The *Halmuni's* Voices:

The "Comfort Women's Disclosure and the Power of Resistance

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ANECDOTAL PREFACE

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I am standing amongst 50 to 60 women, young and old, in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, Korea. In front of me, I face a line of young, uniformed men who are guarded by a metal shield covering the length from their chins to their knees, barricading the 50 meter gateway entrance to the Embassy. In front of them, a line of former "comfort women," who barely reach the top of the shields, are facing the men, shouting, screaming, pointing at the men, pounding the shields, and some even crying in protest against the Japanese government that has not recognized and compensated these women's enforced sexual servitude during the Pacific War.

In anniversary of the 150th consecutive demonstration by the Korean Council and the former "comfort women," today's particular protest was held directly in front of the gates of the Embassy, not across the street, where the demonstrations are usually held about eight meters away from these shielded men. Due to the proximity between the protesters and guards and in light of the one and a half years worth of demonstrations, not to mention the unbearably humid 110° weather condition, today's protest was more intense and emotionally charged.[1]

Little by little, these uniformed men began to push us back across the street to maintain the distance, but each very slow step back only came with a tremendous amount of resistance. There was great tension as the protesters and the guards went face-to-face, one group pushing against the other. I also tried to push against those shields, but in the end, the "halmunis," the other women, and I were forced back to our original place of protest.[2]

This was, for me, an experience that demanded my taking a step back to rethink the bounded spaces and represented ways in which these "comfort women" were thought to have remained.

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[1] On 16 November 1990, the task force called the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan was created in coalition with 19 non-profit organizations in South Korea. Their main activities involve: fact-finding on this issue; demanding Japan take responsibility; demanding fact-finding and financial support for the victims from the Korean government and the National Assembly; appeal to the UN and the international human rights community about this issue; educate people and make public this issue; support the victims emotionally and financially; and file lawsuits for the victims. In light of these seven demands, the Korean Council holds weekly Wednesday demonstrations in front of the Japanese Embassy. The first Wednesday demonstration was on January 8, 1992, and they have yet to miss one protest. See Appendix; Photos 1 through 10. Note though that the photos were ~~not~~ taken on 27 July 1994.

[2] [To begin this footnote, I should state that all Korean terms in this paper will be italicized while all Japanese terms will be underlined.] There is a growing number of terms involving these women and their situation. In Japanese, the term they used during the war (and today) is jugunianfu ("military comfort women") or tenshintai (women "volunteer corps"). Koreans have used the term *chongshindae* (women's "volunteer corps") rather than *chonggun wianbu* ("military comfort women"), but during my time spent in Korea researching this issue, these women were called *halmuni* ("grandmothers") in most instances within the Korean Council (though it seemed ironic to me that they would be called "grandmother" when many never married, much less experienced motherhood.). However, because this term is most familiar to me, I will use *halmuni* or *chongshindae*, as well as "comfort women" interchangeably throughout my paper.

INTRODUCTION

On 14 August 1991, Kim Hak-sun, the first former Korean "comfort woman" to present her public testimony, broke the dam of silence and unleashed what would become a flood of controversy surrounding the "comfort women" drafted for military sexual slavery by Japan during the Pacific or Fifteen Year War (1931-1945).[3] I first learned of the *chongshindae's* experiences from a New York Times article during the winter of 1992.[4] Since then, the question of why the former "comfort women" would talk about these experiences now, over 50 years after the fact, sparked my curiosity and drove me to research this phenomena. As the above anecdote indicates, my research efforts eventually led me to the Republic of Korea this past summer, and during my time in Seoul, I was able to attain valuable resources, speak with the former "comfort women" themselves, and discuss this issue with various scholars and/or activists in this field.[5]

To answer the question of why this issue is being debated and discussed now, I will argue that there are past and present forces at work. Currently, as scholar Alice Yun Chai argues, a strong and supportive global feminist political coalition, especially within the Asian-Pacific region, has played a large part in bringing this issue to the forefront. As for the prolonged silence of the former "comfort women," scholar Chungmoo Choi states that there is a system at work involving both the oppressive practices of Confucian

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[3] Kim Hak-sun's testimony can be found in the following publication: "A Fifty Year Old Silence was Broken - Statements of the Plaintiffs," Forced Prostitution in Japan's Asian-Pacific War, trans. Debjani Das (Berlin: Japanese Women's Initiative Berlin and Korean Women's Group Berlin, 1993), 5-7. See also, Helen Koh, "Appendix - Personal Narratives of the Comfort Women," in "The Comfort Women Problem: Of Memory, Public Disclosure, and the Making of Gendered Identity," (University of Chicago, Unpublished Seminar Paper, 1994), 3-5.

[4] Steven R. Weisman, "Koreans' Hardest Line: Defense Against Japan," New York Times, 22 February 1992, sec. A, p. ?.

[5] The anecdote, however, provides only a part of the personal involvement I made while working on this issue. During my time in Seoul, thanks to the guidance of Professor Chung Chin-sung of Duksung Women's University, I attended a twice a month-held seminar on recent research done in this field by the Research Council on Military Sexual Slavery and volunteered twice a week for the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan. This led to my meeting and subsequent interviewing with Yun Chong-ok and Lee Hyo-chae, the two scholars who head this task force. I also participated in the weekly Wednesday demonstrations in front of the Japanese Embassy, spoke with many of the former "comfort women," and visited several of them who live together in a home called the "Sharing House," whose construction was funded by the Buddhist Committee for Human Rights, a member organization of the Korean Council.

patriarchy and the advance of industrialization and capitalistic development which has factored into maintaining the silence.

The task force and individual researchers have unearthed information answering some of the questions concerning the conditions of this particular practice, and the scholars above have considered questions of why this issue has become an international concern or why the former "comfort women" have endured the silence for over 50 years. While I will draw attention to these scholars' argument and go into detail about the historical context surrounding the practice of military sexual slavery, the focus of this study will be concerned with the former "comfort women" themselves. What motivated them to come forward now, and what do they think about their time spent laboring as "comfort women?"

From that first NYT's article, I remember former "comfort women" Hwang Kum-ju stating the following about her present situation:

> There's still a feeling of humiliation in talking about it. Young women in their 30's come up to me and ask, "Why did you go?" How could anyone ask me that? How could anyone be *willing* to go into such indescribable conditions?[6]

Hwang Kum-ju *halmuni* ("Grandmother Hwang Kum-ju")as well as many other surviving "comfort women" speak of humiliation and shame in telling their oral histories, but they speak, and their disclosures represent a form of resistance today. In the past, their unwillingness to submit to their given conditions meant that, for some, they practiced various forms of resistance, from actively avoiding the *chongshindae* conscription, running away once recruited, to hitting, biting, even stabbing the soldiers. Although they were ultimately dragooned off to the military stations and raped time and time again, even in their marginalized status, they resisted. Some may think this resistance was done in vain, as these women were violated in the end and were forced to endure their lives as "comfort women." Others may think that those surviving "comfort women" who have come forward to indict the Japanese government with their oral public testimonies are also

[6] Weisman, "Koreans' Hardest Line." Italics my own.

protesting in vain, as they will not be accepted into the mainstream of Korean society, nor will they receive due compensation from the Japanese government.

I will argue against this kind of thinking. The "comfort women's" past and present forms of resistance, however recognized (or unrecognized) they are by governments and societies, are their way of giving meaning to their lives, of retrieving for themselves a sense of human dignity and self-worth. I see their resistance as their last attempt towards retrieving a womanhood, a personhood, . It is their last means of seizing and maintaining their human-ness against a people who thought them as dispensable objects, to be taken, used, and discarded, if necessary, and against a society that thought and still thinks them as unimportant, shame-ridden, wasted women. The "comfort women's" physical condition and social status may never change, but their resistance is significant for what it suggests about our understanding of domination. Their stories illuminate ways in which the methods or practices used to maintain domination and power were not successful; they show the cracks and crevices. Thus, their testimonies question one's understanding, one's knowledge; ultimately, one's understanding or knowledge of history.

The exact circumstances of the situation is unknown, as much of the documentation was destroyed (deliberately or as a result of the war). However, through the testimonies of former "comfort women," military personnel, soldiers, and/or eyewitnesses, along with the documents discovered from the Japanese and U.S. governments, much has been disclosed, and while the data represents a fragment of the complete picture, the evidence indicates, as we shall see, just how widespread and systematized the military "comfort stations" were.

According to these findings, as many as 200,000 women were drafted for sexual slavery, approximately 80% of whom were Korean. Thus far, documents have proven that these brothels existed in China, Hong King, French-occupied Indochina, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, British-occupied Borneo, the Dutch-occupied islands of Java, Sumbawa, Surawesi, Burma, and the Pacific Islands of New Britain and Trobriand, as

well as Korea and Okinawa and Ogasawara Islands in Japan.[7] Those forced or recruited to work in these stations included Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian, and Dutch women.[8]

The Japanese government first responded to this issue by stating that there was no evidence of enforced drafting of Korean women as sexual slaves; thus, no question of any apology, memorial or disclosures by the Japanese government. Then, after Kim Hak-sun's testimony, Yoshida Seiji's (a Japanese policeman) public confirmation of his wartime duties of kidnapping Korean women[9], and Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki's discovery of official documents at the National Defense Agency proving Japan's direct involvement[10], Japan finally admitted that the Japanese Imperial Army had forced tens of thousands of Korean women to serve as sexual slaves. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato Koichi, under Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi, expressed "deep remorse" and stated the following:

> The Japanese government is determined never again to commit this grave error. We will reflect on the past as a peace-loving nation and make every effort to forge together a new, future relationship with Korea…With regard to compensation, the matter is currently under judicial review and will be addressed through the due process of law.[11]

One such effort was published on 6 July 1992 when the Japanese government made public its first official interim report on this issue, based on 127 documents and case studies of 131 victims, most of whom were Japanese. The findings disclosed the military's involvement in the building of comfort facilities, recruitment, and drafting of

[7] Witness of the Victims of the Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, 68. Yun Tu-ri states that she was sent to the "First Comfort Station" of Yongdo, Korea.
[8] Yoshimi Yoshiaki, "Historical Understandings on the 'Military Comfort Women' Issue," War Victimization and Japan, (Osaka: Toho Shuppan, Inc., 1993), 81, 82.
[9] "Hokkaido Shimbun," 22 November 1991, p. ?. He documented his duties during the war in his book, My War Crimes: The Forced Draft of Koreans (Sanichi Publishing House, 1983). He was banned from speaking in Korea until 1988, but his book was translated into Korean after the censorship was lifted. It is entitled I Took Koreans In This Manner (Chung-gye Research Institute, 1989).
[10] Asahi Shimbun, 11 January 1992, p. ?. Also, New York Times, 6 July 1992, sec. ?, p. ?. See also, Louise do Rosario, "A Quest for Truth: Sex Slavery Issue Affects Ties with Asian nations," Far Eastern Economic Review, 18 February 1993, 37.
[11] Quote cited from, Military Comfort Women Under Japanese Colonial Rule Interim Report, (Seoul: Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Comfort Women Issue, July 1992), 7.

regulations, but they did not admit to the use of force in the mobilization process. This may be due to the fact that the report failed to include crucial documents from surviving witnesses, diaries of commanders, and soldiers, and articles from the press and foreign organizations. Regardless of Japan's reports and its failures, the testimonies of surviving former "comfort women" are still manifesting not only from North and South Korea, but also from the Philippines, the Netherlands, Taiwan, China and from a few Resident Koreans in Japan. Most have filed some type of lawsuit or complaint with the Japanese government and are affiliated with the various organizations that have formed to help these women in their respective countries.

This unleashing of personal public testimonies has created a contradiction within the Korean context[12]: the same women who buried their past as "comfort women" and concealed it for over half a century, due to Confucian mores inflicting the women's personal shame and fear of social castigation, are, in fact, the same ones who are digging into those furtive mounds of repressed memory in order to describe their past experiences. Why would they break their silence and tell the public about their shameful and dishonoring past? Why now?

Beyond this question, the documents I retrieved revealed two more problems which further complicate this issue. First, contrary to popular belief, this issue was not an "undocumented" topic that emerged for the first time in the early 1990s with the women's testimonies, nor was it an unknown fact amongst Korean people. In Japan, more than 20 books concerning this phenomena were written by former Japanese soldiers and published from as early as 1951 to August 1991.[13] Also, in Korea, as Chungmoo Choi and various

[12] When I use Korea or Korean, I will be referring to the Republic of Korea, as most of my testimonies are of women who live in South Korea.
[13] Some of the titles are as follows:
- *Kenpei* (Military Police) by Miyazaki Kiyotaka (Suzakusha, 1959),
- *Akuhei* (Evil Soldier) *on the Japan-China War Front* by Morikane Chiaki (Sobunsha, 1978),
- *An Actor in the Interlude - My Twisted life* by Shigeyamachi
- *Military Comfort Women* by Senda Kako, 1973.

