコト、ナシタリ而シテ之ニハ特ニ身元ヲ厳選シテ特務機関名ノ許可証ヲ發給スルコト、ナシ右事務処理ノ為ニ天津總領事館内ニ濟南總領事館派遣員事務所ヲ設置シ同所ニ於テ入済許可証ヲ發給シタリ 其後同地ノ治安漸次回復シタルヲ以テ三月一日ヨリ右制限ヲ撤廃シ何人ト雖モ自由ニ濟南ニ旅行シ得ル如クナリタルガ右期間内ニ天津出張所ニ於テ旅行許可証ヲ發給シタル人員ハ

内地人 七百三十一名 (中女百七十三名)
朝鮮人 百七十六名 (中女百十五名)

計九百七名 (此ノ外軍憲兵隊ニ於テ發給シタル者モアリ)ニシテ内地人女百七十三名中芸妓女給七十六名、朝鮮人女百十五名中酌婦女給 (九割ハ酌婦) 一百一名ニシテ職業別ニ尚濟南青島間ハ未タ一般交通機回復旧セス現在軍用列車ノミ通シ旅客ノ入青許可ハ三月十日前後トナル趣キナリ
右御参考迄ニ報告ス

發送元
警務局長
外務部長

第1編 日本軍「慰安婦」・労務「慰安婦」関係資料

17、官公吏		16、業種商		15、銀行、会社事務員		14、新聞雑誌		13、刀剣修理業		12、豆腐製造業		11、娼妓、酌婦、娼妓、其他		10、旅館、料理、娼妓、慰安所		9、米穀酒類商		8、撞球場		7、写真業		6、浴場理髮業		5、喫茶店(カフェ)			
女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男	女	男		
40		2				2		1		4		150				17		2				20		9		10	
4		1	1	102										8	19	1				1	8	3	10	4			
						2		1		4	150	8	38			4		1	1	30	14	10	14				
		1				3				1	245		32							10	4	1	7				
												16	33							13		15	14				
		1				3				1	245	16	65														
44		4	1	102		5		1		5	395	24	103			4		1	1	53	18	26	35				

支那事变ニ由ル当地情勢ハ従来ノ漸減策ヲ持続シ得ザル

年ニ比シ七十三名ノ増員トナレリ而シテ一設備者ヨリ、

昭和三十八年

昭和十三年中ニ於ケル在留邦人ノ特種婦女ノ状況及其ノ取締並ニ租界当局ノ私娼取締状況

在上海総領事館

昭和三十八年中ニ於ケル在留邦人ノ特種婦女ノ状況及其ノ取締並ニ租界当局ノ私娼取締状況

(在上海総領事館警察署沿革誌ニ依ル)

一、娼妓

上海ニ於ケル娼妓ノ保護取締及待遇ノ改善等ニ関シテハ常ニ細心ノ注意ヲ払ヒ居レル処曩ニ昭和四年五月当業者ヲシテ株式組織ノ檢番ヲ設置セシメ檢番料理店置屋及抱主娼妓間ニ於ケル賃貸契約稼業期間収得金ノ分配給与等ニ関シ命令ヲ以テ娼妓ノ待遇改善ヲ図ルト共ニ更ニ客年末一部命令内容ヲ改善シ今日ニ及ビタルガ娼妓ニ対スル待遇等ノ実情ハ寧口内地ノ夫レニ比シ遙ニ改善ノ域ニ達シ居ルト謂ヒ得ベシ昭和十二年八月日支事变ノ戦禍上海ニ波及スルヤ一時全部ノ避難引揚ヲ見タルガ同年十二月頃ヨリ漸次復帰シ現在料理店置屋二十七軒娼妓数二百五十七名ニシテ前年末ニ比シ四軒ノ増加数ニ於テ六十名ノ増員トナレリ又娼妓ノ総稼高ハ前年事変引揚ノ關係上二十三万一千余弗ナリシガ本年十一月末日現在ニ於テハ八十五万九千八百余円ニ上レリ此等料理店置屋及娼妓等ニ

(後略)

