

**Relationship between
"Comfort Women"
and
"Medical Treatment"**

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1. Introduction

The "Comfort Women" issue between Japan and Korea surfaced after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, and seemed to have been settled in Japan around the year 1998. The "Comfort Women" issue, though, did not end and was brought up again outside of Japan. Between September 13, 2006 and July 30, 2007, the use of "Comfort Women" during World War Two was also pointed out in the United States House of Representatives. Their resolution, though, was not based upon truth. I was surprised and heavy-hearted that the misunderstanding on this issue came to this point. I am searching for any avenue to let all know the truth and circumstances of the Comfort Women. It is my concern that there are a number of Japanese and Koreans who are giving accounts of untruthful stories and perpetrating Japan-bashing. I, therefore, decided to tell the truth not only to the Japanese people but also to people overseas.

Whenever I had a chance to speak to the public about the "Comfort Women," I mentioned that we could not discuss the subject of "Comfort Women" without referring to related medical issues. "From Shanghai To Shanghai," written by my father (Dr. Tetsuo Aso), published in 1993 by Shekihu-Sha and its English version published by East Bridge in 2004, contains a series of relevant photographs of comfort women. There are two photographs that were not in that book but in his scholarly information packet. The first picture was of a "gynecologic examination table, which was made by my father by order of the authorities" and the second picture was of a "condom". I added these two photographs here at this time to tell you that the "Comfort Women's" issue is deeply related to medical treatment, and that the Japanese government conducted the preventive treatment for the sexually transmitted infection in the year of 1937.

2. July 30, 2007

The Resolution on the Comfort Women by The House of Representatives in the United States and Japan's Position.

1) The reason why this resolution was passed at that time:

Regarding the issue of the "comfort women" and its connection to Japanese troops, the resolution submitted by the U.S. House of Representatives stated that "The 'comfort women' system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan, considered unprecedented... in its magnitude, including gang rape, forced abortions... and sexual

violence resulting in mutilations, death or eventual suicide in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th Century...”

The U.S. emphasized the criminality of human trafficking more so compared to previous resolutions. With respect to international law, Japan concluded the "International Treaty prohibiting the traffic trade of women and children" in 1921 (10th Year of Taisho) and "U.N. Resolution 1325 (to request the that member countries to protect women from armed conflict)" in 2000.

Mr. Shinichi Arai described in one of his writings, "With the globalization of the world economy in the 1990s, the incidence of human trafficking has increased and large numbers of victims were mainly in developing regions." In 2000 (12th Year of Heisei), the United Nations requested that affiliated countries eradicate human trafficking. In 2004, Japan was subject to surveillance due to its negligence. In 2005, Article 226 of the Criminal Law, which covered instances of kidnapping to outside of Japan and human trafficking, was revised. At that time, Japanese men were highlighted as exploiters of foreign women. This brought up the past issue of comfort women again in various cases.

(1)

The agenda on September 13, 2006, was submitted by the U.S. under pressure from the Japanese government to solve Japanese kidnaps by North Korea. The South Korean left-wing and North Korea worked together to lobby the U.S. for the submission of an anti-Japanese House Resolution concerning the comfort women. The past issue of comfort women was again brought up because of the kidnappings at that time.

2) Comfort Women:

The “sense” of the U.S. House of Representatives was that first, the Japanese military had created the sexual slavery system, and that, in the third point, the Japanese government “should clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the ‘comfort women’ for the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces never occurred...” The phrase "sexual slavery" was used, and a Korean-American used the same phrase in her paper. I am very uncomfortable of their usage of incorrect phrases. All of the phrases they used in connection with "Comfort Women," such as human trafficking, kidnapping, rape, sexual assault, describe crimes. "Slaves" are impersonal and treated as property. Sexual slavery also implies enforced and restricted movement

of individuals. The word "slave" was used when they described "comfort women" as the women were carted off by the Japanese military. Once the words took flight, the words lead to misunderstandings.

The term "Sexual Slave" was a Japanese-English phrase first used on February 25, 1992, by a Japanese attorney, Etsuro Totsuka, when he filed protest with the United Nations Human Right Committee against the Japanese government. The history of prostitutes in Japan is described in more detail in a later chapter. Prostitution after 1937 dealt with overseas military soldiers. They were the licensed prostitutes from Japan doing business overseas; others were prostitutes who came from Japan voluntarily, just as European prostitutes had voluntary done. They used the words "carted off" instead of "recruited". A misunderstanding occurred, which lead to the image of "sexual slavery". I would like to ask historians if they are willing to use this type of language in explaining comfort women.

In Document No. 2 from the Asian Women's Fund (AWF), which was created with Japanese private funds in expressing their apology, a prostitute used the words "kidnap" and "rape" in her testimony. That case was brought up as a war crime against human rights. We have to make a distinction in that case from the issue of "comfort women". We are digging up arguments on two different issues.