Kano Mikiyo, "The Problem with the 'Comfort Women Problem'," AMPO Japan-Asia Quarterly Review 24, no. 2 (1993): 40-43.

other sources state matter-of-factly, Korean people, especially those in the rural areas from where most of the young girls were recruited, knew about the "comfort women" system, or as one *halmuni* remembers it, "the requisition of virgins,"[14] and actively tried to escape Japanese conscription.[15] It has been said that the topic of military sexual slavery was buried due to the lack of information caused by the shame of the disgraced victims and the fear of the assailants being exposed of their crimes. It has also been said that there was no written material on this issue. Evidently, this was not the case, and the Japanese texts and prior knowledge pose a serious challenge to these claims.

The second problem stems from the women's testimonies themselves. These women were raped an innumerable amount of times, but this final result only came after a tremendous amount of resistance from the young women. Their stories, as well as those told by the Japanese officials involved in this practice, describe beatings, torture, and mental/emotional abuse practiced by the Japanese soldiers and officers in their attempt to control the unabiding women. This challenges the belief that poor, Korean, colonized female subjects would remain submissive to their subordinate roles within a patriarchal, colonized society. Their testimonies also reveal that many parents who knew of the practice of sexual servitude fiercely resisted their daughters being conscripted. This second form of resistance argues against the Confucian devaluation of females that Chungmoo Choi articulates.

> Many of the *chongshindae* were chosen in order to protect their brothers and fathers from being conscripted into the Japanese military or to keep their families from losing tenant rights. *Raised from birth as daughters who had no rights because they were expected eventually to marry out of their families, they were expendable.*[16]

[14]Kang Soon-Ae's testimony entitled "Brother, Don't Avoid Me," War Victimization and Japan, 17.
[15] Chungmoo Choi, "Korean Women in a Culture of Inequality," Korea Briefing (1992): 98. Also, the following quote from an article alludes to this knowledge. "In the early stages of the war, it was relatively easy to entice Korean girls from poor families (by deception and false promises)…This policy of recruitment by deception ran into difficulties as knowledge of the 'comfort women' system gradually spread." George Hicks, "Ghosts Gathering: Comfort Women Issue Haunts Tokyo as Pressure Mounts," Far Eastern Economic Review, (18 February 1993): 34.
[16]Choi, 104. Italics my own.

Although this was the case for some, the testimonies which I have read depict quite a different story. According to one of the sources, Koreans who had young daughters dreaded this recruiting which they called "virgin sacrifice."

> Often parents, who knew what "recruiting" meant, hid their daughters and helped them to flee. When this was discovered, the parents were arrested and had to pay a fine…daughters were married off in haste and without their consent, so that they 'were at least not forced to become prostitutes.'[17]

I will provide in detail some of the documents which describe how fathers would have to be knocked down and beaten up, or how the Japanese resorted to kidnapping in order to avoid this kind of parental resistance protecting their young daughters.

The twist that complicates the problems of disclosure, documentation, and resistance is this: these women's stories tell of a fierce resistance against their imposed conditions during wartime which transformed into a self-censorship of silence or outright lying about the true circumstances upon return to their homeland (for those who did return.) Then, after more than 50 years of silence, the active resistance which was practiced during the colonial period comes full circle today with the former "comfort women's" bold disclosure of their unchaste and dishonored status to the Korean public in the form of oral testimonies and other means of protest - the image presented in my anecdote being one example. At the time when these women were silent, though, Japanese men were writing about their own experiences within the "comfort women" system, and their works were even published. Yet, their books did not carry the magnitude of these testimonies, nor did they draw the attention of the international community. The issue did not become popularized nor debated until these women told their stories. Given the above, my original question of "why now" transforms into the following: "What then were the real reasons why this issue emerged in the past but never became discussed or debated on a national and international level until the Korean "halmunis" began their public testimonies?"

[17]Forced Prostitution in Japan's Asian-Pacific War, (Berlin, Japanese Women's Initiative Berlin and Korean Women's Group Berlin, 1993), 17.

To answer this question and in order to grapple with the contradictions and complexities, I consider feminism and its effects and Korea's geo-political position in the postwar era. First, I will argue that the Korean feminist movement and the feminist coalition politics within the Pacific played a large part in providing a supportive framework to encourage discussion and debate and to engage an international audience. In short, these women created a forum to make an issue out of this undebated past. Next, the postwar situation found U.S.'s occupation of Korea and Korea's ensuing civil war as an intricate part of America's hegemonic project whose survival required Japan to serve as the predominant economic force within the Pacific Rim. The geo-political structure which formed in the Pacific Rim as a result of these international policies, along with Confucian and colonial legacy, explain why the published documents were not brought to the forefront in the 1950s, '60s, or '70s, and also why these women remained silent.

Finally, in trying to understand the motivations and explanations for the women's resistance as "comfort women," it is helpful for me to think about hegemony, that is, the way in which forces of external coercion and internal consent are both necessary factors for gaining and maintaining rule, and how this concept intersects with gender, race, and class in order to form a dominating system wherein Korean women were (and still are in some ways) represented and controlled by men's economic, legal, and social decisions. Hegemonic devices were intricately linked with Confucian virtues which dominated women's lives before the colonial period; thus, oppressive forms of patriarchy were part and parcel of the colonial administration's rule.

Given the triple bind of the "comfort women's" subordinate status as poor, female, colonial subjects, it would seem that their disempowered status as a weak and inferior group of people would ensure their remaining within their given situation, but this was not the case. A part of Japan's tactics did not foresee the difficulty they would have in recruiting, maintaining and controlling these women. More resistance demanded drastic changes requiring brutality and abuse in their stratagem. There is no simple argument one

can make in order to understand or explain the motivations behind these women's resistance. What their past and present acts of resistance illuminates, though, is that knowledge, ideology, or consciousness as embodied in history can be challenged by women who are considered disempowered or dispossessed, but their resistance proves this consideration wrong. Rather, their oral testimonies has a certain empowering capability to transform themselves from being objects or objectified to claiming their actions as their own doing. Ultimately, their resistance rests upon the desire for womanhood and human dignity, and as we shall discover, these two concepts may not necessarily be what one assumes them to be. For the surviving "comfort women," womanhood and human dignity are seen in various manners.

As my paper depends greatly upon the oral histories of these women, I will discuss my methodology and the difficulties I encountered with testimonial works. In order to elaborate and explore further the colonial administration and its creation and treatment of the "comfort women," I will begin with a historical context of the pre-colonial era, followed by the colonial period and the "comfort women" system, and then proceed with a brief discussion of the war's aftermath until the 1965 Japan-Korea Normalization Treaty.

METHODOLOGY

As I started reading and writing about the *halmuni*'s testimonies, several important questions about my methodological approach arise concerning the use of oral testimony as my primary source. The construction, interpretation, and (in this case) translation of oral histories posed a great challenge in realizing this paper. My initial difficulty came with the translations, as all testimonies were originally written in Korean and translated into English. Beyond the language that failed to capture the nuances and/or sensitivity of these women's stories, I discovered numerous inconsistencies and/or flat-out contradictions within different versions of the written testimonies of the same women.[18] Due to the mass media coverage and research findings within the past few years, I was fortunate enough to have retrieved between two to four differing versions of the same person's oral testimonies in the written form, not to mention personal interviews and documentaries. I have in my possession about 25 different women's testimonies, many of which I have two or more copies. The inconsistencies I found from the varying versions of the same person's story brought doubt not only to the credibility of the primary sources for this paper but also to my main intent of providing a space for these women's words and voices. How could I write a convincing paper validating their stories when I myself was in doubt of the verity of their words and the "reality" of their memory? How could I substantiate this paper for the academic audience or for those positivist historians who emphasize fact over empiricism, when I rely upon such a subjective and questionable source in oral testimony?

In order to resolve these concerns, I begin with the question of time and memory. In my deliberations, I was struck by the parallels of my project with the much more documented work on the testimonies of the Holocaust survivors. As they helped

[18]For example, there were differences in name from one documented testimony to another. In Witness of the Victims booklet, the story of "Kil Gap-Soon *halmuni*" is exactly the same as a narrative in Helen Koh's translations, but the name is "Kim Hyung-Soon." Also, some testimonies were written in the first person while others were in the third person, which indicates, assuming that the translations were done verbatim, different approaches to the interviewing process. As I am not aware of any of the conditions of this process, I am left further troubled by my using these sources. I will highlight more of these inconsistencies in the section describing the "comfort women" system.

tremendously in my understanding of testimonies in general, I will be alluding to a couple of texts in this field.[19]

Complications with Oral History

In her assessment of the Holocaust experience with testimony, Annette Wieviorka writes: "Time has passed, and the historian does not trust a memory in which the past has begun to blur and which has been enriched by numerous images since the survivor's return to freedom."[20] Lawrence Langer, a specialist of the Holocaust narratives, explains yet another aspect of the problem with testimony and memory:

> Their (the survivor's and witness's) effort to recapture through memory what, because of the impossibility of its content, has already [for us] fallen outside memory, risks estranging the audience they seek to inform…'Since the disaster always takes place after having taken place' [as precise a definition of oral testimony as I have seen], 'there cannot possibly be any experience of it.'[21]

My initial doubt sparked by inconsistency, thus, was really questioning the "*halmuni*'s" memories and the reliability of recovery after a half a century time lapse. Furthermore, even if the problem of reliability were somehow resolved, there was still the dilemma of the audience's inability (because "you had to be there") to comprehend the brutality of the circumstances. So given the doubts and fears of the survivors and the disbelief of the audience, why tell the stories at all and why do I bother taking such effort to explore them?

I suppose the answer to this question lies in how one views the purpose or use of oral testimony. First, I think it futile and unnecessary to demand an exact description of the past from oral histories. It is impossible to reconstruct the past as it was because the survivor's stories are mediated by the present discourse as well as (for most) 50 years of secrecy, isolation, and shame.[22] Second, being sexually violated up to 30, 50 or maybe

[19]I would like to thank Professor Norma Field for guiding me to these helpful texts.
[20]Annette Wieviorka, "On Testimony," Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory, ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), 24.
[21]Lawrence L. Langer, Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 40, citing Maurice Blanchot, The Writing of the Disaster (*L'écriture du Désastre*). Parenetheses my own.
[22]An example of this is the present use of "military sexual slavery" which was not part of the vocabulary in the past.

even 60 times a day is not necessarily something one desires to recall in detail. What would this prove, and what would this precision serve? I agree with Langer when he states that oral testimonies "are doomed on one level to remain disrupted narratives."

> Instead of leading to further chapters in the autobiography of the witnesses, they exhaust themselves in the telling. They do not function in time like other narratives, since the losses they record raise few expectations of renewal or hopes of reconciliation. This does not mean witnesses have no future.[23]

That future, though, depends upon how one can imagine alternative methods to the "doomed" conventional thinking that oral narratives are our tools to recapturing the past. I am sympathetic to Langer's view that "in the presence of their anguished memory, we are asked to share less what is recovered than the *process of recall* itself."[24] This alternative not only goes beyond the preoccupation with detail, but also resolves the possible danger of estranging the audience it is trying to inform because sharing in the *process* of recall absolves the need for one "to have to be there" in order to understand.

With my project, however, there are several layers of mediation involved with this process. In the case of the "comfort women," there is the interpretation of the interviewers who document the retrieved memories, the translation from Korean to English, and finally my own evaluation and use of the *halmuni*'s words. Aharon Appelfeld, an well-known Israeli novelist, describes the need to "bring down" the memories of the Holocaust to the human realm, "to make the events speak through the individual and in his language."[25] Although I agree with the general concept, I feel that it is impossible because the mediation exists, ~~but~~ these layers are unavoidable and occurs with any raw data or archival material. My concern about the "reality" of their memory or the veracity of their words, thus, became focused upon the mediation, for it is the latter that will determine the convincing or refutable character of one's work.

[23]Langer, xi.
[24]Ibid., 40.
[25]Ibid., opening quotation to the book. There is no citation beyond Appelfeld's name.

Finally, as for the preliminary concern with the time gap and the factual errors, inconsistencies, and/or lapses that occur, they only seem a natural part in anyone's remembering process, especially considering the trauma and the repression of the *halmuni*'s past. Langer introduces the paradox of retrieval which may help our discomfort with the "truth." He begins with a quote from one of the Holocaust survivors: "Today, I am no longer sure that what I have written is true, but I am sure that it happened."[26] In distinguishing between a truth (*vrai*) and a surety (*véridique*), Langer elucidates between "the abstractness of a recovered truth and the concreteness of an experienced moment."[27] My understanding of this distinction in light of my own project is this: the fact that the *halmunis* have different descriptions of similar events or the same *halmuni* will describe the same incident in a different manner from one time to another (or maybe she will describe it in exactly the same way each time) does not negate the fact that all of these stories still tell versions of "truths" as each individual grasped it.

The many "truths" reflect the several currents that flow at differing depths, respective of each person's understanding. It is, indeed, these many currents and differing depths which create the complex layers of memory that challenge the existing understanding of history and work to destabilize the mentality that could refer to the military brothels enforcing sexual servitude as "*comfort* stations," or label the "comfort women" themselves as ammunition.[28] Memory, or the process of recall, represents a clashing of the past and present, and it is this interaction whose gravity, for me, surpasses the concern for accuracy. Langer believes that this is also the case for the survivors.