支那事変ニ由ル当地情勢ハ從來ノ漸減策ヲ持續シ得ザル事情アルニ顧ミ設備其ノ他ノ条件ヲ付シ増加ヲ認許スルコトトシ三十二年末現在料理店及置屋二十七軒芸妓二百五十七名ニ上リ前年ニ比シ六十名ノ増員ヲ見タリ

一、酌婦

在留邦人経営ノ貸席ハ内地公娼制ニ依ル乙種芸妓(娼妓)ヲ抱ヘ明治四十年七月貸席ヲ開業シタルモノナルガ昭和四年六月上海公安局ハ管下全般ニ亘リ支那人公娼廃止ヲ佈布スルト共ニ支那街ニ在リシ邦人業者ニ対シテモ閉鎖ヲ強要スル等ノ態度ヲ示シ一方之ニ呼応シテ本邦人ヲ以テ組織スル婦人矯風会上海支部モ公娼制ニ極力反対ヲ唱ヘ外務省ニ陳情スル等ノ運動ヲ為シ社会問題トシテ取り挙げラレタル事アリ国際都市ニ於ケル邦人ノ体面ト社会風教上常ニ問題視セラルルニ顧ミ当館ニ於テモ同年公娼廃止ニ代ルベキ弁法トシテ料理店酌婦制度ヲ設ケ爾來抱酌婦ノ改善ヲ計リ来リタル処昭和七年上海事変勃発ト共ニ我ガ軍隊ノ当地駐屯増員ニ依リ此等兵士ノ慰安機関ノ一助トシテ海軍慰安所(事実上ノ貸席)ヲ設置シ現在ニ至リタル然ルニ本業者モ今次事変勃発ト共ニ一時内地ニ避難シタルガ客年十一月頃ニハ常態ニ復シ其ノ後在留邦人ノ激増ト共ニ瀝月、末広ノ貸席ヲ増シ十二月末日現在事実上ノ貸席十一軒(内海軍慰安所七軒ヲ含ム)抱酌婦百九十一名(内地人百七十一名朝鮮人二十名)トナリ前

十五万九千八百余円ニ上レリ此等料理店置屋及芸妓等ニ対シテハ常ニ保安風俗衛生上ノ取締ヲ勵行シ来リタルガ

年ニ比シ七十三名ノ増員トナレリ而シテ一般貸席四軒ハ殆ド居留邦人ヲ顧客トシ他ノ海軍慰安所七軒ハ海軍下士官兵ヲ専門ニ絶対地方客ニ接セシメズ且酌婦ノ健康診断モ陸戦隊及当館警察官吏立会ノ上毎週一回専門医ヲシテ実施セシメ居ルモノナリ尚其ノ他当館管内ニ陸軍慰安所臨時酌婦三百名アリ

(三、四・略)

五、私娼

上海ハ魔都ノ称アルガ如ク遊客ノ好奇心ヲ誘フ歓楽場所ニ存在シ就中一般人士ヲシテ矚目セシムルモノハ私娼ニシテ特ニ共同租界繁華街タル南京路両側ノ如キハ支那人私娼又ハ如何ハシキ「ダンサー」等野鷄ト称シテ出没シ猥褻極マル言辞ヲ弄シ又ハ赤露ノ革命ニ由リ本国ヲ逃レ流浪セル白系露人ノ私娼ハ其ノ数五、六百名ヲ算シ彼等ハ常ニ取締ノ隙ニ乗ジ各処ニ出没シテ行客ヲ曳キ支那事変後ノ現在ニ於テモ邦人居住地区虹口及楊樹浦方面ノミニテモ約百五十名ノ多キニ達シ居レリ之ニ次グ本邦人私娼モ事変前二百五十名内外ト称セラレタリシガ事変後戦時景氣ノ好況ニ由リ正業ニ転ジ其ノ数著シク減ジ現在百五十名内外ト認メラル而シテ此等私娼ハ其ノ大半ハ朝鮮人ニシテ内地人私娼ノ大部分ハ一戸ヲ構ヘ支那人車夫等ヲ客引ニ使用或ハ租界内ニ慰安機関ノナキ陸軍兵士ヲ対手ニ語学教授主人ガ第一線ニ勤メ居ル留守宅又ハ其ノ