Once again, the term "Comfort Woman" was a euphemism for prostitute during the foreign expedition of the Japanese Army beginning in 1937.

3. Relationship between European Countries and Japan

1) Prostitution and Human Trafficking in Japan

From the feudal era of Hideyoshi Toyotomi and Ieyasu Tokugawa through 1957 (32nd Year of Showa), when the Prostitution Prevention Law was established, licensed prostitutes were women traded through human trafficking. According to foreign doctors' bibliographic writings, many of the women that became prostitutes were sold when they were between six- and ten-years-old by their destitute parents. When they reached the age of 15, they were forced to work as prostitutes for ten years. During their contracts, one-third of them died due to illness. After the completion of their contracts, some were returned to their homes and married. After the "Maria Luis Incident" in June, the act of

liberating prostitutes was issued in 1872 (5th Year of Meiji), which mainly prohibited human trafficking. After this, exchanged money was transformed into "loans" or "advanced payment". To separate licensed prostitutes from unlicensed ones, the government introduced medical examinations which were conducted in Europe at that time to regulate prostitution. In 1900 (33rd Year of Meiji), the Home Ministry brought the control of prostitution from the local level to the national level by issuing regulations. Once the "rental parlor regulation" was revised, it became much easier to close the business. However, the "advanced payment" system was continued until 1957 (32nd Year of Showa) when the Prostitution Prevention Law was established.

The origin of human trafficking in Japan goes as far back as the Nara and Heian Eras. The Taiho and Yorou Constitutions prohibited human trade, except for slaves. From Heian through Muromachi Era, human trade was widespread, and many writings based on human trafficking were made known to others throughout the world. The geographical explorations in the 15th and 16th centuries brought the Portuguese to Japan. They bought Japanese slaves and took them out of Japan. Hideyoshi Toyotomi issued the " Prohibition on Human Trade," which contributed to deporting the *bateren* (Catholic priests who came to Japan during the Muromachi Era) from Japan. Again, the Tokugawa Government (*bakufu*) issued a prohibition against human trafficking. The relationship between employer and the employee was changed from a difference of social status to one of economic obligation. The form of employment with genealogical human trade was established among the prostitutes and waitresses in the licensed quarter. After the middle of the Edo Era, a prostitution employment system was formalized nationwide. The Labor Standard Act was established in 1947 (22nd Year of Showa). Article 6 of the provision prohibited intermediary exploitation, and Article 17 prohibited the offset of cash advances. However, they were not applicable to prostitutes. The Supreme Court ruled cash advances as invalid in 1955 (30th Year of Showa). In May in 1956 (31st Year of Showa), the prostitution system was abolished under the Prostitution Prevention Law which took effect in April in 1957 (32nd Year of Showa).

The above is the brief history of human trafficking in Japan.

2) Foreign Medical Doctors' View of "Prostitution and Syphilis in Japan"

The number of foreigners who came to Japan during the late Edo Era was 226.

Seventy percent (158), were medical doctors, the majority of them from the United States. Except for missionary doctors, Britain send the second most, 39 doctors. They introduced the newest medical treatments to Japan. They treated illness and also reported their experiences back to their own countries. Their writings are historical records of the situation in Japan at that time (6). I will discuss the following four foreigners who left long-lasting imprints on Japan. They are Pompe Van Meerdervoort, Rutherford Alcock, William Willis and George Bruce Newton.

(1) J.L.C. Pompe van Meerdervoort (1829~1908):

J. L. C. Pompe van Meerdervoort stayed in Japan for five years, from 1857 (4th Year of Ansei) through 1862 (2nd Year of Bunkyu). He was a Dutch military doctor, a Medical Officer and a Government of Japan Science Research Official. He graduated from Utrecht Military Medical School and came to Japan on board a ship named the *Japan*. Later that ship would be called the *Kanrin Marti*. He was encouraged to systematically introduce the most up-to-date Western medical treatments to Japan. He wrote "Treatment Method of Venereal Disease Syphilis" in 1869 and "Pompe Experience Report-Five Years in Japan". He wrote on the differences between prostitution in Japan and in European countries in his publications. The red-light districts were under police watch, and the Japanese government protected prostitutes rather than strictly regulate them. The prostitutes in the European countries, on the other hand, engaged in their business by their own free-will. He mentioned that historically, prostitution in Japan began from human trafficking of young girls. When they reached the age of 15, they were forced to work as prostitutes for ten years. After the completion of their contracts, many were rehabilitated into society and returned to their normal lives. In contrast, the unlicensed "whores" of... were looked down. He also pointed out the lack of sanitation among the prostitutes, but the Japanese government did not pay attention to the conditions in which they lived. He also brought up the case of Nagasaki.