> Witnesses in the testimonies do not search for the historicity of experience, nor do they try to recapture the dynamic flow of events. They are concerned less with the past than with a sense of that past in the present. Unlike those who re-create details and images of the event through written texts, they generate narratives less predisposed to remind us that we are dealing with a self-consciously *represented* reality.[29]

[26]As translated from the French: "Aujourd'hui, je ne suis pas sûre que ce que j'ai écrit soit vrai. Je suis sûre que c'est véridique." Ibid., 42.
[27]Ibid., 43.
[28]Choi, 103. See also, Hicks, 33.
[29]Langer, 40. Italics within text.

This is the exciting, yet complex and difficult, work of the historian, novelist, poet, or artist who recognize the "enrichment of the numerous images" that Wieviorka warns of, but instead of seeing this in a negative light, the challenge is there for these thinkers to engage. Penetrating the various mediations in the attempt to reassess or evaluate the experience will always require more imagination and energy than withdrawing into the comfort zone of silence and disregard. The challenge is there, and the choice is left open. I take on and will always take on this challenge and refuse to disclaim the value of the *halmuni*'s oral testimonies because of translation problems or inconsistencies.

I will conclude with one final note. It may seem that these women's experiences, the violence, the barbarity, and the brutality, are beyond words. Indeed, the *halmuni*'s themselves allude to the notion of the inexpressible, of necessary silence.[30] The paradox here is that the very person who testifies in order to make people aware appeals at the same time to silence.[31] Yet, they have come forward and given public testimonies because, beyond everything else, words are all they have left. So beyond the doubts, fears, and disbelief, I, too, will write these words, because the notion of the inexpressibility does not exonerate the historian, novelist, poet, or artist from interrogation; it does not justify silence.

[30]The following are a couple, out of example. "If Miss Noh thinks of the events of that time, she cannot speak," or Kim Bok-Dong *halmuni*'s statement, "I cannot explain the suffering. Even speaking about this fact is humiliating." Witness of the Victims of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, (Seoul: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, ?), 25, 19.
[31]This is the same paradox which Wieviorka notes. "On Testimony," 25.

FEMALE SUBORDINATION DURING THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

In order to examine part of the rationale that worked to maintain the "comfort women's" prolonged silence, shame, and dishonor, it is necessary to give context to the Confucian ideology which was established during Korea's modern era, the Yi dynasty, also known as the *Choson* period (1392-1910).[32] It was during this time when the foundation of the male-dominated, socio-economic, political, cultural structure was established. This historical context is necessary to set the grounding for my discussion of the Korean woman's subordinated status under a male authority.

Sadae juui: The Colonial Mentality

During the Yi dynasty, the Confucian ideology was widely practiced, and it established the social, political, and economic practices in Korea. This ideology was molded after its Chinese counterpart. Accordingly, the absolute authority of the first monarch, Yi Song-gye, otherwise known as *T'aejo* ("grand progenitor"), was a Chinese investiture, and as such, Yi was subordinated to the Chinese emperor.[33] This orientation towards Chinese culture and dependence upon their good will and protection characterized Korea's foreign policy during this time: *sadae juui,* meaning "serving the great", the "great" alluding to China.[34] The structure endured for 518 years, and the ideology would continue for much longer, influencing Japan's colonization and the U.S. occupation .

[32]"The male literati constituted the dominant social class of the Choson period. They were the "*yangban*," the members of the "two orders" of officialdom who served as civil or military officials, and because this *yangban* class directed the government, economy, and culture of the Choson, it may also be designated a *yangban* society." Carter Eckert, Korea Old and New: A History (Seoul: Ilchokak Publishers, for the Korea Institute, Harvard University, 1990), 108.
[33]Yung-Chung Kim, Women of Korea: A History from Ancient Times to 1945 (Seoul: Ewha Women's University Press: 1976), 79.
[34]Michael E. Robinson, Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea: 1920-1925 (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1988), 34. See also, Carter Eckert, Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945 (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press: 1991), 227.

"Virtuous" Ideals of Confucianism

The change in the dynastic cycle from the Koryo dynasty (918-1391) to the Yi reflected not only a shift from the practice of Buddhism to Confucianism, but also a fundamental change in modulating women's behavior. Yi administrators criticized the "loose morals" of Korean women during the latter part of Koryo[35]; thus, they decided to encourage women to achieve Confucian "virtues." In 1432, the Yi government published *Samgang Haengsil-to* ("The Three Principles of Virtuous Conduct"), a book replete with exemplary cases of "virtuous women" which would serve as a guide to all Korean women's behavior.[36] In 1475, Queen-Consort Sohye compiled the most important and influential textbook for women. Entitled *Naehun* ("Instructions for Women"), it taught girls four basics for womanly behavior: moral conduct, proper speech, proper appearance, and womanly tasks.[37] From 1392 to 1485, these Confucian virtues were encouraged. Then in 1485, the *Kyongguk taejon* was promulgated, resulting in a more legal, systematic control of women.[38]

The "virtuous women" ideal, now established by law, expounded the overwhelming rules of what women were and how they were supposed to act.[39] I think it important to remind the reader that most of what is recorded in the Korean dynastic history applies with certainty only to higher class women or royalty. The practice of Confucian "virtues" on the lower class or commoners can only be assumed.[40] With this in mind, I

[35] For example, women's remarriage was widely practiced and accepted. "Men and women seem quite free to bath together in the open stream, their clothes lying along the bank." Kim, 83.
[36] Kim, 84.
[37] Loosely translated: moral conduct--women need not have great talents, but should be quiet, serene, chaste, and disciplined; proper speech--women need not have great rhetorical talents, but must avoid bad and offensive language and speak with restraint; proper appearance--women need not be beautiful, but must be clean in dress; womanly tasks--women need not be clever, but must pay attention to such duties as weaving and entertaining guests. All of these combined to represent the behavior of a proper married women. Martina Deuchler, The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 257.
[38] This term, *Kyongguk taejon,* was translated as a compilation of customary laws and codes. Kim, 84.
[39] Kim, 84.
[40] Ibid. I am aware that I am writing a historical context as it applied to upper class women for a paper focusing on "comfort women" who come from poor and rural areas. This may seem problematic, but due to the lack of research on commoners at this time, I work under the assumption that these ideals affected more than just the elite.

continue with women's "virtuous" ideals. A women's life was controlled first by her father, then her husband, and finally, after her husband's death, by her son. An example of this domination can be seen in women's not having a name (beyond her surname which was not used).

> Women did not have names. They were identified by their position relative to men. Before marriage she was so-and-so's daughter, after marriage, so-and-so's wife, and in her old age, so-and-so's mother. When she was married, only the name of her original family [surname] was entered in the husband's family registry. Even in the registry of her own family [*chokpo*], only the name of the son-in-law, her husband, was recorded…She could not carry on the family line.[41]

This is where the notion of women's or a daughter's expendability originates.

In addition, women could not choose their husbands, as marriages were arranged. She entered into a binding contract, not only subject to her husband's authority, but also to the fate of the household head.[42] However, it was binding only for her, as her family-in-law could expel her from their home if she should commit one of the "seven evils", *ch'ilgo chiak,* which included disobedience to parents-in-law, failure to bear a son, adultery, jealousy, hereditary disease, garrulousness, and larceny.[43] It may seem that marrying may not have been the greatest option, but there was no other choice, for marriage was the precondition for adulthood, and to remain unmarried was socially inconceivable.[44]

The rulers of the Yi dynasty also believed that the disorder of the Koryo period was, in part, due to women's frequent social activities, and restrictions placed upon women's social outings had both political and social motives.[45] The social rules confined the women's role to the household, while her husband would support the family from the "outside." Interestingly, one word for wife was *anae,* "inside person,"[46] and if the *anae*

[41] Kim, 85, 86.
[42] It was normal for the whole family to be punished if the family head was found guilty of a major crime. Only at the end of 18th century did the law prohibit such practice. Deuchler, 243.
[43] Kim, 89.
[44] Deuchler, 243. Not to mention the fact that women were not allowed to remarry if her husband should die.
[45] Kim, 84, 85.
[46] This separation of sexes was evident even in the design and structure of the household itself, which was divided into two main sections demarcated by a middle wall. The outer part, *sarang ch'ae* (no translation, but in dictionary means "a room reserved for entertaining [male] guests; a drawing room"), was reserved for

were to go out in public, she had to abide by certain dress codes, including veiling her face with a "*yommo*" (screen-hat).[47]

Above and beyond all of these rules was the most significant and symbolic "virtuous" ideal: that of chastity. One scholar, Chungmoo Choi, describes the latter as "patriarchal ideology dressed up as Confucian morality, which demands that a woman's chastity be claimed only by her legal husband. Traditional Korean women were taught to believe that the loss of chastity was worse than death itself."[48] Choi continues:

> One reminder of the way Korean men have controlled women's bodies in the name of ethical virtue is the miniature dagger (*changdo*) in an ornamented casement dangling on a string of tassels…By wearing the dagger the gentlewomen claimed both high fashion and moral virtue--as imposed on them by the Confucian male elite. *A woman was supposed to use the dagger to take her own life in the event that her body was even touched by any man other than her husband.*[49]

Sacrificing one's life in order to protect one's chastity is by no means a passive action, and many of these "comfort women" did kill themselves[50], and for those who never did, the testimonies of the survivors discuss the thought of suicide greatly. It is no wonder why the "halmunis" maintained their silence for so long. If they were to have talked about their experiences, their morally stigmatizing past would have ascribed them into social purgatory. Thus, one factor that worked to bury the "comfort women's" past was this: while they may have resisted at the "comfort stations" in order to protect their chastity, when they re-entered their own country, they had not committed the ultimate act of sacrificing their lives in order to maintain their "virtuous" ideal of chastity. Rather than

men and used as a reception area. One would enter from the outside, through the main gate, without going near the inner part, the *an ch'ae*, which was designated for the female members. This is where the women would manage the household. Girls' education took place here. Ibid., 86.

[47]Deuchler, 261.

[48]Choi, 104.

[49]Ibid. Italics my own.

[50]In January 1943, the Japanese government banned the reporting of Korean women's suicides because of the great number of women who took their lives. After 1940, missing persons' reports filed by Japanese brothel owners, describing the external features of their escaped prostitutes, appeared regularly in Japanese. "These missing persons' reports indicate that there must have been a daily resistance from Korean women." Forced Prostitution, 1993.

reveal the truth, they opted for silence. It is this system of oppression, constructed and defined by a male elite, which was veiled as Confucian morality.[51]

The oppression is amplified in light of the paradox that Choi has noted which parallels these virtuous ideals. The same patriarchal ideology that called for the ultimate act of suicide to protect a woman's chastity would ironically disregard these same ideals in order to shield their men, i.e., to save a brother or father from being conscripted for war.[52] In either case, the oppression always worked at the expense or sacrifice of the women's lives, and the system which gives men the legal and social power to "represent" and to exploit women is what is at the core of the *chongshindae* issue.[53]

Why the Need for "Virtuous" Women

One historian would argue that women's vulnerable disposition was created because men saw women as powerful and dangerous. Joanna F. Handlin argues that in China, the cults of footbinding, chastity, and the "virtuous women" ideal were men's reactions to women's resistance or aggressive behavior, to economic necessity, and to women's expanded opportunities brought about by the urbanization and industrialization of the late 19th century.[54] There is the common fear of losing a privileged social and economic status enjoyed from the benefits and rewards via exploitation and oppression.

Within the Korean context, this "fear" paradigm could, perchance, explain the contradistinction in women's status from the Koryo to the Yi dynasty, that is, from a fairly free life juxtaposed to an overwhelming strict one. As mentioned earlier, the prohibition of social outings during the Yi had both political and social motives. During the Koryo dynasty, the superior and independent political positions and actions of the Mongol princesses over their Korean husbands reflected the superior-inferior relationship between

[51]Choi, 104.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Choi, 98.

[54]Gary Y. Okihiro, "Recentering Women," in Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 70.

the mainland and the peninsula.[55] As independent figures, these princesses exercised their power and made frequent and costly trips outside the palace - to her homeland, to Buddhist temples, and on hunting trips and sightseeing excursions with the king - which added financial burdens to Korea. They also wielded great political power, and one ironic way in which they used their power was through personal involvement in the conscription of Koryo women for Mongol courts.[56] Men's fear of this kind of political and social power explains part of the reason why there was an overwhelming subjugation of Korean women during the Yi dynasty, which inevitably lead to women's vulnerable status that Choi indicates.

Historical Legacy of Female Tribute and Sexual Slavery

The "virtuous" ideals of chastity, discipline, and self-censorship (symbolized by the ornamental dagger) was part and parcel of women's vulnerability, but it was not just the use of a dagger which linked past practices to the "comfort women's" silence. Korean women's self-censorship has had a long historical legacy.

