

## Chapter 11: Statues of a comfort woman and a mobilized worker

### A statue of a “curse” in front of the Japanese Consulate

As a part of my on-the-scene reporting, the author visited the comfort woman statue standing in front of the Japanese Embassy in Korea. When I arrived at the site, the statue was surrounded by festive anti-Japanese demonstrations.

Next to the statue, a vinyl tent was set up and inside the tent, several women were stationed to “protect the comfort woman statue.” There was a “girls’ party” atmosphere.

On the wall across from the Embassy was pasted a large banner illustrated with a comfort woman statue which read: “We protect the statue! Volunteers are welcome to protect the statue here with us.” In this manner, they merrily denounced Japan.

On the sidewalk, a large “plate of peace” is inlaid, which says in Hangul, English and Japanese:

**On January 8, 1992, Wednesday demonstration for the resolution of the Japanese military comfort women issue began here in front of the Japanese Embassy. To celebrate the one thousandth anniversary of the demonstration on December 14, 2011 and to pass on its sublime spirit and history, we hereby establish “Monument of Peace.”**

Along the sidewalk, there were many golden plates inlaid, stating “women who stood up here for truth,” and each plate bore a name of a former comfort woman and a story in Hangul and English, such as: “victim of the Japanese military comfort women system, taken to China at the age of sixteen.”

On the wall in the back of the comfort woman statue, there were many *Ema* (votive tablet of a horse) boards posted, stating: “Japan must apologize,” or “Old women are dead, but they shall never be forgotten.”

Here, at this place, it is said that even elementary school children shout, “Japan must apologize. Shame on you!”

Surrounded with such words of “vengeance and hatred” against Japan, the comfort woman statue stares at the Japanese Embassy. I felt a chill when the thought crossed my mind that the statue could be considered the “cursing statue,” wishing for Japan’s destruction.

I also visited the comfort woman statue standing in front of the Japanese Consulate in Busan. This one stares right at the Consulate's stone wall, only several meters away on the sidewalk. There is no festivity here, unlike near the one in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul. However, with the stillness, it is all the more eerie and intimidating.

What other country on earth insults so intently foreign consulates in this manner? This clearly breaches the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Article 22-2, concluded to protect the safety, peace and dignity of foreign consulates. I cannot help but wonder why it is that neither the Japanese Government nor the Japanese Embassy requests the immediate removal of the statues.

### **Ubiquitous comfort woman statues in Korea**

Comfort woman statues are not only in front of the Japanese Consulates. Now, they are all over Korea.

In 2014, the prestigious Ewha Woman's High School led a fund-raising campaign to build a comfort woman statue, and with the participation of 16,000 students from 53 high schools, a statue was built a year later. The statue was installed at Francisco Education Hall in Seoul. Korean *Yonhap News* reported the students' activity as wonderful and fully endorsed it, stating, "These high school students who helped build the statue hope that many students will become interested in the comfort women issue." Korean high school students absolutely believe that "the Japanese military committed cruelties against Korean women that the world has never seen before," and, feeling morally superior to Japan, they built the statue as an act of "conscientiousness." The level of thinking has reached the cult stage.

Similar grass-roots, anti-Japanese cultist activities permeate the country as "Korean conscience" and one statue after another have been built in Korea. There are now sixty statues in Korea as of January 30, 2017. Their related Japanese sister cities and regions are shown in the chart on the next page.

As I will state in Part IV of this book, the "forced abduction of comfort women" is sheer nonsense. After San Francisco permitted the installation of a comfort woman statue in a public area, Osaka City cancelled its sister city relationship with San Francisco. In order to preserve Japan's prestige and honor, and at the same time to speak the truth to Korea, other Japanese autonomies should follow suit and urge their Korean sister cities to remove their comfort woman statues. If Korean sister cities fail to do so, Japanese cities should cancel their sister city relationships for the honor of the Japanese people.