(2) Rutherford Alcock (1809~1897):

Rutherford Alcock resided in Japan from 1859 (6th Year of Ansei) through 1864 (4th Year of Bunkyu). In the year after the signing of the Treaty of Amity, he arrived in Japan and took the post of British Minister-Counselor. He was an ex-military doctor and once pursued a career as a surgeon. He changed his career, however to be a diplomat after suffering from rheumatism. He found that his fingers did not work well. While he was

in Japan, the war between England and Satsuma broke out in 1863. He published a book titled "The Capital of the Tycoon (Tokugawa Shogun)" in 1863. He wrote in his book that there was no line of distinction between prostitution and marriage in Japan, which showed the innocence of women and the immorality of men. Without understanding the real Japan, it was very difficult to discuss how the issue of prostitution influenced their family lives. He also discussed polygyny and slavery in Japan.(7)

(3) William Willis (1837~1894):

William Willis resided in Japan from 1862 (2nd Year of Bunkyo) through 1877 (10th Year of Meiji). He was an assistant of the medical staff in the British Legation. He graduated from the School of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh in 1859. He was embedded within the Boshin War and received high recognition for his medical treatments. After the war, he engaged in educating medical students at a large hospital in Tokyo (the precursor of the University of Tokyo). The new Japanese government chose German Medicine as the primary influence, and he moved to Kagoshima. He worked to establish hospitals and taught medicine to medical students there. He also handed down traditional British medicine to the Japanese Navy. He wrote "The Latest Treatment for Syphilis," translated by Hajime Mitamura (who participated as an interpreter whenever Willis lectured, and added his experience to his book). Willis also wrote a report to the British Foreign Office, entitled "Prostitution in Japan" on November 26, 1867. The report described prostitution in Japan in detail, providing social background, which was highly recognized in social medicine. Syphilis was uncommon in the countryside, but one-third of men in their thirties in urban areas suffered from syphilis. The reformed Infectious Disease Prevention Act in Britain contributed to research on syphilis and venereal diseases overseas. In conclusion, he recommended the establishment of hospitals for syphilis treatment at each open port and conducting regular examinations. (8)

(4) George Bruce Newton (1830~1871):

George Bruce Newton died in Nagasaki in 1871 while he was in Japan, from 1867 (3rd Year of Keioh) through 1871 (4th Year of Meiji). He was a doctor with the British Royal Navy. In 1868, he established a syphilis hospital (they called this type of hospital a "Lock Hospital" in Britain) in the Yoshiwara quarter in Yokohama and became the hospital's first director. They examined prostitutes once a week and forced them to be

admitted to the hospital for treatment. He traveled to Yokohama, Hyogo and Nagasaki in order to supervise the hospitals. He established the mandated system for examinations for venereal diseases. He wrote "New Treatment for Syphilis" in 1869. The article titled "the Prostitution and Syphilis in Japan (especially in Yokohama)," written upon the request of Mr. Fletcher, the British consul, stated "The Lock Hospital in Yokohama was established in 1868. The Japanese doctors there were embracing venereal diseases and were also receiving training to achieve sufficient European treatment methods by Mr. Newton, a dispatched Navy doctor." Newton thought that prostitution in Japan was human trafficking of little girls, and that the Japanese did not feel guilty about it and, furthermore, thought of it as an expression of affection. (9)

Jake Sedgewick and George B. Hill rose to Newton's position after he died. In August 1872 (5th Year of Meiji), The Syphilis Hospital was established in Hyogo. In July 1874 (7th Year of Meiji), The Syphilis Hospital was re-opened in Nagasaki. The next successor, Lawrenson, returned to Britain on May 27 in 1881 (14th Year of Meiji). (10)

In Britain, the Sanitary Revolution started in 1840 and influenced many administrative reforms such as sewage treatment. To prevent contagious syphilis infections, they established the medical inspection system especially for prostitutes who were suspected as the source of infection.

3) The Relationship between Japan and Foreign Countries

In Japan, after the rule of Shogun Yoshimune (reign from 1716~1745) during the mid-Edo Period, the government assimilated many Western ideas by means of the Dutch language, which started with medical studies and gradually to languages, geography and scientific fields. Later, their interests expanded to Western studies, included those of France, Germany and Britain, which played a leading role in the modernization of science and technology in Japan. Syphilis treatment was also introduced at that time. The predominant treatment prior to Western influence was with Chinese herbal medicines. The European treatment introduced to Japan was with the use of mercury. Syphilis was first discovered in Japan in 1512, prior to the introduction of firearms from Europe. The disease spread rapidly throughout Japan and continued thereafter. Three generations of doctors of Chinese medicine operated a medical clinic called "Hosei-Do" at Ooasa Village in Yamagata-gun in Aki (grandfather, father and son). They kept diaries

of the treatments they performed. Based on their five-year treatment records, conducted from 1815 (12th Year of Bunka) through 1819 (2nd Year of Bunsei), statistical results were as follows: The number of people tested was 100,000. Among them, 60.1 were afflicted with syphilis (compared with 130 in 1950 and 1.4 in 1983) and 42.4 were gonorrheal patients (10.3 in 1983), which showed that sexually transmitted diseases in Japan were increasing not just in urban areas but also in rural communities. European doctors stated that the Japanese patients they treated had poor hygiene. The number of syphilis infections was increasing tremendously due to the large number of prostitutes. (11)

(1) The Situation in Europe:

According to "The Social History of Prostitution" by Vern Bullough et al., France started syphilis examination in Europe in 1798. The French government delegated two medical doctors to conduct medical examinations of prostitutes in Paris and required the doctors to report the results to them. In 1802, they established medical charities and conducted examinations twice a week; however, it was closed shortly thereafter due to poor management of the program.