There has been a continuous practice of objectifying women's bodies and thinking of them as material tribute for military expansion from time immemorial. Korea's own history can be written in terms of its continuous foreign invasions, and with each invasion, the "continuity" was this: Korean women were taken as sexual slaves or material tribute in order to pacify and serve their military potent neighbors. Though foreign invasions occurred before the Yi dynasty[57], for purposes of this paper, I begin with an examination of those which took place during the Choson period.

[55]The inter-ethnic marriage was part of the treaty between China and Korea. Kim, 71, 72.
[56]Kim, 72. These women provided entertainment and/or sexual pleasures for the Mongol courts.
[57]During the Koryo dynasty (918-1391), large-scale invasions were carried out by Machurians (Khitans and Jürcheds) and the Mongol. Eventually a treaty was signed, and Korea had to pay an immense annual tribute to the Yüan court of the Mongolian empire, and included in this tribute were humans, as artisans, eunuchs, and women were sent to Peking. A marriage commissioner's office was inaugurated in Koryo to round up girls or widows to be sent to Yüan. Kim, 70, 71.

For the women of Yi dynasty, the "virtuous" ideal of remaining chaste even at the cost of one's life caused hardships and induced a tremendous amount of self-sacrifice during the trials of foreign invasions.[58] Koreans suffered greatly with the onslaught of Japan's (Hideyoshi) invasion of 1592. The aid of the Chinese (Ming) army played an important role in ending this seven year war. However, there are records of Korean women's being raped not only at the hands of the Japanese military, but also by the Chinese soldiers who supposedly came to defend Korea. Many women committed suicide in order to avoid such dishonor.[59]

There were also two Manchu invasions known as the *Chongmyo Horan* in 1627 and *Pyongja Horan* in 1636.[60] In both the Japanese and Manchu invasions, Korean women were taken as captives to the invader's respective homelands. After the wars, there was the problem of how to repatriate these women. This original process of repatriation was the precedent that created the historical legacy of Korean society's rejecting "dishonored" and/or "used" women. Some women managed to return to Korea (only after paying a high ransom to the invaders), but their return was not welcomed because families assumed that these women had been dishonored. After the Hideyoshi invasions, husbands wanted to divorce their returning wives, but a order by King Sonjo, the Korean ruler from 1567-1608, commanded husbands not to discard them. This precedent was the same policy followed for those who returned from Manchuria. However, in both cases, King Sonjo's orders did not reduce the controversy within noble families who felt that remaining married to an ex-captive would defile the honor of family tradition.[61] - but later granted divorce 1650 King Hyojong

Similar to the Korean historical legacy, this practice of enforced sexual servitude is not a foreign concept within the Japanese context. The exploitation of Japanese women by

[58]Kim, 104.
[59]There were 356 "virtuous women" who killed themselves rather than suffer dishonor, for which the government honored them with a *chongmun*, a gateway made of two vertical red poles and one horizontal pole, usually erected at the entrance of the village where the woman was born and lived. Kim, 105.
[60]Kim, 107.
[61]Ibid., 194. Interestingly, the etymology of the Korean term for a promiscuous women, *hwanhyan hyo* (literally, "returning woman"), stems from the official discourse about the Korean women who were drafted, used, worn-out, and returned by the Manchus in the 17th century. Choi, 104, 105.

the country's armed forces dates back to the beginning of the Meiji Period (1868-1912) when daughters of poor farmers served as prostitutes for overseas Japanese soldiers from Siberia, China, and Southeast Asia, all the way to India and even Africa. This practice persisted through the Taisho era (1912-1926), and it eventually led the way to support Japan's neocolonial aspirations during the Pacific War (1931-1945).[62] In historical terms, thus, there is evidence for women's bodies becoming tribute and expendable commodities for use by Chinese courts or Japanese armed forces, just as they were when they Japanese military shipping clerks listed the *chongshindae* as "ammunition" or "war supplies" in their documents.[63]

The overall framework portrays a separation of the sexes, women's self-censorship and subjugation as part and parcel of the Confucian ideology aimed at social harmony. The structure's intent was to create a female mentality devoid of agency, as women experienced a social, economic, and political disempowerment, and a forced dependence on her male authority. Moreover, it stripped them of their power and dominated their lives, making them vulnerable objects. Confucian doctrine would also devalue a daughter's worth. From birth, females had no rights in her natal family because they would ultimately marry into another family, severing all ties. Daughters, thus, were expendable.

I am sure that this was actually the case for many a Korean family. An ideology cannot become one without practice of and support for its beliefs. What I suggest with my study, though, is that the "comfort women's" resistance displayed during the colonial period is a form of objection against this imposing structure, and their actions, whether they were conscious of it or not, dares to provoke and dispute the established Confucian ideology of the times. They may have been stripped of their control; they may have been sexually violated; but they were not completely devoid of agency, nor were they always thought of as expendable. Resistance from both the young women and their parents is a

[62]Alice Yun Chai, "Asian-Pacific Feminist Coalition Politics: The *Chongshindae/Jugunianfu* ("Comfort Women") Movement," Korean Studies 17, ed. Edward J. Shultz (Hawaii: University of Hawaii, 1993), 67-68.
[63]See footnote #28.

testament to this. My point here is that the overwhelming forces of patriarchy and the hegemonic devices which are used are not domineering to a point where there is no space for protest. There have been ways in which people resisted dominating structures, and this study works to promote and further the voicing of this resistance.

COLONIAL PERIOD AND THE IANSHO ("COMFORT STATIONS")[64]

With the ideological and historical context of women's submissive and subjugated status, I enter into the colonial era. Before I present the "comfort women" system, an understanding of the historical conditions is required. During the colonial era (1910-1945), the *sadae* legacy of "serving the great" is continued; but this time, the "great" is alluding to Japan. The specific circumstances of Japan's colonial administration, however, sheds light on how the practice of women's enforced sexual bondage could be carried out on such an institutionalized magnitude.

"Dark Ages" (1910-1919)

Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 marked the first defeat of a western power by a non-western nation, thus strengthening Japan's political and strategic basis in its imperial pursuits.[65] The Protectorate Treaty made Japan's annexation of Korea official in 1905 which led to colonization in 1910. The Government-General of Korea (hereafter GGK) took official control on 22 August 1910 under the auspices of Terauchi Masatake, the first Governor-General (1910-1916). Japan justified its seizure of Korea by asserting the theory of natural Japanese-Korean affinity (Nissen Doso Ron) which claimed the historical and cultural ties between the two countries. Furthermore, they posited the condescending rhetoric of assimilating Korea into the progressive Japanese society as the long-term goal for the colony.[66] This paternalistic rhetoric, however, did not reflect the reality of the "dark ages" (*amhukki*), a trope used to describe the tremendous political repression and social strife of colonized Korea's first decade. Indeed, the details are scarce

[64]In Japanese, ian means "consolation" and sho means "place." The word iansho was a specific military term for brothels run by the Japanese armed forces. The women who served the military were called ianfu, meaning "consolation donors." They were considered a "gift for the imperial Japanese army" from the emperor. Forced Prostitution, 13. The imperial subject or imperial cult ideology will be referred to throughout this paper, as all citizens were considered equals as the "children of *Tenno*." The *Tenno* (emperor) system was essential to modern Japan's national formation, for it provided the source of national identity and legitimized the Meiji government.

[65]Japan's international position was solidified with its victory over China (1894-1895), the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902), and the Taft-Katsura Memorandum (1905).

[66]Eckert, Korea Old and New, 255.

as censorship and suppression were fierce, but nine years of such maltreatment culminated with the March First movement of 1919, where students, professors, workers, and citizens galvanized to protest the colonial regime. Influenced by Bolshevism, but more importantly, heeding the idealist calls of Wilson's "Fourteen Points" which emphasized national autonomy and self-determination, demonstrators paraded throughout the country shouting *"Taehan tongnip manse"* ("Long live an independent Korea"). This peaceful protest sparked a nation-wide uproar in the ensuing months in which over one million people participated.[67] Yet, the movement failed to overthrow the cage of Japanese control, and the Korean people's naïve belief in and appeal for international support was met with indifference. Although the Japanese were able to cap Korea's revolutionary yearnings and maintain its bureaucracy, they realized that a new approach was needed.

"Cultural Period" (1920-1931)

Under the new leadership of Admiral Saito Makoto, the "cultural period" (Bunka Seiji) was adopted, and a so-called "renaissance" was born. The GGK attempted a hegemonic rule to gain internal consent of the Korean people, i.e., a trust and faith in the colonial state and bureaucratic apparatus to such a point that forced coercion and outright repression would no longer be necessary. The overall policy, though, remained the same. The only difference was that "the naked coercion was replaced by a softer but even more effective policy of manipulation and co-optation."[68] Koreans were supposedly "free" to express their opinions, to publish newspapers, journals, and magazines; indeed, a discourse on "cultural nationalism" did exist in the 1920s.[69] However, one must remember the ambiguous position of Korean intellectuals vis-à-vis the colonial state and Korean society, i.e., either of accommodating towards the Japanese and feeling alienated from the native Koreans, or of rebelling against the colonial authority and being excluded

[67]Ibid., 278.

[68]Robinson, 45.

[69]Ibid. See especially chapters 2 and 3.

from the various benefits as collaborators, not to mention the possibility of incarceration or even death. The colonial authority did not want to promote Korean nationalism, especially after the March First experience, nor did they want to deny totally any means for solidarity. What they sought was to disperse the national spirit and divide the leadership by allowing a leeway into cultural areas and activities which they thought would not openly conflict with colonial goals.

The change in tactic was followed by a change in its bureaucratic apparatus. Saito not only increased the numbers of those in charge but he also created the "High Police" (Koto keisatsu) to oversee the increase in organizations and publications, and to strengthen the surveillance apparatus.[70] Although "cultural nationalists" claimed that their goal was to regain national sovereignty in the post-March First era, their gradualist stance, compounded by Japan's diffusing, divide-and-conquer strategy, would never attain the unity desired.

"Cultivation" For Mobilization and War (1931-1945)

A new phase of colonial tactic would arise as Japan recovered from the world depression and dealt with the Chinese threat to its continental interests. This created the backdrop for Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, an area rich in natural resources. Subsequently, this invasion led to the formation of the Japanese puppet state Manchukuo. For Korea, this meant the end of the "cultural period" and the dawn of forced assimilation and mobilization for war. The 1930s, thus, began with the collapse of a united front (*Sin'ganhoe*)[71], the destruction of the Korean communist party, and the repression of the late 1920s labor and tenant offensives. As the decade progressed, not only did the

[70] In 1910, the Governor-General had 6,222 military and civilian police at his disposal, half of them Korean. By 1922, the force had more than tripled to 20,771, and it tripled again by 1941. The 1941 figure of over 60,000 police represented one policeman for every four hundred Koreans. Moreover, "the colonial police became a major source of resentment. This resentment was compounded by the fact that the police recruited a large number of Koreans, often from the lower classes. Roughly half of the police was Korean, and the colonial thought police also employed a vast network of native informers," who would eventually play a key role in the recruitment of the "chongshindae." Eckert, Korea Old and New, 259.

[71] This front consisting of the moderates, radicals, and the communists existed from 1927-1930, one of the many groups or journals created during the 1920s under the watchful eye of Japanese censorship and police.

hinterland become the strategic and economic keystone for the metropole, but the Korean people themselves became an indispensable resource in Japan's war machinations. According to GGK's 1938 industrial commission's report, "the rapid development of material resources on the peninsula" required "the cultivation of human resources."[72] This "cultivation" process regarded the Korean people's physical and spiritual conditioning as crucial. Thus emerged what became the most infamous and ignominious colonial policy of all: the Naisen Ittai, the GGK's movement to "transform [the Korean people] into imperial subjects" (kokoku shimminka).[73]

Naisen Ittai, loosely translated, means "Japan and Korea as One Body," but its ramifications reached far beyond any past colonial experience. Japan attempted to forced Koreans to relinquish not only the idea of political independence but all thoughts of a Korean identity, which was the key for producing loyal, strong subjects, devoted to serve Japan. This agenda required a "cultivation" that was complex and comprehensive. First, Japan asserted that Korea was no longer just a colony; rather, "it was to be treated as an integral part of Japan itself, and Koreans were to be given all the duties, though not necessarily all the rights, of imperial subjects."[74] As such, Koreans were to be indoctrinated into the "national polity" (kokutai) through education (in Japanese language only), the Shinto religion, and other daily practices, from citing the imperial oath, attending calisthenics, celebrating the Japanese holidays, to following the humiliating and degrading Name Order, which forced Koreans to adopt Japanese names.[75]

This "cultivation" was only the preparation for what would become a mass mobilization of the Korean people during the Pacific War, with Japan as the self-appointed head of the vast Pacific, propagandized as the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.

[72] Eckert, Offspring of Empire, 236. This "cultivation" required a 20% increase in police force between 1937 and 1940. This was to deter the native political offense carried out conspicuously after 1938. Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 237-239. In reference to the Name Order, Richard Kim's Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood (New York: Praeger, 1970) is an autobiographical tale recounting the Japanese forced assimilation polices through the eyes of a Korean boy.