Korean autonomies that installed comfort woman statues and their Japanese sister cities<sup>1</sup>

Korean Province	City/county	No. of statues	Japanese sister cities
	Seoul (special city)	5	Tokyo; Hokkaido; Sumida-ku, Tokyo; Tahara, Aichi
Gyeonggi	Bunchon	1	Okayama; Kawasaki, Kanagawa
	Osan	1	Hida, Saitama
	Gunpo	1	Atsugi, Kanagawa
	Goyang	1	Hakodate, Hokkaido
	Siheung	1	Hachijoji, Tokyo
	Suwon	1	Fukui; Asahikawa, Hokkaido
Gangwon	Wonju	1	Miho, Gifu
	Gangneung	1	Chichibu, Saitama
North Chungcheong	Cheongju	1	Tottori; Kofu, Yamanashi
South Chungcheong	Daejeon	1	Sapporo, Hokkaido
	Dangjin	1	Daisen, Akita
	Seosan	1	Tago-cho, Aomori; Tenri, Nara
North Gyeongsang	Pohan	1	Fukuyama, Hiroshima; Joetsu, Niigata
South Gyeongsang	Ulsan	1	Hagi, Yamaguchi; Niigata
	Namhae Co.	1	Isa, Kagoshima
	Busan	2	Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi; Fukuoka; Hokkaido
	Changwon	1	Kure, Hiroshima; Himeji, Hyogo
	Geoje	1	Yame, Fukuoka
North Jeolla	Jeonju	1	Kanazawa, Ishikawa
South Jeolla	Muan County	1	Nagoya, Aichi
	Gwangju	1	Sendai, Miyagi
	Suncheon	1	Izumi, Kagoshima
	Mokpo	1	Beppu, Oita
Jeju special autonomous province	Jeju	1	Beppu, Oita; Arakawa-ku, Tokyo; Sanda, Hyogo; Wakayama

<sup>1</sup> *Evening Fuji*, dated January 30, 2017, with a special contribution from Mr. Hosoya Kiyoshi.

### **Comfort woman statues and monuments are being built overseas, one after another**

Following the Kono Statement, Korea took it for granted that “Japan admitted that there was forced abduction.” Greatly encouraged by this so-called recognition, Korea began building comfort woman statues and monuments all over the world. Places where such statues and monuments were built as of July 2018 are listed in the next chart.

#### Cities in which comfort woman statues and monuments are installed

Date (year.month.day)	Country	City	Site, kind of installation
2010.10	New Jersey, USA	Bergen County Palisese Park	Library Monument
2012. 6	New York, USA	Nassau County	Eisenhower Park Monument
2012.12	California, USA	Orange County Garden Grove	Private estate Monument
2013. 3	New Jersey, USA	Bergen County Hackensack	Court house Monument
2013. 7	California, USA	Los Angeles County Glendale	Central Park Statue
2014. 1	New York, USA	Nassau County	Eisenhower Park Monument (second one)
2014. 5	Virginia, USA	Fairfax County	County office site Monument
2014. 8	New Jersey, USA	Hudson County Union City	Square Monument
2014. 8	Michigan, USA	Detroit	Korean-American Culture Center estate, Monument
2015. 11	Canada	Toronto	Koreans Hall estate Monument
2016. 8.6	New South Wales, Australia	Ash field	Church estate Statue
2017. 4	Bayern, Germany	Wiesent	
2017. 4	Nepal	Himalaya	Pavilion Park (estate)

			Statue (Epitaph removed)
2017. 6.30	Georgia, USA	Brook Heaven	Park, Statue
2017. 7	New Jersey, USA	Bergen County, Fort Lee	Cliffside Park Church Monument
2017. 9.22	California, USA	San Francisco	St. Mary Park Statue
2017. 10.13	New York, USA	Manhattan	New York Women's Club Museum, Statue
2017. 12. 8	The Philippines	Manila	Statue (removed on 2018. 4.27)
2018. 5. 23	New Jersey, USA	Bergen County Fort Lee	Monument

In New Jersey, U.S., there are already five statues, four of which stand in public property. In New Jersey, bullying of Japanese-Americans and the children of Japanese families has become intolerable and mothers fought back, forming a group called “Himawari (meaning sunflower in Japanese) Japan,” and worked to fight misunderstanding and prejudice against Japanese people. (Readers may find out more on the extent of bullying by searching “Himawari Japan” on the Internet.