In 1792, the German government established a similar disease control system in Berlin. The King of Prussia agreed to the control system itself but disagreed with the general statute, which was loaded with words of approval towards prostitution. Around that time, medical and military authorities in European countries strongly requested to control prostitution. In 1873, the European medical community offered regulations to control prostitution using each countries' constabulary force and to establish an international law.

In 1875, a British and Continental Federation was established, which requested the repeal of the government's control of prostitution. The United States also joined the confederation and formed the "Chastity Crusades" movement.

Each country did not sanction the practice of prostitution in the general statute but gave their unwritten approval. As a course of action, they had to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and used local police forces to control prostitution. (12)

(2) The Response to Russia:

Due to its geographical location, Russia had contact with Japan earlier than any other country. By commercial interest, Russian ships visited Japan in March in 1738 and also invaded Japanese territory. In the year 1854 (1st Year of Ansei), the United States and Japan concluded a treaty of amity. In the same year, 1854, Russia committed to the Japan-Russia Treaty of Peace and Amity (border demarcation) and signed the treaty in 1858.

The Russian naval vessel, the *Posadnik*, came to Nagasaki in 1860 (1st Year of Manen), Commander Nicolai Birilev requested access the “amusement facilities” for the crew. At that time, "Maruyama District" refused to give medical examinations to prostitutes and three brothels were set-up to conduct business at Inasa after medical examination by Japanese doctors. This was the first medical examination given to prostitutes in Japan. The brothel was called "Russian Matross Resting Place" and conducted business until the end of the Edo Period. According to the autobiography of Matsumoto Ryojun, examinations were conducted every other day. The first two examinations were conducted by Dr. Pompe (a Dutch government doctor). Matsumoto Ryojun conducted examinations thereafter. The examinations became a means by which to control prostitution. Matsumoto Ryojun was a court physician under the Tokugawa Shogunate and became a military surgeon general. It is said that he was the person who brought the examination system for syphilis from Nagasaki to Edo (13,14). In 1860, a syphilitic clinic was established in Hakodate. A French doctor conducted examinations for syphilis in Yokohama around the same time.

(3) The Response to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

In August in 1854 (1st Year of Ansei), concluding a treaty with the United States, Japan also concluded a treaty of amity with Britain. After July 1858 (5th Year of Ansei) a treaty of amity was signed, Sir Alcock Ratherford was assigned to Japan as British Minister-Counselor. The Namamugi Incident happened in 1861, the British legation was torched and the Satuma-British War began. In 1865, Sir Harry Smith Parks was assigned to Japan taking over as British Minister-Counselor (1st Year of Keio).

Britain had many colonies and was expanding their overseas territories at that time. They were faced with the problem of venereal disease spreading within the Royal Navy. In 1864 (1st Year of Ganji), the Contagious Disease Prevention Act was passed in

Parliament. The Act was revised in 1866 and 1869. However, feminists, led by Josephine Elizabeth Gray Butler, abolished the Act in 1886 (19th Year of Meiji). Yumi Ookawa wrote about the abolished Act, which greatly influenced Japan. In her "Introduction to the Modern Syphilis Examination System and Syphilis Hospitals - Japanese Syphilis from the View of British Legation," she noted that this infectious disease was transmitted during sexual activity, and that military doctors were in charge under the jurisdictions of the Navy and Army. They treated infected women and determined the area of jurisdiction applicable to the Act. After the Act was abolished, "Barracks Rules" was institutionalized and mandatory screenings were conducted.

The following is the relationship between Britain and Japan, by year:

In 1869 (2nd Year of Meiji) - July: The government control system was reformed to include two bureaus and six ministries. The Japanese government requested British and French troops to withdraw.

In 1870 (3rd Year of Meiji) - September: Dr. Newton of the Royal Navy opened the Yoshiwara Hospital in Yokohama. He established hospitals in Tokyo, Nagasaki (in July, 7th Year of Meiji), and Hyogo (August, 5th Year of Meiji) and supervised them.

In 1871 (4th Year of Meiji) - The Syphilis Hospital was established in Osaka, under the encouraged of a Dutch military doctor, Baldwin.