The establishment of Manchukuo in Manchuria was followed by the Nanjing massacre and the second Sino-Japanese war in 1937, which spread and expanded into Southeast Asia. In wake of the second Sino-Japanese war in 1937, the Japanese Imperial Army began accepting Korean volunteers in 1938, but this date did not mark the beginning of Korean people's, especially the "comfort women's," involvement within the Japanese military. In order to account for the drainage of Japan's human resources in the 1940s, mass mobilization campaigns began in its colonies. For Korea, this meant that by 1940, the GGK had organized the entire colony into 350,000 Neighborhood Patriotic Associations. The associations, consisting of ten families each, enabled tight control over rationing and local security. At the same time, it recorded families' contributions for war (i.e. gold and silver jewelry, brass tableware) and for labor service.[76]

There were three main types of labor conscription: men's military duty; women's military sexual servitude by females; and by far, the most extensive contribution to Japan's war apparatus, Korean men and women's work in factories and mines.[77] For this third category, in what has been called a "population hemorrhage," as many as 4,000,000 people, an incredible 16 percent of the population, were uprooted and placed in a foreign land by 1944.[78]

Simply stated, in the last years of Japanese rule, Korean society had all but perished under war mobilization and political repression. The prisons were overflowing with thousands of political prisoners; millions were uprooted from their homes; food rationing had dwindled; any and all objects were appropriated for war production, even Korean film prints were melted for their silver content; and Korean language publications had

[76]Eckert, Korea Old and New, 321.

[77]From footnote #2, I pointed out that several terms are used to refer to the "comfort women." For the women who were conscripted, there was no fine line distinguishing the different categories of services one provided. Women who did only factory or service work were referred to as *kunro chongshindae*. To make matters more complicated, some women provided non sexual work during the day and sexual service at night. Also, many who were first drafted as factory workers later became sexual slaves.

[78]Eckert, Korea Old and New, 322. A fact-finding team for the truth about forced Korean laborers was formed in 1972 jointly by Korean resident in Japan and Japanese lawyers, scholars, and intellectuals. Part II entitled "Forced Laborers and War Victims," can be found in War Victimization and Japan: International Public Hearing Report, 98-147.

disappeared for the most part.[79] This last and most intense period of the Pacific War and of Japan's colonial rule over Korea began with Pearl Harbor in 1941 and ended with the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, after which Japan finally surrendered on 15 August 1945. It is within this colonial historical context when the recruitment of the "chongshindae" took place.

[79]Eckert, Korea Old and New, 325.

CREATION OF THE IANSHO

Iansho Origins and its Expansion

With the mass mobilization efforts of the early 1940s in mind, I take a step back to review the specific conditions under which the iansho ("comfort station") system originated. Lieutenant-General Okamura Neiji, the Japanese Army commander of China, admitted to being the one who initiated what later became an institutionalized iansho system. He stated that he set up the first official iansho in Shanghai, 1932.[80]

> Long ago, there were no "comfort women." To my shame, I am the creator of "comfort women." Because of two or three cases [this is likely an underestimation] of rape reported in the Shanghai Incident... I, as chief advisor to the expeditionary forces, requested that the Governor of Nagasaki Prefecture call in a unit of "comfort women." I was pleased that, as a result, *there was no case of rape after that.* Presently, every army unit is accompanied by a female comfort unit, which has by now become a part of the military logistics.[81]

Yet, despite Okamura's bold disclosure, he was wrong in two of his assumptions. First, as documented earlier in this paper, there was a historical legacy of military sexual servitude in Japan and Korea. Second, the system was not created in reaction to the 1932 Shanghai Incident. Rather, the Japanese military leaders learned a "lesson in war" in August 1918 when the troops experienced a rampant spread of sexually transmitted diseases from Russian women who were raped by Japanese soldiers in Siberia. This idea is documented in the Japanese magazine Bungei Shunju (March, 1992) in which Sato Katsumi, editor of a monthly magazine Gendai Korea stated the following:

> The existence of military comfort women is undeniable, and it is clear that they were directly linked to the military. The Japanese army, after their expedition to Siberia, devised the system... Approximately one-third of the expeditionary forces became useless because of venereal diseases contracted by Russian women. Alarmed by this, the army devised the system to avoid

[80]Terry McCarthy, "Japan Admits to Using Sex Slaves during Second World War," The Ottawa Citizen, 5 August 1993, sec. A, p. 2. See also, Forced Prostitution, 12, 13.

[81] Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 22, citing from Inaba Maso, Records of General Okamura (Date and publishers not given). Inserts from the secondary source. It should be noted that he seems to think that forcing Korean women to have sex with the Japanese soldiers was not "a case of rape." These types of language nuances will be addressed later in the paper.

> trouble with local women. The Japanese government's initial statement that the army had no role in the matter is utter nonsense.[82]

Substantial evidence of the iansho system in the post-1932 period exists, but it was Japan's full-scale war against China in 1937, involving as many as 800,000 Japanese soldiers, that created a great upsurge of "comfort stations" in these Chinese cities. Finally, in 1941, as Japan declared war against the U.S., vast areas of Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific became home to even more iansho.

Description of the Iansho

As noted with Lieutenant-General Okamura's statement, the government instituted the system and managed it directly, but as the war efforts spread and intensified, the army employed private entrepreneurs to run the "comfort stations."[83] The general sanitation, supervision and regulation of the institution, though, remained in the Japanese military's control. Professor Yoshimi, accordingly, distinguishes that there were four types of "comfort stations" which were used by the Japanese forces.[84]

1) Military-run "comfort station"
2) Privately-run "comfort station;" most common and frequented by military forces
3) Private-run "comfort station;" open to ordinary citizens although priority was given to the military
4) Privately-run brothels; no Japanese government affiliation

[82]Quoted from Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 21, 48. See also Senda Kako's Japanese text, Military Comfort Women, (1973): 21-30; and War Victimization and Japan, 50.

[83]Civilians who established these army "comfort stations" had to pay taxes to the army which may lead on to believe that "a second, hidden agenda of the Japanese army was to secure financial resources." Mi-Gyeong Lee, "Realities of the 'Comfort Women' in South Korea," War Victimization and Japan, 12. As proof of the civilian-run "comfort stations," there is mention of Japanese couples or civilians who would run the iansho in many of the oral testimonies. One such example comes from a survivor identified as "B." She states that "there was an old couple from Tokyo who were responsible for looking after us. We called them mother (okasan) and father (otoosan)." Koh, "Appendix," 3. One former "comfort woman" states that a Korean woman from Wonsan, Hangyong Province, Kim Ok-Soon, was managing the "comfort station." She lived with the Japanese officer who managed the station, "hitting us from time to time if she found any error in our performance." War Victimization and Japan, 22.

[84]Yoshimi, "Historical Understandings," War Victimization and Japan, 84, 85.

The government bore responsibility for the first three types, and not the fourth, although Japanese soldiers visited the privately-run brothels. The government's responsibility came in various forms. They maintained strict regulations and supervised and funded the overall management of the private-run military "comfort stations." They provided the buildings for use as stations either by constructing ing them or by providing houses taken during their conquests.

In general, their living conditions included rooms which were partitioned by boards, with a cushion or futon-like mattress inside. Many women spoke of quarters as having the top wide opened ("so that those tall enough obviously could watch"). Noh Chong-Ja *halmuni* gives the best images of their living quarters at Oh-Oh-Tae Mountain (no reference to where this mountain was located) with the simile that "it was like a horse's stable, being petitioned off into small rooms by thin boards." She continues to describe that "each room was only just big enough for two people, with a curtain at the front. On the wooden floor was a thin mat. There were many small rooms in this stable-like place. Even when the 38 girls went in (after her group had been placed there), five rooms were left. I was in room number 27."[85]

The areas surrounding these stations varied depending on where the battles took place. Escape was usually impossible not only due to the sentries who guarded these areas but also because of their lack of knowledge or orientation as to where they were. Kang Duk-kyong describes the trip to her second "comfort station."

> On the way, there were buildings on one side all the way, and mountains on the other. Where we arrived, there was a body of water, either a pond or a river. There was a lot of farming fields, and there were very many trees nearby. Snow was everywhere. It was a large compound with many large buildings with flat roofs. There were quite a few civilian homes nearby.

[85]Noh Chong-Ja's testimony, citing from Witness of the Victims, 24. Many of these women were referred to with their Japanese names; some even by the room number assigned them. A note about this particular source: nine of the testimonies come from this pamphlet which I attained at the Korean Council. There is no specific date, but I estimate that it was published sometime in late 1993 or early 1994. Also, there are various grammatical errors or awkward sentences, but in order to present the original form in which I read the testimonies, for the excerpts which I include in this paper, I will copy verbatim from the translation.

> The building where we were stationed had a flat roof. As we entered, there was a corridor in front, rooms were on either side. The tatami-floored rooms had a window each. Although there was a door for the next room, my room didn't have a door, but a drape. The dining hall, toilet, and bathroom were in other buildings.[86]

Kim Bok-Dong *halmuni* describes being placed into a fifteen-story building, in which the first floor was inhabited by the soldiers, and the second floor was for the "comfort women." "If you went as far as the 15th floor, it was clean and tidy like people could live there."[87] Mun Pil-gi *halmuni* describes the "comfort station" where she was placed as an L-shaped, two-story Japanese building with a wall surrounding it and two sentries posted at the gate. She continues to make a curious statement.

> Next to the 'comfort station' was a house where a Chinese helper lived. In front of the station were Japanese officers' housing where *family lived.* The first floor was reserved for *the superintendents and their families.* Second floor had rooms for the women…On Saturdays and Sunday, [except for meals], we constantly did it with soldiers. Officers came after seven in the evening. *However, the officers who came to China with their wives didn't come to us.*[88]

As for their dress, it varied greatly. Some stated they dressed in Korean style *chima* and *chojori* (long skirt and blouse), while others dressed in western style clothes such as a blouse or dress. As Noh Chong-Ja recalls days when they were ordered to wear Kimonos, showing an example of the practices involved with the Naisen Ittai. "At those times, they also had to wear a sash which stated "Great Japanese National Defense Wives Association" on it. On one occasion, as congratulations for winning a battle, the girls had to wear the kimono and sash and line up outside the wall of the fortress (where their unit was stationed)."[89] As the war progressed, especially in the 1940s, most were reduced to wearing military uniforms, due to the lack of other garments.

[86]Ibid., 7, 8.
[87]Ibid., 19.
[88]Ibid., 53, 57. Italics my own. These statements, amazingly enough, indicate that some Japanese wives of the officers or superintendents were at the "comfort stations" themselves, and I assume that these wives knew of the circumstances. If this were the case, then this documents that, in addition to the men, some Japanese women knew of the jugunianfu practices. I doubt that a rapport existed among these women, but I wonder what the Japanese women thought about these practices.
[89]Ibid., 25.

Means of Mobilization

Contrary to notions that these young girls were thought of as "expendable"[90] and contrary to the stereotype of the submissive Korean women who remained within the boundaries dictated by Confucian guidelines, there were various forms of resistance against their recruitment for the *chongshindae*, not only from the young women themselves, but also from the parents. According to the women's testimonies which I have read, those who did volunteer went with no knowledge of the service they were to provide.[91] Of those who knew and resisted, the Japanese military recruiters found ways to coerce, kidnap, lure, or trick them.[92] None of the testimonies in my possession describe being sent with the consent of their family members, as "expendable" objects.[93]

The idea that Korean people never discussed this issue publicly because they did not know about the circumstances is also highly debatable, given the great efforts made by the young women and their families to prevent the daughter's capture. Many realized that the "*chongshindae*" conscription meant "virgin sacrifice," and they resisted the recruitment in any way. Some were married off or became engaged in order to avoid the draft.[94]

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[90]See footnote #16.

[91]It would be tedious to cite the 24 testimonies in which the former "comfort women" state their unawareness; I do cite many of their statements throughout the paper. To substantiate this claim, I cite a quote from a spokesperson from the Korean Council. "…it was by force that they provided sexual service for the first time in their lives…As soon as they found out what was about to happen to them, they fought back. No one did not fight back against being forced into sexual service. Many…were too young to have known what sexual service was, but still, they protested and fought back. Lee Mi-Gyeong, "Realities of 'Comfort Women'," War Victimization, 48.

[92]This is an excerpt from Yoshida Seiji's book. "In May, 1943, I received an order from the army to recruit 250 Korean women, and I drove to the button factory of Cheju Island…When we passed a village, we held the excited villagers in their place with the help of weapons and succeeded in this way to take 7 or 8 women with us. At the first opportunity, these women were raped in the truck by all the men. As we reached the button factory, we placed military posts all over the grounds so that the women could not escape, stopped the production, and herded the women workers together. We took forty of them with us." Forced Prostitution, 18.