The latest comfort woman monument in the U.S. was built in Fort Lee, New Jersey. In a report from a member of a group who attended the dedication ceremony of the monument:

**The dedication ceremony started with a speech by Mayor Sokolich of Fort Lee, followed by a recitation of the poem inscribed on the comfort woman monument by a Korean-American student from Fort Lee High School and then a speech by a female Filipino-American lawyer. In her speech, the lawyer stated that she studied the comfort women issue five years ago and found out that fourteen and seventeen year-old girls were repeatedly raped, and claimed Japanese military involvement and used the term “sex slaves.” Her speech was a huge affront to Japan. [Omitted] The sponsor of the ceremony put up banners with the national flags of China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, to suggest that Japan committed crimes in every part of Asia, including Korea.**

**Originally, a Japanese-American, who was a veteran and an honorary citizen of Fort Lee was scheduled to make a speech, emphasizing community unity, not division. However, the Koreans demanded that the speaker fully embrace Korean assertions and contribute to the registration fee, which obliged him to decline from making his speech.**

**In the city of Fort Lee, more than 30% of the entire population are Koreans and they have tremendous influence in terms of funding and organizations, totally overwhelming the Japanese in this respect. We fear that the behaviors displayed in Fort Lee will spread all over America, along with dissemination of a false history fabricated by Koreans. Already, in American schools, history fabricated by Koreans is being taught to American children as “true history”. Desiring that our Japanese children living in America will be able to live with pride in American society as Japanese people, we, of “Himawari Japan”, provide books and other sources of information on the comfort women issue, both in English and Japanese, so that not only Japanese parents, but also Japanese children themselves obtain a true understanding of Japanese history. We distribute these materials to after-school Japanese schools and local American schools. We give them out to anyone who asks, at any time, free of charge.**

**We sincerely wish for your continued support and cooperation. Thank you.**

At the end of this ceremony, it is reported that an old Korean man stood up and shouted in broken English, “Japanese--100% guilty!!”

I have already mentioned that behind the fanatic, overseas actions on the part of Koreans, building comfort woman statues and monuments, there is a clear psychological motivation--of seeking “revenge” against Japan by totally smearing Japan. In doing so, it is their goal and intention for Japanese-Americans and Japanese people to be despised and bullied in America, which, as part of their revenge, will continue for eternity. In this light, there is no room for reconciliation.

This situation is war, in that the future of the people is to be decided. Japanese mothers in various American states are desperately fighting on their own, with no one to help them. The primary obligation of any country is to protect its people’s life and property, and equally importantly, their honor and pride. Thus, the Japanese Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diet should immediately and entirely support their individual struggles. There is no time to waste, such as making a fuss over the trivial “Mori/Kake” issue.<sup>2</sup>

### **Newly begun installation of mobilized worker statues**

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<sup>2</sup> “Mori/Kake” refers to two incidents in which Prime Minister Abe and his wife’s involvement have been the subject of much discussion. “Mori” refers to Moritomo Elementary School and “Kake” refers to Kake Veterinary College. Incidentally, Mori and Kake are popularly used expressions to describe two ways of serving *soba* noodles.

As a male version of the comfort woman statues, Koreans recently began to install statues of a mobilized worker. On August 12, 2017, two such statues were installed, in front of Yongsan Station, a station in Seoul, and in a park in Incheon. On the day of dedication, in front of Yongsan Station, a celebratory ceremony was held, and numerous members from the two major Korean labor unions, the General Federation of National Democratic Labor Union (Democratic Labor Union Federation) and the General Federation of Korean Labor Unions (Korean Labor Union Federation) attended the ceremony. National Assembly member and former Majority Leader Woo Won-shik of the “Democratic Party of Korea”, the ruling party headed by President Moon Jae-in, gave a speech during the ceremony.

He said, “It is extremely meaningful to establish this statue. We should continue to build these statues all over the world so that people of the entire world remember agony of forcibly mobilized workers under the Imperial Japanese occupation.” His speech was really a declaration of Korean intent to continue installing mobilized worker statues, along with comfort woman statues, all over the world.

The author visited the statue in front of Yongsan Station. The mobilized worker statue is not alone, as it is surrounded by multiple monuments. The following words are inscribed on the largest monument there:

**Under forced Imperial Japanese occupation [meaning the period of Japan’s rule], many workers were forcibly brought here to Yongsan Station. Those who had been brought here were then sent to coal mines, munition factories and civil engineering sites in not only Japan proper, but also Sakhalin, the South Sea Islands and the Kuril Islands, where they were exploited in extremely poor conditions, beyond human imagination. Here, at Yongsan Station, from which they left their homeland for the last time, we establish the “statue of a forcibly mobilized worker” to remember our painful history. Korean workers became victims amidst frustration and vexation. We wish to soften those Korean workers’ grudge by our own hearts and hands. [Author’s notation.]**

Around this monument, there are many monuments of piled-up blocks, and on each of the blocks are written such things as “We shall never forget. We will act,” and “Japan shall admit the history of forced mobilization and officially apologize.”