In 1872 (5th Year of Meiji) - The *Maria Luz* Incident occurred in June. The Prostitute Liberation Act was officially announced on October 2 (Official Release No. 290). After the released of the Prostitution Act, the British legation worried of syphilis spreading by unlicensed prostitutes and requested that the Minister of Foreign Affairs introduce their "Contagious Disease Prevention Act" to Japan. They suggested that the Japanese government establish their own "Contagious Disease Prevention Act" and presented their plan as a model. They stated in the plan how to train Japanese medical doctors who would conduct the examinations with the use of the western medicine. The Japanese government had no choice but to build syphilis hospitals and to train Japanese doctors.

In 1875 (8th Year of Meiji), both British and French militaries were withdrawn from Japan.

In 1876 (9th Year of Meiji) - Article 45 was issued from the Home Ministry. It was an official notification to each prefecture to conduct syphilis examinations to prostitutes and to designate the directors of public hospitals work concurrently as the director of the syphilis hospital.

In 1878 (11th Year of Meiji) - the Home Ministry ordered Yokohama, Hyogo and

Nagasaki prefectures to submit epidemiological reports of examinations every three months. The results were translated and reported to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 1881 (14th Year of Meiji) - Oversight by British military doctors ended at the time to allow for the change to doctors coming to Japan. The government established syphilis outpatient clinics in various districts in Japan. They improved environmental hygiene and brought standard up to European levels to get out from under the control of British military doctors. Japan began to make its own decisions on this issue. (15)

All of the treaties signed by Japan with other countries at the end of the Tokugawa Administration were unfair, colonial treaties. It took over 40 years for Japan to recover its sovereignty by abolishing extraterritorial rights in 1894 (27th Year of Meiji). During those 20 years, the Contagious Disease Prevention System was established in Japan.

4. Transition of Venereal Disease Prevention

1) Syphilis Examination, Outpatient Clinic and Hospital

Examination: From 1860, examinations were held periodically from every other day to once a month. Weekly or biweekly examinations were most common at that time. If the patients had symptoms of inflammation, discharge amount, or purulence in the vulva and vagina, they were suspected of being infected with the disease.

Treatment: For local treatment, lavation and mercurial preparation were applied. For total treatment, herbal medicines and a mercurial preparation were administered.

Effect: Licensed prostitutes took examinations on a regular basis but private, unlicensed prostitutes, in most cases, did not get examinations.

The prevalence of sexual diseases in 1913 (2nd Year of Taisho) was as follows:

	Licensed Prostitute	Private Prostitute
In Nagasaki Pref.	5.1%	24.6%
In Saga Pref.	8.1% (over)	15.2%

History of Treatments:

In 1879 (12th Year of Meiji) - The gonococcal bacterium was discovered.

In 1905 (38th Year of Meiji) - The syphilis spirochete was discovered.

Dr. Wassermann reported a diagnosis technique by serological reaction.

In 1910 (43rd Year of Meiji) - Salvarsan was discovered by Drs. Paul Ehrlich and Sahachiro Hata as a treatment for syphilis. It was used in the beginning of the Taisho Era in Japan.

In 1928 (3rd Year of Showa) - Penicillin was discovered by Dr. Fleming.

After 1945 (20th Year of Showa), penicillin was used in Japan.

The syphilis serological reaction and venereal disease speculum were used in the examinations from early on. Diagnosis was made mainly through visual and manipulation examinations.

The British government requested that the Japanese government 1) establish syphilis treatment hospitals where the infected syphilis patients were separated from others and received treatments, and 2) promote syphilis examinations of prostitutes in private, unlicensed houses of prostitution.

The Japanese government regulated a better environmental hygiene and brought the standard up to the European level to get out of the control of the British military doctors. They established the syphilis outpatient clinics in various districts in Japan.

Most of the clinics were located in the through-traffic areas of cities and near licensed quarters in seaports.

The following are the progressive reports taken by a case in Fukuoka.

Fukuoka Syphilis Outpatient Clinic (or Matsubara Prostitute Health Examination Clinic) was founded in 1881 (14th Year of Meiji). It was located in the area of what is now Chiyo 4 chome #2 in Hakata-ku. The examinations for syphilis of 39 brothels in Yanagimachi and the licensed prostitutes in Mizuchaya were already underway since 1879 (12th Year of Meiji). The Clinic started the examination of waitresses from 1908 (41st Year of Meiji) and of *geisha* in 1913 (2nd Year of Taisho).

According to clinic regulation, expenses for the syphilis patients included meals, medicines, beddings, firewood, and nurse fees paid by the assessment funds. The patients who suffered from other illnesses had to pay expenses from their own pockets, and were not allowed to be hospitalized. Syphilis patients at the clinic were examined once a week and reported their discharge from the clinic to the district police stations. Once the health conditions of the prostitutes improved, the clinic started to conduct not only syphilis examinations but also for other infectious diseases. The name of the clinic was changed from "Syphilis Clinic" to the "Health

Examination Clinic". Thereafter, neighborhood citizens in the area used the clinic for other health care needs. At the time Kyushu Imperial University was founded in 1912 (45th Year of Meiji) in Fukuoka, the brothels were moved to Shinyanagimachi (the current name is Kiyokawa) and the Clinic was also moved there.