[93]Kim Hak-soon's case was an exception, as her *adopted* father took her to China and left her there at a "comfort station." She had run away from home because after her father died, her mother had eventually remarried, and she did not like her stepfather. Her adopted father, Kim Taewon, supported her when she went to Giseng (similar to the Japanese Geisha) school for three years before she became a "comfort women. "A Fifty-year old Silence was Broken," Forced Prostitution, 5.

[94]Kim Bok-Dong states that her older sisters got married quickly in order to avoid being taken by the Japanese military. As she was the fourth daughters and only 16 years old, she did not thing she would be detained. Witness of the Victims, 18. Kim Hyung-Soon's sister was married off, and she herself became engaged at 17 years of age as a means to protect her from the draft. Ibid., 13. My own grandmother married at the tender age of 16 in order to avoid the recruitment for *chongshindae*.

Others went to work in department stores or factories.[95] Noh Chong-Ja's mother told her to go hide at her grandmother's house that was deep in the mountains after hearing about other daughters being kidnapped. "The military police came, demanding that she (my mother) give up her daughter and even though they kicked and beat her, she kept my whereabouts a secret."[96]

One testimony which clearly refutes the "expendable" notion is Kang Soon-Ae's. When three servicemen came with guns to take her, her father caught one of the serviceman by the collars, and pointing to his own neck, cried: "Kill me before you do anything to my daughter! I won't let you take my daughter away!"

> The servicemen pushed my father away…[my father] then grabbed a knife in the kitchen and, as he stood up, attempted to attack the servicemen. In turn, the servicemen began to calm down and handed my father a pack of cigarettes, explaining that I would be able to earn money, acquire professional skills, and even help my brothers go to school if I would go to Japan and work for "Osaka Nakashi" (?) Co., Ltd. After all of that, my father retired into the house and my mother fainted.[97]

While it is true that daughters were not always considered "expendable," this did not prevent the daughters from feeling like a burden to their poor families, especially if they were not earning money. Mun Ock-ju gives an example of how after eight years of continuous work, she found herself unemployed. So when a man named Matsumoto said, "When you send money home, your family can live from it," she left without telling her parents because she states that "my parents didn't approve and scolded me so I snuck out."[98]

To counter this resistance against recruitment by the Korean families, the Japanese soldiers had to use different ploys and tactics in order to fulfill their quotas for the needed

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[95]Koh, "Appendix," 1. Yun Tu-ri *halmuni* worked at a factory because she says: "We were told that we wouldn't be conscripted to the comfort women corps if we worked for this factory, Nishimura Hifuku, in Pusan." Witness of the Victims, 66.

[96]Koh, "Appendix," 8. She was later caught on her way to her grandmothers. I note that this is one story with an inconsistency. In another version, the testimony states that she was urged to go to her aunts, not grandmother's, house. Witness of the Victims, 24.

[97]Kang Soon-Ae, War Victimization and Japan, 19. Question mark within text.

[98]Forced Prostitution. 7. See also, Koh, "Appendix," 5. She was eighteen when she left.

amount of "comfort women."[99] Kang Soon-Ae *halmuni*'s story gives example of one devious tactic. In her story, one will notice the many different ways in which she tried to avoid conscription and the way in which praising the colonial authority was incorporated into the coercive recruitment practices.

> When I was fourteen years old (April, 1941), the "requisition of virgins" became more intense. As I was scared that they might capture me, I hid myself in a crematory for about 14 days, but eventually returned home. Then, as married women were exempt from the requisition (at that time), my mother made me a hair accessory called a *pinyo* which was typically worn only by married women…in hope that I would not be recognized by the police.
>
> One day I went to a rice mill at the pier of Shin-Masan (southwest Korea) to collect wheat bran with my mother and wore this accessory. In those day, the villagers received rationed materials once a month…the Japanese told us to sing their national anthem and did not supply anything if we could not or did not sing it…My grandmother could not sing Japan's national anthem, and eventually came home in tears and with empty hands.
>
> …the son of the headman of the village, Kim Yong-Ma, came accompanied by two servicemen and a policeman. He suggested that I should go and receive the rationed supplied, saying…since I could sing, I would be able to receive her supplies. The policeman then grabbed me by my hand and took me to the supply office. I sang "Kimi-ga-yo" and was supplied with rice, which exceeded the ordinary amount of about .36 liters. In addition, I was given two pairs of black rubber shoes…as well as an extra can of food.
>
> As this story spread throughout the village, the villagers began sending their daughters, who they had previously kept in hiding, to the supply office. This was designed to serve as a lure because it provided the opportunity for the police to capture girls in Masan.[100]

As for this and other kind of luring which occurred, the recruiting police officers or military men were probably following orders given them from the higher Japanese officials. A document entitled Cases in the Recruitment of Workers for Military Comfort Stations shows the attempt to get away from using force to gaining internal consent by

[99]Yoshida Seiji notes the increasing use of deceit. "In a grazing field, we said to the shepherdesses: 'We are conducting a vaccination, all of you get into the car!'" By the sea, Yoshida told the divers on their way home: "We are driving in the same direction, we can take you along the way!" In this manner, Yoshida admits to having lied and kidnapped these young women. I should note that by the time these deceptive ploys were used, during the latter phase of the war, the military no longer stipulated the women to be young and unmarried. The "comfort women" ages ranged from 11 and 12 to married mothers. Forced Prostitution, 18.

[100]Kang Soon-Ae, War Victimization and Japan, 17, 18. Inserts my own.

employing local people in the villages for the recruitment process.[101] The following excerpt from this confidential army report clarifies this desire.

> The selection of recruiters has been inadequate, with the method of recruitment of comfort women taking place in a method akin to kidnapping. The police have already warned those arrested or under interrogation about several points of caution.
>
> In the future, the military should be selective in the recruitment of appropriate personnel. This notice hereby advises that a close relationship should be forged with the local military police and police authorities and further advises that consideration be extended regarding ways to compensate for the damage done to the name of the military and regarding the possible social problems that may arise.[102]

goes back to critique of hegemony

Japanese Women and the Iansho System

One may question why Japanese women, though there were some, were not conscripted for this process. Beyond the fact that they were the precious Japanese imperial women, compared to the colonial subjects, there were a couple of reasons. First, Japan had signed the "International Arrangement and Conventions for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children" in 1904, 1910, and 1921 which prohibited trading women and minors for prostitution.[103] The Chief of the National Security Bureau of the Home Ministry, thus, issued a notice to the governor of each prefecture in February 1938 stipulating that those who were sent overseas as jugunianfu had to be prostitutes over 21 years of age with a valid ID authorizing their conscription.[104] Moreover, the government was focused on emphasizing women's role in production and reproduction (as opposed to the call for "good wives and wise mothers" in early Meiji period), which meant that Japanese women were urged to provide labor service by working in the industry and to give birth to more "subjects of the Emperor."[105]

in comparison to

[101]See footnote #70.

[102]Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 31.

[103]Yoshimi, "Historical Understanding," War Victimization and Japan, 83.

[104]Ibid.

[105]Under a Motherhood Protection Law of 1937, benefits were given to poor mothers: "Women were told that their children were not their property but the Emperor's, and so their sons must later be sent away joyfully, as the Emperor's soldiers. In short, mothers were being made to produce the means for aggressive

Second, it was widely understood that because experienced prostitutes were liable to spread venereal disease, using them as military "comfort women" would not be prudent.[106] As reported by Army Medical Corps Second Lieutenant Azabu Tetsuo, there was a high probability that most Japanese prostitutes who had worked for several years were already infected with venereal diseases, restricting their capability to provide sexual service.[107] The military had to find candidates elsewhere, and they would find the solution to their dilemma in young Korean virgins who would pose no threat of predisposed disease or infection. Indeed, Doctor Azabu Tetsuo "suggested that "comfort women" be as young as possible…(and) young Korean girls were mostly virgins, which made them an exciting alternative,"[108] and because of a special clause that allowed a member nation to exclude its colonies from application of the International Convention that prevented Japanese women of such labor, all occupied and/or colonized areas were subject to conscription.[109] It was true that the young virgins had no predisposed disease, but as it will be indicated in the testimonies, they were not immune to acquiring them.

Daily Life and Resistance in the Iansho

Trying to avoid the draft for the *chonshingdae* was not successful for the tens (possibly hundreds) of thousands of young Korean women; thus, many became "comfort women" for the Japanese armed forced. The Japanese government systematized its responsibilities in managing and maintaining strict regulations of the iansho. I provide a

war." Kumari Jayawardena, Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World (London: Zen Books Ltd, 1986), 252, citing from Noriko Sano, "Japanese Women's Movements during WWII," Feminist International (Toyko), no. 2 (1980): 78.

[106]Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 29.

[107]This is documented in two reports by Doctor Azabu entitled, "Active Prevention of Syphillis," and "A View on 'Comfort Women' and Venereal Disease," citing from Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 26, 27.

[108]Ibid., 29. Several documents show that Japanese women were about, on average, ten years older than the Korean women. Lee, "Realities of the 'Comfort Women'," War Victimization and Japan, 12.

[109]Yoshimi, "Historical Understandings," War Victimization and Japan, 83.

list of rules for the soldiers who used these "comfort stations" to demonstrate the strict regulations the military had established.

> 1) Entry into this brothel is allowed to soldiers and military personnel, however not to military workers. Visitors must be in possession of a certificate permitting brothel visit.
>
> 2) In addition to payment, the user has to receive an entry card and a condom at the entrance.
>
> 3) The charge for sub officers, soldiers and military personnel is ¥2. Officers pay ¥5 and are permitted to stay overnight.[110]
>
> 4) The entrance card is valid for the day of issue only. If no room has been entered, the entry fees may be refunded.
>
> 5) As soon as the entry card has been submitted to a women, refund is no longer possible.
>
> 6) The user must go with the purchased entrance card to the room with the given number. The visiting time is fixed at 30 minutes.
>
> 7) After entrance in the room, the entry card is to be submitted to the women.
>
> 8) Alcohol consumption is prohibited in the room.
>
> 9) The room should be left immediately after performance.
>
> 10) Whosoever offends these orders, military discipline, or decency, shall be expelled from the brothel.
>
> 11) Copulation is prohibited without condoms.

Other rules stipulated how the soldier's should view the institution of iansho. They consisted of the following:

- Viewing the women as an imperial gift
- Not indulging in love affairs with the women
- Not laying any property claims over them, as they were public property
- Committing themselves to using condoms, which bore the saying, "Come on, attack!" on them.[111]

[110]Mun Ok-ju remembers the rates as the following: ¥1.50 for soldiers; ¥2 for colonels and sub-officers; ¥2.50 for captains, majors, and lieutenants, and ¥3 for major-generals. The time slot was one hour; however, this time limit was not kept. Forced Prostitution, 8. The rates also differed by nationality. The Japanese "comfort women" were most expensive, followed by Okinawans, Koreans, Chinese, and Southeast Asians. Hicks, "Ghosts Gathering," 33.

[111]"Demands for Compensation: Why after 50 years?" Forced Prostitution, 31.

The above provides an overview of the written rules of a military brothel in Yang jia zhai, China 1938, as drawn up by the military.[112] The regulations varied from brothel to brothel, but for the most part, the list presents a general outline. With this in mind, I now will show how every rule (except rule #1) was broken and begin to reveal the oral histories depicting the harsh reality which the "comfort women" experienced.

The Beginning Phase as "Comfort Women"

Resistance was tremendous in the beginning. The kicking, yelling, screaming, hysterical youths were sexually violated as soon as they were captured, as was noted with Yoshida's comments,[113] or their first beatings and sexual violations by the officers awaited them at the iansho themselves. Some women discuss being trained to serve men for a week up to a month, learning Japanese, and practicing how to use a condom. Others were just placed directly at the stations. In the early phases of a "comfort women's" experience, escape was an especially popular form of resistance. However, many mention that in addition to the strict restrictions to their mobility, they were unfamiliar with the surroundings, and the fact that no inhabitants were nearby made it even more difficult for others to run away. One woman states that "for the first two years, in order to prevent escape, vigilance was strict. We were never taken out."[114] At another iansho, they could not go to the bathroom (which was in another building) freely at night, "fearing we might make use of the opportunity. They scared us by dressing up as ghosts. The rumor was that ghosts appeared in the toilet, which prevented us from going there at night and confined us to using the washtub in our room."[115]

For those who managed to escape but were later caught, severe methods of punishment awaited them and the other "comfort women" who had to observe. Kim

[112]Ibid, 19. Rules were translated from an original picture taken of them by an army doctor Tetsuo Aso (Azabu) in 1938.
[113]See footnote #92.
[114]Identified as "B" in Koh, "Appendix," 2, 3.
[115]Kang, War Victimization and Japan, 20.

Hyung-soon tells of her desire to "expose the barbarism of the Japanese" with her story of escape.

> In the beginning, they caught the girls who tried to escape and took them to a room in the basement. Then, they lined the rest of us up there. The attempted escapees were hung upside down completely naked and the soldiers beat them brutally, cut off their breasts and with a knife, sliced out their inner organs and threw them at us saying, "If you try to run away, this will happen to you."
>
> I was so shocked and afraid that I tried to escape through the bathroom window, but they caught me…took my clothes off, and hung me upside down. When I regained consciousness, they poured water down my nose and seared my back with a hot iron and stabbed me with a bayonet. I still bear those scars…[116]

Being placed into a "comfort station" did not mean they remained in that same station. Kim Bok-Dong *halmuni* describes her constant moving, following the soldiers.