On one of the monuments is depicted an old woman holding a picture of her deceased husband and a letter in her hands. The explanation reads: “An old woman in Gwangju was robbed of her husband by mobilization and lived a vengeful life, left with a picture and a letter.”

As I mentioned earlier, there is a relief of a picture depicting “an abused mobilized Korean worker.” The picture was, in fact, taken at a coal mine elsewhere during Meiji Period (1868-1912). Every day, tens of thousands of men and women of all ages pass by these monuments, glancing sideways at the monuments. Every day, hatred against the Japanese people and vengeance accumulate in their minds.

A statue of a mobilized worker was also installed on December 7, 2017 in front of the passengers’ terminal in Jeju City. Moreover, the National Federation of Victims under Imperial Japanese Occupation (Hereinafter, the Federation) announced its plan to build a mobilized worker statue right next to the comfort woman statue in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul. The Federation is a group of alleged former mobilized workers who were forced to work for Japanese companies and their bereaved families. Secretary-General of the Federation Chan Dok-hwan explains the aim of the statute installation<sup>3</sup>:

**The reason why we build a statue of a mobilized worker here in front of the Japanese Embassy is that leading Japanese diplomats see the statues of a comfort woman and a mobilized worker before their eyes and constantly become aware of Japan’s past error and learn from it.**

In May 2018, there was confusion when some Koreans tried to install a statue of a mobilized worker next to the comfort woman statue in front of the Japanese Consulate in Busan. At that time, the riot police prevented this installation. However, those behind the installation of the mobilized worker statue will not so easily give up. They think it not right that there is a comfort woman statue but no mobilized worker statue. From now on, I fear that these troubles over the installation of statues will be repeated endlessly in Seoul and Busan.

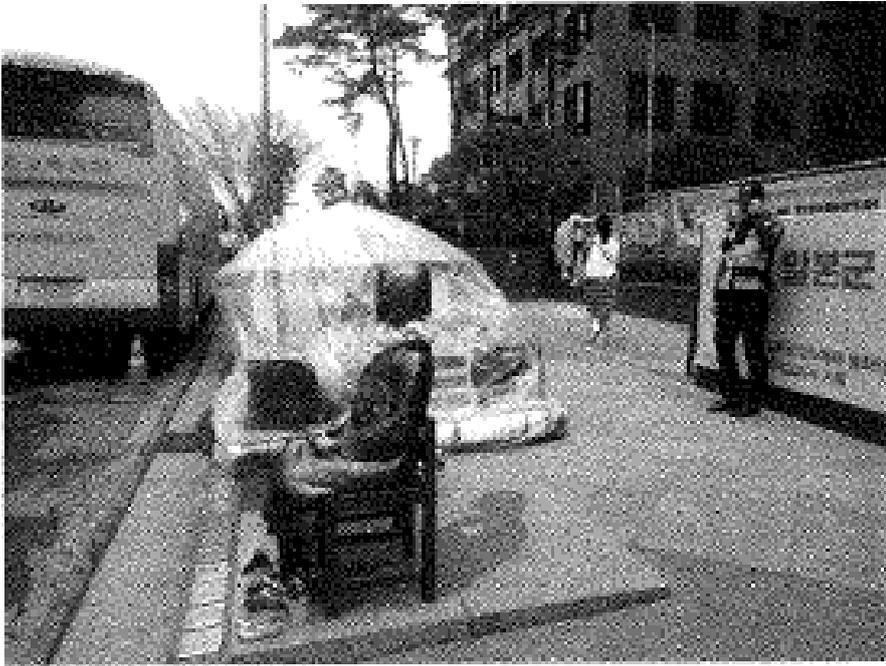
### **People act in a grotesque, self-important manner**

Looking back upon the postwar Japanese-Korean relationship, we learn that when Korea brought up the past and intimidated Japan to a certain extent, Japan would simply apologize, saying, “Sorry, that was entirely our fault,” without ever fighting back, and immediately agreed to pay compensation.

Following past practice, in which Japan always put consideration of Korea before anything else and swallowed whatever demands Korea made, without argument, it seems that Korean diplomatic skills and even the general population’s sense of justice became paralyzed.