After the move, the name of the clinic was changed to "Fukuoka Kubai-In" or "Sakuramachi Hospital".

Thereafter, the Clinic became "Fukuoka Health Clinic" or "Sakuramachi Health Clinic" and continued to conduct the examinations until March 31, 1958 (33rd Year of Showa). At the end of that year the closed facility became the Obstetrics Department of Sakuramachi Clinic under the direction of the Fukuoka Midwives Association.

2) The Positive Method for Prevention of Venereal Disease in Japanese Military

The preventive method required by the British government was also applied to the Japanese troops going overseas. In the first large foreign military expedition from Japan, troops were sent to Siberia.

(1) Troops in Siberia:

Japan, the United States and France sent troops to Siberia between 1918 (7th Year of Taisho) through 1925 (14th Year of Taisho) to quell the Russian Communist Revolution. Approximately 12,000 Japanese troops were sent to Vladivostok to rescue Czechoslovakian troops. The number increased to 73,000, Japanese troops occupying all key areas in Siberia. They were plagued by partisan warfare in Sakhalin beginning in January 1919. Soon after, other countries withdrew their troops, but Japanese troops remained until October 1922, occupying the North Sakhalin. In May 1925, Japanese troops were unconditionally withdrawn from Siberia, with the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The war cost approximately one billion yen (¥1,000,000,000), approximately 3,000 were either killed or wounded and one-third of all troops were frostbitten.

The statistics on the health conditions of the troops, recorded over three years, from 1918 (7th Year of Taisho) through 1920 (9th Year of Taisho) shows:

Killed in Action Wounded in Action Other Injuries Sexual Diseases

1,387

2,066

941

2,012

The above data are documented in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Medical School.

The statistical data in the U.S. shows that the rate of sexual diseases was 16 percent during peace-time and 40 percent during time of war. In the case of the Siberia Troops, it was said that the number of sexual diseases was five through seven times higher if the slightly infected were included. Japanese troops were always requested to fight against an enemy force that was 20-30 percent larger. Wounded soldiers weakened troop strength; therefore, soldiers had to be prevented from contracting diseases. It was a good opportunity to inform the people that it was very important to control and prevent soldiers from contracting sexual diseases (Water conditions became a problem in the Manchurian Incident. The military established a unit to supply water and prevented soldiers from spreading epidemics).

Note: In the "Fukuoka Midwife School" which my grandfather established, there were students, whose husbands or fathers died due to syphilis contracted during the occupation in Siberia. These students were studying at the school in order to start an independent life. It was later discussed that former soldiers could have survived if Salvarsan had been used as treatment. The use of Salvarsan started in Japan from the early Taisho Era.

(2) The Second Sino-Japanese War (Japan and China Incident):

The Japan-China War was triggered by the Marco Polo Incident in July 7, 1937 (12th Year of Showa). Repeated arbitration between the two countries was unable to settle differences. This grew into a major conflict, which led to the war against the United States and Britain.

There were brothels for military personnel in Shanghai and other port areas where naval vessels were docked. At the onset of the Japan-China War, the Japanese government sent so-called "Comfort Women," to the war zone to prevent the soldiers from committing violent assaults and contracting venereal diseases. They were the first "Comfort Women". Dr. Tetsuo Aso, at that time, a second lieutenant and military doctor at the 14th Clearing Hospital of the 11th Army Group, recorded in his publication "A Positive Method for Prevention of Venereal Disease".

On January 2, 1938 (13th Year of Showa), health examinations were conducted at one of the elementary schools in Shanghai. Approximately one hundred people took the examination (20 Japanese and 80 Koreans, all lived in Kita-Kyushu). From early February, the "wartime brothel-comfort station" was established in the Yangjiazhai. Also, a private seaport comfort station was established for the military. According to the March 11 report, all of the public comfort stations were closed soon thereafter, and only private ones continued to operate.

The followings were reported by Japanese Army doctors:

A Positive Method for Prevention of Venereal Disease submitted by Tetsuo Aso, Second Lieutenant, Army Doctor.(17)

On June 30, 1939 - He delivered a lecture at the Jiujiang Chapter of Military Doctors and submitted his paper.

He spoke on the subject of examining comfort women, which he conducted on January 2, 1938. Twenty of a hundred Japanese comfort women examined were infected with venereal disease. They were of older age. He mentioned in his lecture that soldiers should reduce their alcohol consumption and encouraged them to seek out other activities such as music, movies, books and physical fitness. He also recommended establishing military amusement facilities for soldiers. Self-abstinence health education should be cultivated among soldiers. Examination should be accurate and strict. He also presented ten photos of comfort women he took during his stay in China.