> We were in one place for two months, then transferred to another place for two months. We kept moving following the battle. The front line fighting was only eight kilometers away from us, and we could hear the gunfire. If the soldiers occupied a new area, we would follow into that area. And as there were some soldiers in the mountains, we would have to go, in groups of ten, to the mountains to service them for one week at a time. We went backwards and forwards like this.[117]

In order to keep "sanitary" conditions and "healthy" women, these women received weekly check-ups and received regular injections of something called #606. Others, though, stated that they never had check-ups, but after they contracted venereal diseases, they received a shot of #606.[118] One woman who became pregnant was forced to swallow some tablets to induce a miscarriage.[119] As for the use of condoms, some soldiers brought their own.[120] Others refused to use them. Some women washed condoms after intercourse in order to reuse them.[121] A speaker for the Korean Council states that the Japanese

[116]Koh, "Appendix," 11. Incidentally, this is the *halmuni* whose other version of her testimony identifies her as Kim Gap-Soon. As I have three different version, and two of them refer to her as Kim Hyung-soon, I will use the latter name.
[117]Ibid., 20.
[118]Koh, "Appendix," 3. See also, Witness of the Victims, 83, 58. And also War Victimization and Japan, 67.
[119]Ibid.
[120]Koh, "Appendix," 4.
[121]As described by Mun Pil-gi *halmuni*: "We washed condoms inside and outside, put disinfectant to use them again. At first, we were given 40 condoms, and we used them three times each. We put the condoms on the soldiers." Witness of the Victims, 57.

military did not take care of those who suffered venereal diseases or those who were no longer healthy enough to work. These women were neither soldiers nor military personnel; thus, treatment in hospitals were out of the question. As they had become worthless for the armed forced, they were no longer fed and were *replaced*.[122] However, Mun Pil-gi *halmuni*'s testimony directly contradicts the above. She states: "It was nice while we had venereal diseases, because we didn't have to do with soldiers then."[123] It is this kind of inconsistency or contradiction which complicated this issue further for me because both statements are true. Many were killed and replaced, but some were treated and returned.

No matter the how sanitary and strict the rules were, there was at least one case of a woman who became pregnant and actually had a baby. Kang Duk-kyung *halmuni* states that she first got her period at the barracks and got pregnant right afterwards. After the war, she return to Cholla-do Province, where she ended up having the baby.

> My mother said I couldn't come live at home. An acquaintance took me to a large Catholic orphanage in Pusanjin. I kept crying in front of the orphanage, and the acquaintance left the baby there. While working nearby, I went to see my baby every Sunday. One day when I went there, I saw another child wearing my baby's clothes. I was told that my baby had died of pneumonia. My baby was four years old. I couldn't believe it…[124]

As for getting paid for their "comforting" duties, most were never given money. Some received coupons or bank account numbers which were useless and invalid after the war. However, some did manage to earn money, Mun Ock-ju being one case in which she even sent money home. The majority, though, were not given any monetary compensation by the Japanese. Mun Pil-gi describes her procedure with payment.

> The soldiers paid us with round coins, giving us one coin per hour. Everyday we took the coins to the superintendents, and they recorded it everyday on a graph on the wall to show who did it with how many soldiers. They were always waiting for their turn at our doors. We never saw a penny, and they didn't put our money in bankbooks. We never demanded for our money, and the soldiers didn't tip us.

[122] Forced Prostitution, 20. Several of the testimonies do mention women who just disappeared one day.
[123] Witness of the Victims, 60. She had gonorrhea and had to go to the clinic everyday, getting shots and drugs. She was fine after a week.
[124] Ibid., 11.

Noh Chong-Ja did not get any money but received "comfort bags," which were her only source of pleasure. "Inside the bag was soap, cream, toothbrush, 1000-stitch belt, a waistband, and canned food."[125]

Fear and Intimidation by Japanese Armed Forces

There were daily means of intimidating or placing fear into these women. Some were just beaten when they refused orders. One woman "Tokiko" spoke in Korean, after which an officer gathered them in the yard and cut her neck with a sword in order to teach the others a lesson.[126] Kang Soon-Ae *halmuni* states: "When they thought I was not obedient enough, they slashed me with a sword at my right eye, beneath my forehead, the back of my neck, and on my head."[127] Noh Chong-ja *halmuni* tells of one occasion when they had to get dressed up for the execution of a captured Chinese soldiers.

> The Chinese soldiers stood next to a hole and after their head was chopped off with an ax, the head rolled into the hole. Several times, we were made to watch prisoners who had fainted after having been mauled by German shepherds, being put into a pit and stabbed to death with bayonets. I remember having been made to witness ten such scenes. The soldiers said, "we are showing you so you will become courageous," when they forced the girls to attend the execution.[128]

As the next excerpt will demonstrate, the hours were not strictly enforced, especially among the high ranking officers; they were often drunk, violent, and physically abusive. Kim Yong-sil's resistance against this kind of abuse was met with torture.

> One Sunday, the officer who fooled me into going to that place came to me, heavily drunken, and forced me to serve him. I refused…then he sat on me and grasped my hair and pounded my head on the floor. I bit the officer on the arm, but he snatched away his arm, breaking my two incisors. The next day, several rascals turned me upside down and poured water into my

[125] Koh, "Appendix," 8.
[126] Kim Yong-sil, War Victimization, 57. As opposed to being ethnocentric, one "comfort woman" used this "child of Tenno" argument against a Japanese soldier when she refused to have sex because she was menstruating. The enraged soldier threatened her life with a sword, but she replied by stating: "Do not lie! Why do you want to kill me? After all, I am also a woman belong to the great Japanese empire." He tried to stab her but failed; instead, she stabbed and killed him. Amazingly, the military recognized this action as self-defense, and the Korean woman was acquitted. Forced Prostitution, 9.
[127] Kang, War Victimization, 24.
[128] Excerpt from two sources. Noh Chong-Ja, Witness of the Victims, 26. Also, Koh, "Appendix," 8.

nostrils. When my stomach was swollen, they pressed my belly hard by stamping a board on it…Other girls could do nothing but simply watch in horror. Such was the daily routine of life.[129]

Inconsistencies

In contrast to these atrocious and brutal experiences, there were surprising moments of freedom and activity which shocked me while I was reading these testimonies. Juxtaposing the following excerpts with the gory ones depicted above may seem as if some of these women were living in two different worlds. It seems clear that there was a systematized institution at work here; yet, at the same time, there are inconsistent anomalies which throws the reader off track and makes it problematic to suggest any general conclusions one may have concerning the practice of military sexual slavery.

One fallacy is the notion that these women were not completely sealed off from the outside world. They may have been strictly confined especially during the early phases, but for some, there was contact with the outside world. A few tell about their writing home to their mothers. Mun Ock-ju sent home some money for her mother's funeral.

> I told the troops I wanted to write to my family, because my mother had been very sick when I left home. They gave me a slip…and I went to the field post and wrote home. Soon I got a telegram saying that my mother was dying from an illness, then another telegram followed informing that she died. I thought she was not dead but wanted me to come home. My mother must have thought I could travel freely.[130]

Mun Pil-gi also sent a letter to her mother: "I told my mother that my sisters should get education, and complained about the Japanese." Once, she even received a letter in response.[131]

A few women speak of establishing a close rapport with one Japanese military official. For Mun Pil-gi, this rapport was with the military doctor named "Baba." He told

[129]Kim, "How Can We Permit Their Sins?" War Victimization, 57.
[130]Ibid., Witness of the Victims, 42.
[131]Ibid., 61. Because she was illiterate, another "comfort woman" named Kyoko helped her write the letters. Kim Bok Dong was another woman who sent a letter and a photo home to let them know that she was o-kay. Amazingly enough, a cousin who was drafted to the South Pacific found her after liberation at the 16th Military Hospital, with the picture that Kim's mother had given him before he left. Ibid., 21.

her that she was too young to be a "comfort women," so she stayed at his house during the daytime and took to household chores. He paid her the amount of money which she would have earned anyway. She continues:

> He slept with me after a week of my arrival. I cried a lot because it hurt so much. He treated me very nicely and I wasn't harmed much. *I think I owe him my life. I didn't have to do with soldiers because he came to me and slept with me almost every night.* After about ten months, some of the girls advised me that it was time to start doing it with other soldiers. They said it was not wise to trust a Japanese man.
>
> The doctor said it was bad of Japanese to make me do this kind of thing, and he felt bad about it as a Japanese…I couldn't express my thanks to him.[132]

I cannot help but be astounded to think that this particular woman thought that because she slept with just one man, she owed this one man her life. These statements demonstrate that the subordinate status engrained in them as poor, colonial subjects was very much in effect for some of these women.

> Mun Pil-gi *halmuni* continues to speak of unusual occurrences.
>
> When we went to a hairdresser's or wanted to eat something or going out for an outing, they gave us expenses. When we asked for cosmetics or other necessities, they bought them for us…Sometimes, I asked a superintendent's wife to buy me millet cakes.[133]

One of the most difficult inconsistency I had to deal with reveals that one woman actually had found freedom and yet, she ventured back to her "comfort station."

> One the way to an island (to service soldiers) one women older than me had to be left behind because she had tuberculosis and couldn't travel any longer. I volunteered to take care of her. *When the others left*, I took care of her in a place far from the barracks. I was with her all the time, feeling sorry for her. *She died in about ten days,* and I cremated her with my hands because no soldier wanted to come closer. I didn't even shed a tear. I scattered her bones in the sea.[134]

If the fact that she was left alone for ten days was true, I question why the thought of escape did not come to her. With this particular case, Mun Ock-ju *halmuni* describes how she escaped from the first time she was forced to be a "comfort women," and the above

[132]Ibid., 55. Italics my own.
[133]Ibid., 56, 57.
[134]Ibid., 41. Italics my own.

excerpt describes a scene from her second period of life as a "comfort women," as she was captured again by the Japanese military. I wonder if it is because she felt that it was her "fate," a concept she alludes to often, that she does not try to escape her situation. Whatever the case may be, this woman's story was one case which contradicted my idea about resistance, thus causing difficulty in my analysis.

The Korean *halmunis* have memories of doing work outside the realm of sexual slavery. As mentioned before, there was not a fine line delineating women's work during the war. Towards the end of the war, for example, when the casualty and injuries were high, many learned first aid treatment and tended to injured soldiers.[135] Mun Ock-ju *halmuni* recalls how they got "training about how to give injections, bind wounds, stop bleeding, treat malaria wounds, etc. Following this, we nursed wounded soldiers."[136]

Throughout their time as "comfort women," the people who managed the stations fed these women, but when food supplies were diminishing in the 1940s, some planted potatoes and lived off these products.[137] When the war was over, the "comfort women" were not always told. One touching example is told by a surviving "comfort women."

> The Japanese soldiers suddenly disappeared. During that time, I and the other women survived raising fruit and sweet potatoes and we lived on that. The Japanese army did not inform us that the war was over, they abandoned us. As some of the 20 women had committed suicide, there were 14 or 15 of us left. However, if I think about it now, that time when we lived together, just us by ourselves, was the happiest period of my memory.[138]

Their Return Home

The surviving "comfort women" who managed to return to their homeland would encounter difficult times ahead. Mun Ock-ju states: "We wept that we had been able to survive and return home."[139] I am not sure whether it is out of joy or out of knowledge of her predicament. She continues to say that when she returned home to her family in Taegu,

[135]War Victimization and Japan, 23. See also, Witness of the Victims, 21.
[136]Forced Prostitution, 9, 10.
[137]War Victimization and Japan, 24.
[138]Koh, "Appendix," 1.
[139]Ibid., 7.

they were happy and cried together. However, "I told my family that I had been working in a restaurant."[140] Most ended up lying to their families about their experiences. For Mun Pil-gi, there was a party that welcomed her homecoming, but eventually she ended up running away from her family after five days, as pressure mounted for her to get married and to prove that she had studied and worked in a factory.[141] One woman's brother had made up the lie for her, stating to their neighbors and friends that she had been helping to take care of their grandmother's house.[142] As their families began to pressure them into marriage, some ended up running away to avoid the questions of why they would not want to marry.

Even in the present day, in light of Korea's modern developments, there are still some conservative Korean circles who have strong fears that a public debate bringing attention to this "disgraceful" topic could damage Korea's reputation in the world. These conservative Koreans are, therefore, against demanding the Japanese government for an apology and/or compensation.