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<sup>3</sup> *SAPIO*, October 2017 issue: “Direct interview with Mr. and Mrs. Kim, who made and spread statues of a comfort woman and a mobilized worker all over the word,” by Takenaka Akihiro.



Comfort Girl Statue in front of Japanese Embassy, Seoul



Comfort Girl Statue in front of Japanese Consulate, Busan

On August 14, 2017, a replica of a comfort woman statue sat on the seat of a public bus circulating around Seoul. In the bus, a lamentable girl's screaming, about to be taken away from her village, played loudly. A photo of the Mayor of Seoul, Park Won Soon, sitting next to the replica in the bus was disseminated worldwide.

The Japanese Government did nothing against this Korean act of insolence and took a humble attitude to Korea, which raised Korea's self-confidence, wrongly thinking that it doesn't matter how hard Korea beat Japan the weakling. The harder Korea hits Japan, the more sympathy Korea receives from countries all over the world.

They can no longer control themselves when it comes to dealing with Japan and they fail to realize how grotesquely conceited and how far from global common sense their actions are.

They have built comfort woman statues all over the world and yet they don't see how the rest of the world is inwardly dumbfounded at their actions, wondering why Koreans did not try to protect their own women in the first place. On top of that, they even built statues of a mobilized worker, which will only increase overseas antipathy, "What a helpless, pitiful people Koreans are!"

## Chapter 12: Korean judiciary intent on hurting Japanese companies

### The Supreme Court ruled that individual claims are valid

On August 2011, the Korean Constitutional Court ruled that it is against the Constitution for the Korean Government not to make any efforts to concretely resolve the issue of claims of compensation for the Japanese military comfort women. The issue of compensation between Japan and Korea was completely and finally resolved by the “Agreement concerning the Settlement of Problems in regard of Property and Claims between Japan and Korea and Economic Cooperation,” following the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea, which was concluded in 1965. Until 2011, the Korean Government acted in accord with the Agreement. However, the Korean Government is obliged to follow decisions made by the Constitutional Court. After the judicial ruling, Korea took a hard attitude toward Japan over the comfort women issue. The Judiciary practically ordered the Korean Government to wage diplomatic war against Japan with its verdict.

Encouraged and stimulated by such a political movement, self-described former mobilized workers and their bereaved families entered one lawsuit after another against Japanese companies, demanding compensation.

Prior to these actions, similar lawsuits were entered in Japan and the Japanese Supreme Court ruled that based on the “Agreement concerning the Settlement of Problems in regard of Property and Claims between Japan and Korea and Economic Cooperation,” each claim was not valid. However, in a lawsuit against Shin-Nittetsu (currently Shin-Nittetsu Sumikin) and Mitsubishi Jukogyo (Heavy Industries) held on May 2012, the Korean Supreme Court ruled that “individual claims are valid,” and nullified the previous decision in which the plaintiff lost, and returned the case to the High Court. The Korean Supreme Court stated on this occasion:

**On the premise that Japan’s colonial control was legal, the Japanese court ruled that the National Mobilization Act duly applies to the plaintiff. However, it is clearly against the sense of values held by the Korean Constitution that regards Japanese control of Korea as merely an illegal occupation and, therefore, the forced mobilization of Koreans is against the law.**

What a self-serving argument this is! As I explained earlier, “Japan’s Annexation of Korea” was entirely legal. Above all, the Korean Constitution, which was created *after* Japan’s annexation of Korea, cannot rule on matters which took place during Japanese rule.

They say that the Japanese court ruling is against the sense of values of the Korean Constitution, which was promulgated in 1948 and was revised nine times since then.

If the Korean Supreme Court’s logic is right, then Korea can easily reject treaties and demand compensation of other countries, either by making a new constitution or revising the current one, stating that the issue is against the Korean Constitution’s sense of values. Does Korea believe that such thinking can possibly exist in a modern society?

**One after another, Japanese companies are ordered to pay compensation**

In the verdict returned by the High Court following the Supreme Court’s decision, both the Seoul High Court and the Busan High Court ordered the previously mentioned Japanese companies to pay compensation to wartime mobilized workers in July 2013. Following these verdicts, in November of the same year, the Gwangju District Court ordered Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to pay compensation to former members of the Women’s Volunteers Corps. Thus, the Korean judiciary directly attacked Japanese companies.