Willow (an argot used in the treatment of venereal disease) of Wuchang written by M. Yasumura, Army Major and a medical doctor.

In February 1941, The Prevention of Epidemics Health Committee distributed this report to awaken people's attention to the control of private, unlicensed prostitutes in the Chinese area of the Wuchang District. There were approximately 300 Chinese citizens who conducted private prostitution. They were from 14 through 30 years of age, working as waitresses at restaurants and as office workers, and housewives whose husbands were away on migrant work. The prostitutes worked anywhere that was accessible, even in private homes. They were never examined for syphilis and were thus the intermediaries for spreading infections. As a supposed method of treatment, Chinese prostitutes believed that they needed to transfer the spirochete to other people when they found themselves to be infected. It was reported that some of the prostitutes knowingly tried to infect their clients by making holes in the condoms during sexual activity.

Preventive Measures: 1) Shut down private prostitution and establish a licensed prostitution system. 2) Provide proper sanitary accommodations and education at the brothels. 3) Provide periodic examination and treatment.

Mental Symptom (Psychoneurosis) and Crime During the War by Dr. T. Hayao, an Army Lieutenant and a psychiatrist. (19)

Hayao presented his paper in April 1938. Described as a psychiatrist, he reported on the increase in various types of mental symptoms and disorders during the time of war. A progressive paralytic dementia, a mental disorder, developed faster with syphilis infection. The onset of the mental disorders was noticeable at an earlier age, to around 30 years old. Over-work was also a factor in this dementia. A patient who was injured from an assault following heavy consumption of alcohol was chosen as an example. Wassermann blood and bone marrow reaction tests were recommended to be done at the time of the drafting of men into military service. If these tests were conducted, the number of such patients would be reduced in war zones. Many alcoholic, mentally disturbed patients were observed in war campaigns. Many were chronic in nature. Some demonstrated acute hallucinations, became delusional, and were pathological drunks. Most accidental mortalities were somehow related to alcohol.

"Requisition" itself would be permitted, but to demand goods under strong threat would be considered to be plunder and robbery. These individuals were never ashamed of their actions. ["Fill up the number"](#)~~Making up a pretext for taking things~~ is a kind of burglary and this led to demoralization of the soldier's mind.

Preventive Measures: 1. Regulate alcohol consumption. Prohibit alcohol in the military. 2. Establish physical fitness facilities to build a strong body and mind. 3. Establish high level amusement facilities, such as movie theaters, concert halls, libraries and museums. 4. Conduct sports competitions. 5. Close the comfort stations and reform them to licensed quarter. As a result, all brutish amusement facilities were closed but the high level healthy facilities continued to conduct their business. He suggested to the military to regulate or prohibit alcohol consumption in the troops.

The army medical officers' suggestions were consistent in establishing amusement facilities, not comfort stations, and to regulate alcohol consumption.

For reference, the following are results of the research conducted in mainland Japan and former colonial areas--Korea, Taiwan and Sakhalin:

In November 1937 (12th Year of Showa) – Trend report from a parlor (*zashiki*) rental trader.

*A brothels research in the Korean Peninsula from the 4th through 6th Year of Showa:

	Japanese	Korean	Japanese	Korean
Number of Trader:	312	216	59%	41%
Prostitutes:	1,900	1,385	58%	42%
Patrons:	450,315	110,683		

*The number of prostitute in Kyushu in the 5th Year of Showa: 6,279 in total

The details are :Fukuoka: 1,880 Nagasaki :1,305 Saga : 828
 Kumamoto: 790 Ooita: 730 Kagoshima: 353
 Miyazaki: 273 Okinawa: 120

*The disease research at 25 points:

Syphilis :14% Gonorrhoea : 65%

The number of infected Koreans was well over that of Japanese.

Chancroid 21% - The number of infected was 50-50.

Regarding fees charged by the prostitutes, Japanese prostitutes charged 10 to 20 percent more than others.

In Asian colonies of western countries, not many homeland prostitutes were seen. In Japan's case, a number of prostitutes were from their home country, and not many Korean prostitutes in Korea, Taiwan, Sakhalin and Guandong.

Japanese soldiers requested the comfort women from the homeland and not many indigenous, colonial prostitutes were requested.(20)

A person who ran brothels in Shanghai from 1940 (15th Year of Showa) through 1945 (End of the War) wrote on the lives of the comfort women there. The comfort women were Japanese, Korean and Chinese. "Message from Comfort Women (Seaside House)- Comfort Women Designated by Navy and Army Troops" was written by Kohei Hana.(21)

(3) The Pacific War (The Greater East Asian War)

From December 8, 1941 (16th Year of Showa), through August 15, 1945 (20th Year of Showa), Japan fought against the United States, Britain, Holland and the other nations of the Allied Force. Dr. Tetsuo Aso described the "Comfort Women" in the

Kokopo District in his *From Shanghai To Shanghai* and *Rabaul Diary*. Writings about "Comfort Women" are found in the following 15 places in his *Rabaul Diary*:

1) Page 34-December 17, 1943, there is a house of Yamato Nadeshiko (Japanese women) near the Rabaul Navy Hospital.