他正業ヲ装ヒ密カニ売淫行為ヲ為シ居レルガ軼々居所ヲ替ヘ之ガ取縮上ノ苦心少カラザルモノアリ

〔後略〕

一九三八年

皇軍の九江入城及び領事館再開と九江在留邦人の状況*

在九江領事館

開館当時ニ於ケル状況左ノ通

一、邦人関係

十二月一日九江在留邦人ハ五百五十七名ノ多キニ達シタルガ其ノ大部ハ軍ヲ対象トスル飲食店、酒保、写真業、特種慰安所関係者ニシテ孰レモ一時的在留者ニシテ就中全人口ノ四〇%ヲ占ムル所謂特種婦人ノ如キハ軍ノ命令ニ依リ移動シ居レル状態ナルヲ以テ九江ノ復興乃至繁栄等ヲ樹立スルガ如キハ当分困難ナル実情ニアリ尚旧居留民ハ南潯鐵路関係者二名ヲ除キ他ハ殆ド復帰セルモ(概ネ單身)目下当地ハ廬山及南昌作戦上外支人ノ復帰ハ未ダ之ヲ許可セザルヲ以テ事変前ニ於ケルガ如キ商取引ヲ為スコト全然不能ナル為不得已軍人相手ノ所謂「缶詰品ノ販売」ヲ為シツツアル状況ニシテ可及的速ニ对支那人ノ復帰ヲ期シツツアリ

開放セラレアリタル関係上早クヨリ邦人居住シアリテ事変前ハ一時其ノ数百三十余名ニ達シタルコトアリシモ打続ク時局不安ト排日ノ影響ニ由リ漸減シ昭

最モ繁華ナリシ大中路二面セル支那人商舖ヲ好意的ニ割等テ便宜ヲ図リツツアリ

又進出邦人ニ対シテモ同区域一帯ヲ日本人居住区域トシテ家屋ノ割当ヲ為シツツアリ支那人復帰ノ上ハ之ガ屋賃等ニ付近ク結成セラルベキ自治委員会方面ト協定ノ要アルベク目下特務機関ト協議中ナリ從テ当館トシテモ在留邦人統制上速ニ日本人会ノ復活ヲ必要トスル次第第二テ目下民会长及民会役員等物色中ナルガ外人復帰ヲ認めザル關係上対外的ニ相当機微ナル關係モアリ之ガ復活ニ付テハ慎重ヲ期シツツアリ

〔以下略〕

一九三八年

昭和十三年在南京総領事館蕪湖分館警察事務状況

昭和十三年在南京総領事館蕪湖分館警察事務状況

同警察署長報告摘録

目次〔略〕

〔前略〕

一、在留邦人ノ状況

当館管内ニ於テ現在邦人ノ在留スル地方ハ蕪湖、安慶、太平、馬鞍山、裕溪口、蘄州及青泥鎮ナルニ

郵船、中公司、華中鉄鉱公司等ノ会社員ノ外省内土産品ノ買付、輸出及本邦品ノ輸入商ノ如キ一般貿易業者、商店員、雜貨商並ニ主トシテ軍人相手ノ料理

四、「従軍慰安婦」にされた人々

——一九九五年一月二五日発行 アジア女性基金パンフレットより——

「従軍慰安婦」とは、かつての戦争の時代に、日本軍の慰安所で将兵に性的な奉仕を強いられた女性たちのことである。

慰安所の開設が、日本軍当局の要請によってはおこなわれたのは、中国での戦争の過程でのことです。一九三一年（昭和六年）満州事変がはじまると、翌年には戦火は上海に拡大されます。この第一次上海事変によって派遣された日本の陸海軍が、最初の慰安所を上海に開設させました。慰安所の数は、一九三七年（昭和十二年）の日中戦争開始以後、戦線の拡大とともに大きく増加します。

当時の軍の当局は、占領地で頻発した日本軍人による中国人女性レイプ事件によって、中国人の反日感情がさらに強まることをおそれ、防止策をとることを考えました。また、将兵が性病にかかり、兵力が低下することを防止しようと考えました。中国人の女性との接触から軍の機密がもれることもおそれられました。