After these events, lawsuits against Japanese companies drastically increased and as of August 18, 2017, fourteen lawsuits have been filed, twelve of which the plaintiffs won and the cases are now in before the Supreme Court. For readers’ information, recent major verdicts are shown in the following table.

**Lawsuits concerning compensation against wartime Japanese companies and returned verdicts in Korea**

Date	Court	Defendants	Plaintiff	Compensation ordered
October 2014	Seoul Central District Court	Fujietsu	13 members of former Women’s Volunteers Corps and 18 bereaved family members	80 to 100 million won
June 2015	Gwangju High Court	Mitsubishi Jukogyo	1 allegedly mobilized Korean woman and 5 bereaved family members	562.08 million won in total
November 2015	Seoul Central	Shin-Nittetsu	7 former mobilized workers	100 million won per person

	District Court	Sumikin		
November 2016	Seoul Central District Court	Fujietsu	5 former members of the Women's Volunteers Corps	100 million won per person
August 2017	Gwangju High Court	Mitsubishi Jukogyo	3 former Women's Volunteers Corps members, 1 bereaved family member	470 million won in total
August 2017	Gwangju High Court	Mitsubishi Jukogyo	1 former Women's Volunteers Corps member, 1 bereaved family member	123.25 million won in total

### **President Moon Jae-in proposes a collaborative investigation into the issue of mobilized workers by North and South Korea**

On August 15, 2017, during commemoration of Korea's independence from Japan, President Moon Jae-in referred to the issue of mobilized workers and said, "Pains of forced mobilization still live with us. The whole scale of damages has not yet been made clear. The Government and the civil sector must cooperate to resolve the problem. From now on, if the relationship between South and North Korea improves, hopefully we plan to jointly investigate the issue and find out the truth." In addition, regarding the issues of comfort women and mobilized workers, he further stated, "To solve them, we must consider universal human values and international rule that requires, based on the people's consensus, the recovery of victims' honor and payment of compensation, as well as search for the truth and a promise not to repeat the error. It is urgently necessary for the Japanese leader to act with courage."

As I previously mentioned, the issue of compensation between Japan and Korea was resolved, following the Agreement concerning the Settlement of Problems in regard of Property and Claims between Japan and Korea and Economic Cooperation. However, President Moon Jae-in proposed to revive the issue and work with North Korea in bashing Japan.

Thereafter, on August 17, there was a press conference on the occasion of President Moon Jae-in's one hundred days in office, and he stated again, "Although there was an agreement between the two countries, it is the Supreme Court's decision that the civil right of forcibly mobilized individuals still remains, to enter lawsuit against Japanese companies like Mitsubishi." Even former President Roh

Moo-hyun, who was the dyed-in-the wool anti-Japanese activist, regarded the issue of mobilized workers as resolved. President Moon Jae-in, who audaciously claimed that there “civil rights” still operate, is pro-North Korea and anti-Japan to the core.

Later, the *Yon-hap News* reported, from sources within the Presidential Cabinet, that President Moon Jae-in explained to Prime Minister Abe, during a telephone conference held on August 25, regarding his statement that “individual claims are valid,” which was made during the press conference on the 17<sup>th</sup>: “This is not an issue between the countries, and what I meant to say about the ruling made by the Supreme Court is that the Agreement does not cover individual claims that are still valid between the victims and companies.”

Then, he reportedly added; “This issue will not become shackles to future development of our relations.” On hearing this, the Japanese mass media reported that: “President Moon Jae-in revised his statement,” which relieved Japanese politicians.

On closer examination, however, the President’s statement was far from a revision. He just mentioned that “victims have the right to individual claims against companies.” Moreover, if the President truly wished to get along with Japan, he should have said, “I will not make the issue a shackle towards the development of good relationships.” His true intention was to revive the issue of mobilized workers and he used ambiguous language to obscure his true intentions.

In fact, President Moon Jae-in has not changed in his position to “respect the Supreme Court’s decision,” and using his Executive power, he appointed Kim Myeong-soo, former chief of Chuncheon District Court, the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, which was approved by the National Assembly on September 21, 2017. It is crystal clear what the appointment of this Chief Justice means.

### **A state governed by emotion, preferring emotion over law**

What, on earth, makes Korea think that it can easily upset officially agreed upon matters between countries?