2) Page 115-April 4 in 1944, I met the escorting staff for vivandiere ladies troop.

3) Page 126-April 20, the comfort station at the troop.

4) Page 166-June 15, patrolled "The Seoul House" escorted by the headquarters medical officer. Not many differences were seen from the Shanghai brothels.

5) Page 199-August 6, there are 15 or 16 women from the Korean peninsular at "The Soul House".

6) Page 216 -September 1, I was asked my opinion from a military doctor of the Headquarters Hospital after the examination of the comfort women.

7) Page 225-September 14, two military doctors visited me to ask for my opinion as a gynecologist. September 15, I examined two pregnant women at the comfort station.

8)Page 227-September 17, I asked Mr. Otto, a German, about the situation at the Catholic hospital.

9) Page 228-September 18, I placed a request with the Catholic hospital to borrow their machinery.

10) Page 232-September 25, the borrowed Hegal was not a complete set and had some missing numbers.

11) Page 233-I gave up an abortion operation on a pregnant comfort woman.

12) Page 315-May 17 in 1945, the brothel and comfort station were shut down due to poor conditions.

13) Page 365 • July 26, I heard a story of a soldier who died at a brothel in an air raid.

14) Page 568-November 15, I chatted with Austrian military policemen about sex in war time.

15) Page 644 - February 6 in 1946, I saw the Austrian Military Police taking back two oriental women from an island that was on the frontline. There were no words.

In 1994 (6th Year of Heisei), the tripartite coalition government of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Murayama (headed by then Prime Minister, Tomiichi Murayama) Cabinet, the Socialist Party of Japan and the New Party, Sakigake, acknowledged Japan's ethical responsibilities on the "Comfort Women" issue and established the "Asian Women's Fund" in cooperation with the public. That fund eventually raised ¥565,000,000. Japan had exchanged agreements of reparations with several countries

after the war, so the matter of compensation, including the issue of compensation to "Comfort Women," had already been legally settled.

One of the countries that signed an agreement of reparation and received compensation was the Philippines. Japan subsidized expenses of ¥255,000,000 yen and ¥380,000,000 yen for Indonesia and Holland for them to build welfare facilities. Taiwan refused Japan's offer due to complicated diplomatic relations. An offer was made to Korean accusers actually worsened the relationship and image of Japan. I learned that apologies offered without knowing the truth of the "Comfort Women" damaged the national interest. We do not want our children to repeat the same mistakes in the future.

5. Conclusion

The prostitutes called "Comfort Women" consisted of a mixture of licensed and unlicensed private prostitutes with the majority of them being Japanese. Some of them took care of the soldiers up to the last minute, fought with them and died with them, tinged with defeat. Some came back to the home country. I wish everyone would try to understand the thoughts that ran through their mind at that time.

The historical beginning of prostitution in Japan started from the selling and buying of young girls. When the Meiji government was established, the government was thinking of regulating human trafficking, consistent with international law. However, the *Maria Luz* Incident occurred and the government was obliged to deal with it immediately. After the act to liberate licensed prostitutes was issued, an advisory legislative panel raised the suggestion to build "nursery homes". The Finance Ministry insisted on approval of independent licensed prostitution, and human trafficking became prohibited as result of the discussions. The money interchanges were changed to "advances" and continued until the Prostitution Prevention Law was issued.(22)

Prostitution at the time was deeply related to the poverty of the people. Some children who were born into poverty were either aborted or sold. Those sad stories would continue after the Meiji Era.

In early 1960s, cancer was not treated even if it was detected by an examination. Once the health insurance system was established, medical care was provided to most of the people. In the 21st century, society again created conditions for poverty with differences in social welfare. We wish to realize a society in which hard work and effort

are rewarded.

There was a period when women had to work in factories or work as drivers due to a manpower shortage as men went to foreign countries as members of the Japanese military. At that time, the number of licensed prostitutes decreased. (23) Many people returned to their homeland after the war, and women's workplace became narrowly defined again. To improve women's working conditions, the following should be considered: 1) Take measures to encourage women to work in places where men avoid, 2) Improve the pay system for full- and part-time workers, especially so as not to create a disadvantage for women, 3) Support working women who have small children or who are a single parent. To establish women's rights, we do not have sufficient experience of women working together and helping each other.

We want to build a country, without prostitution rooted in poverty, moral dissolution or ignorance. We want the government to strictly regulate and eliminate the buying and selling of innocent human beings. I am concerned that we still have many people who have not learned or understand history, inside and outside of Japan.

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