The truth is that in Korea there exists a “law of national emotion,” which is totally alien to law-abiding states. Of course, it is not a written law. The leading Korean newspaper, *JoongAng Ilbo*, explains this as a “law that is made concrete by certain civil groups and scholars and if the media support it, the law is “enacted.”” And this law reigns over the Constitution. Moreover, a university professor openly states this on TV, saying, “The judiciary should not only strictly interpret the law, but also consider national

emotion.”<sup>4</sup> That is to say, Korea thinks that national emotion goes before the Constitution and law.

Traditionally, in Korea, the dominant thought is that, free of rules and regulations, people should cope with things in a flexible manner, as necessity rises. Those who insist on following laws are often criticized as ruthless. Their lack of a law abiding sense may seem merely self-indulgent to us Japanese, but to Koreans, people of “emotion,” emotion is more important than the law itself.

Under these circumstances, the legislative body, considering public opinions, easily enacts laws that are retroactive, which is unthinkable in modern law-abiding states. As for the Korean judiciary circle, totally disregarding international laws and treaties, even the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court prefer Korean “national emotion” over legally binding treaties concluded between countries.

Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha, during a press conference with the foreign media, commented on the lawsuits filed by former mobilized workers against Japanese companies: “It is clear that we must respect the decision made by the Supreme Court as a law-abiding state.” This, I should say, is a sick joke.

How can we keep promises made with other countries? How is it possible to keep a stable relationship with a country that is so affected by “national emotion”, which changes over time? At the very least, we can only hope that “national emotion law” will become written law.

### **Should the plaintiff win, Japanese companies’ assets will be “seized”**

As I previously mentioned, in Korean District Courts and High Courts, Japanese companies lost, one after another, and are now waiting for the final judgement of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court seemingly recognizes the importance of the matter and, for more than four years, has yet to make a final decision. However, according to the *Yomiuri Newspaper, morning edition* of July 28, 2018, the Supreme Court session on this issue resumed.

In 2012, the Supreme Court previously ruled that “individual claims are valid,” cancelling the original verdict against the plaintiffs and returned the case to the High Court. The incumbent Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is a pro-human rights activist, appointed by President Moon Jae-in. Moreover, “national emotion” overwhelmingly backs the plaintiffs. The final judgement by the Supreme Court will be most likely to be against the Japanese companies. If it is certain that the Japanese side loses,

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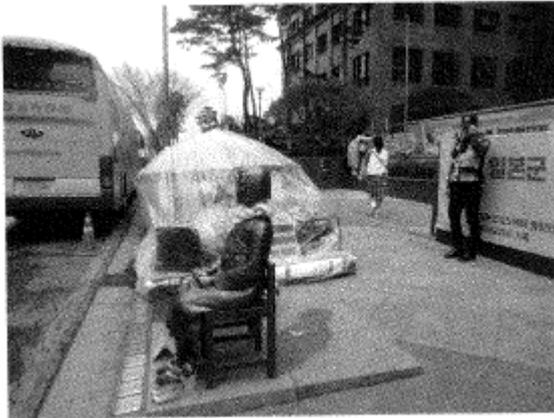
<sup>4</sup> *The Yomiuri Newspaper, morning edition* of July 28, 2013: “Law of emotion’ that distorts Korean diplomacy”.

then all 266 companies listed at the National Memorial Museum under Japanese Occupation will become targets of lawsuits, and should that happen, the total amount of money involved in court actions is estimated to reach ¥2 trillion.

If an order to pay compensation is issued and the defendants decline, then Japanese companies' assets in Korea will be seized. In addition, among the plaintiffs' lawyers is an American lawyer who was involved with postwar compensation lawsuits against German companies. It has been stated if the plaintiffs win the case in Korea, the American lawyer will proceed to seize the assets of the defendants' U.S. subsidiaries as well.

It does not stop there. If the verdict is that Japan's rule of Korea itself was an "illegal occupation," aside from the comfort women and mobilized workers, then everything related to Japanese rule will become the target of lawsuits. Should that happen, the relationship between Japan and Korea will totally collapse and panic will strike the entire Japanese Archipelagoes.

Thus, this is the real dread of the lawsuits over mobilized workers. As I will explain later, the Japanese Government should be well prepared for the worst-case scenario.



Comfort Woman Statue in front of Japanese Embassy, Seoul



Comfort Woman Statue in front of Japanese Consulate General, Busan