> In Pusan, the second largest city in South Korea with a population of more than three million, the citizens were against the construction of a commemorative plaque to the women forced into prostitution, on the grounds that these women were no models for their children, and that *due to their defiled bodies, they should spend the rest of their lives in dishonor and shame.*[143]

Japan's Rationale

After having read the words from the former "comfort women's" oral histories, it may be appropriate to highlight the different pictures one can imagine from the language used to described the *iansho* system from the Japanese government's perspective. My own language has labeled these women's experiences as (if I may paraphrase), "suffering due to

[140]Ibid.
[141]She initially ran away to her aunt's house where her mother would come to visit. She states: "My mother was beaten many times on account of me. My father accused her of letting me become loose." Witness of the Victims, 63.
[142]Koh, "Appendix," 3. The fact that he made up the lie for his sister indicates that either during or after the war, he had known about his sister's duties in the *chongshindae*.
[143]Forced Prostitution, 33.

the ceaseless rapings, beatings, and torture." This is how I understood their lives, as described in their testimonies, but the Japanese government saw them in a different light. One will notice this kind of language pervades the Japanese government's literature when alluding to the institution of sexual slavery. The language transformations may be paralleled to the growth of feminist consciousness in the Third World, specifically within the Asian context.

It is obvious that Japan believed military sexual slavery was necessary to carry on the war. An adjutant from the war ministry named Kawahara summed up Japan's rationale best with the following statement: "Places of sexual gratification has an immediate and far reaching effect on the psyche of the soldiers, the raising of war morale, army discipline and prevention of crime and sexual disease..."[144] According to Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki and other Japanese sources, there were mainly these three reasons for the conscription. First, the military wanted to provide release from their everyday harsh lives sexually and psychologically in order to maintain the morale of the soldiers who endured long periods of battles with little rest and relaxation.[145] These women may have even become an incentive to some, as they were presented as "imperial gifts for the Japanese military." The Chief of Staff of the Japanese Army's Expeditionary Force in North China Division, Okabe Naosaburo, one of Lieutenant-General Okamura's subordinates in Shanghai, noted the following in his 14 March 1932 journal entry: "Lately, the soldiers run about looking for women...the army recognized the necessity to set up appropriate institutions toward the resolution of the soldiers' sexual problems..."[146]

From this psychological viewpoint, one could argue that a war mentality conflicted with the Confucian ideological precedent. In other words, the idea of complete and unconditional surrender of a soldier's will and life for the nation took away the authority

[144]Ibid., 13. Documented in Yoshimi Yoshiaki's book, Jugun Ianfu Shiryo Shu (Tokyo: Otsuki shoten, 1992), 209-210.
[145]Yoshimi, "Historical Understandings," War Victimization, 85.
[146]Forced Prostitution, 12.

and autonomy ordained him as a male in a patriarchal society. It is clear that the soldiers themselves were subject to strict rules and regulations. For example, leaves of absences off of the military compound were allowed only "with the accompaniment of a superior officer or for visiting comfort houses" in the post-Nanjing era of the Pacific War.[147] The commanding officers deliberated greatly on the best means to control and to discipline the soldiers, on the one hand, and to maintain the war morale, on the other. Evidently, they found their answer in the iansho system. In attempting to explain this line of thinking, one Japanese writer, Hikosaka Tei, stated the following in his book Dansei Shinwa ("Male Mythology").

> For soldiers who were deprived of their independence and forced to become objects, to have sex with a women was a chance to have fantasies at least temporarily, to regain their autonomy. In those moments, they could almost lose the feeling of being an object/soldier and become a dominant, independent, and "free" person who could enjoy pleasure.[148]

A similar theme throughout the testimonies which may work in conjunction with this psychological argument is the particularly aggressive and violent behavior the soldiers demonstrated the day before going to the front lines or battle field.[149] "In order to increase their effectiveness in battle, the day before leaving for the front, they became agitated and particularly violent."[150]

What Hikosaka forgets to mention, though, is the fact that the Japanese military created the structured atmosphere where independence could only be found within this private, sexual realm. It was true that the Japanese soldiers probably suffered from war trauma, repression, and self-denial,[151] but their personal distress in no way justifies or excuses these soldiers/officers/personnel of the innumerable acts of violence.[152]

[147]Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 25, 26.
[148]Kano, "The Problem with the 'Comfort Women' Problem," 41.
[149]Forced Prostitution, 6.
[150]Koh, "Appendix," 4.
[151]Some Korean women even cried for the Japanese soldiers who died on the battle fronts. Also, as Ienaga Saburo writes: "Vast numbers of unwilling men were drafted, sent off to risk their lives and be maimed and killed at the front. A considerable number tried to improve the odds by dodging the draft under one stratagem or another. What they thought about military service was caught in an underground song popular at the time: 'For the country they say. How sad the draftee going off to the stupid army. A tearful parting

In addition to the psychological argument of "temporary independence and freedom" with sexual services, Japan believed that the strictly regulated system would also maintain a high level of "sanitary" conditions needed to prevent venereal diseases, thereby keeping the soldiers healthy for war and ensuring that they would not endanger other Japanese people upon their return home. In Shanghai, April 1933, the 14th Brigade of the Japanese navy legitimized the establishment of its own brothel system (i.e., regulations under Japanese management) with the notion that the spread of sexual disease would be significantly lower in comparison to other native brothels.[153] As mentioned before, this is one reason why Korean young females were highly recruited.

Beyond the Japanese military's need for psychological and sexual gratification under "sanitary" conditions, the greatest impetus for the widespread upsurge of "comfort stations" manifested after the 1937 "Rape of Nanjing." The Japanese realized that the need for brothels went beyond satiating the soldier's sexual desire or preventing venereal diseases. They understood the institution of military sexual slavery as a deterrent, as the solution to avoid the kind of "wild," massive rapings and slayings that the Chinese experienced in Nanjing and which Japan foresaw and feared in the aftermath of this experience. An estimated 200,000 people were killed, and some 20,000 women raped within a two month period. Evidence of the soldier's brutality was documented. According to a report (#1995 from 9 September 1940) of the war ministry, 732 soldiers were convicted of robbery, rape, and/or murder from the period between 7 July 1937 to the

from his lonely Su-chan.'" Ienaga, The Pacific War, 1931-1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in WWII (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 214.

[152]This is not to say that all Japanese felt this way. A few brave souls resisted the war and its propaganda. See Ienaga, especially chapter 10. However, there are those who deflect the soldier's responsibilities. Such is Kagami Mitsuyuki's argument in an article entitled "The Nanjing Massacre and the Japanese Tenno's Visit to China," Impaction, Issue 77. He wrote: "The victims had thrown away their will to the soldiers, who became killing machines by usurping that human will. In other words, if these women had not given up their will to resist, it would not have happened." Citing from Kano, "The Problem with the 'Comfort Women' Problem," 40, 41. This kind of rationale gives us a window into how some Japanese still think in terms of their role in the Pacific War.

[153]"Military Brothels as Places of Organized Rape," Forced Prostitution, 13. Another helpful resource may be "Dainiji tokyuoin Shinshustu ni Kansuru ken" ("Sending the 2nd Mission of Special Women to East Asia"), Bungei Shunju special Issue Magazine, December 1955 cited in Yoshimi, Jugun Ianfu, 224-225.

end of 1938.[154] According to Kawakara, this kind of rampage represented "crimes of the worst kind,"[155] for they went against army discipline, sparked strong anti-Japanese sentiments among the native people, endangered the security of the region, and benefited China and her allies towards anti-Japanese propaganda. In other words, this incident endangered Japan's conquest for power. A warning notice that Okabe had sent to his units on 27 July 1938 documents these sentiments precisely.[156]

> Anger and resistance against the Japanese among the locals have been widely spread by the illegal actions of the Japanese military. Such resistance plays into the hands of anti-Japanese communists and thus impedes our efforts to maintain security. According to various reports, stories of rape by the Japanese soldiers have spread far and wide, and the reaction is much more serious than we had anticipated, fomenting an intense air of hostility against the Japanese.
>
> Therefore, cases of rape should be considered not merely as simple criminal acts but as serious offenses that, by disrupting public order, impede the military operations of the army and *adversely affect the prestige of the nation as a whole. Rape should be treated as an act of treason against the state.*
>
> ...the behavior of individual soldiers should be strictly controlled, while at the same time, *sexual comfort facilities* are installed as quickly as possible, so that there are no unintended violations of the rules for lack of such facilities.[157]

Also, according to the Internal Regulations of the Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion, drafted on 16 March 1938, regulation #59 of chapter nine stipulates that "the purpose of comfort facilities is to maintain high morale and discipline by providing *a peaceful way to comfort the soldiers.*"[158]

The use of language in the above quotes sheds light on the different perceptions of what rape was and how it was understood. If one were to read just the Japanese accounts of the iansho system, the "sexual comfort facilities" described as a "peaceful way of

[154]Forced Prostitution, 13.

[155]See footnote #139.

[156]Okabe was Chief of Staff for the Northern China Division. This notice was found by Professor Yoshimi at the Center for Self-Defense Research of Japan's Defense Agency.

[157]Korean Comfort Women Interim Report, 24. Italics my own.

[158]Korean Comfort Women Interim Report, 38. The Commander in Chief of this battalion was Major Bampa, stationed in Shangzhou, China.

comforting the soldiers" would suggest that there was consent on the part of those who provided this "comfort."[159] Indeed, there is no mention of the kind of resistance the former "*halmuni*'s" describe in their testimonies. From this language, I deduce that the Japanese did not view this "comforting" system as one which involved rape, brutality, or torture.[160] On the other hand, the Nanjing incident involved, in Kawahara's words, "crimes of the worst kind," wherein the massive and wild "rapes should not be considered as simple criminal acts, but as a serious offense…as an act of treason against the state." Thus understood, Okabe was not sympathizing for the Chinese women and indicting his countrymen's violence and abuse. Rather, he was concerned with the damage done to the Japanese Imperial Army's reputation which ultimately reflected upon the Emperor and "adversely affect[ed] the prestige of the nation as a whole."

I highlight the nuances of language use for a couple of reasons. First, it is to demonstrate that the Japanese knew what rape was and understood it in a negative connotation, as "an act of treason," when it reflected the nation or the *Tenno*. Second, it was only recognized as "rape" when it endangered their conquests for power, and as "comfort" when it aided to maintain that power. The construct of a modern nation-state, thus, with its legitimizing foundation rooted in the strength of the "*Tenno*" system, has created a phenomena in which an abstract whole, a nationhood, has been placed above individual rights and autonomy.

[159]According to the Japanese dictionary (Kojien), "comfort women" (jugunianfu) are defined as "women who accompany units of soldiers to the battlefield to comfort them." Citing from Military Comfort Women Interim Report, 21.

[160]I remind the reader of what I noted from footnote #81, when Lieutenant-General Okamura Neiji stated that there was "no case of rape" after the "comfort stations" were established.

POST-COLONIAL PERIOD TO NORMALIZATION (1945-1965)

After the Pacific War, the victorious allied forced set up tribunals for the trials of Germany and Japan's war crimes. The international military tribunal in Nüremberg and the international military tribunal for Japan in Tokyo punished some of the war crimes. There was no trial, much less attention, given to the Korean women who were forced to be sexual slaves by Japan. However, the military trial of 1947 in Batavia/Java condemned one high-ranking Japanese officer to death for his crimes involved with military sexual slavery in Indonesia committed against Dutch women.[161] Even today, although Japanese officials have fully recognized and publicly apologized for managing and setting up this institution, there has not been any form of compensation, nor has there been any military men convicted of their crimes. Why was there a trial for just the Dutch women and not for the Korean and other Asian women?

The conditions following the Pacific war resulted in Allied Occupation and financial support for both Japan and Korea to ensure an uplifting from their postwar devastation. In order to understand the resulting framework, i.e., the relation of the Pacific rim to Japan and Japan to the U.S., an overview of the American policy objectives is needed because the policy explains why the U.S. was intent on becoming involved in the east Asian region. I pay particular attention to how this structure has affected Japan and Korea, and how its workings played a part to induce the silence of the "comfort women's" experience.[162] For Korea, the overall change reflected a shift from the military threat under Japanese colonial forces during the war to economic dependence upon both U.S. and Japan after the war; thus the *sadae* legacy still lingered on.

Maintaining U.S. Hegemony

In the aftermath of the Fifteen Year War or WWII, the U.S. had realized its goal as the hegemon of the world economy. Yet, a steep global crisis arose: the "dollar gap."

[161]Forced Prostitution, 29.

[162]I would further like to allude to how this structure has continued the practice of sexual slavery, but in the contemporary form of militarized prostitution in South Korea today, but due to the confines of this paper, this can only be footnoted at this point.

Although the U.S. had attained sheer economic supremacy, this very economic domination caused a tremendous imbalance in the world economy which threatened the prosperity of the U.S. and its foreign policy objectives. The domination of American producers in the world economy would induce profit if foreign nations could purchase American goods. However, the global trade imbalance, or the "dollar gap," meant that foreign demands for American imports were expanding dramatically at the very time when the foreign countries' means for paying for them were contracting.[163]

What was the American response to this crisis? The Congress appropriated funds to finance the export of American goods to foreign economies, because the benefits of such economic aid and allocations were necessary. On a domestic level, foreign aid maintained American employment, income, profits, and production, but more importantly, on the international level, America sustained its plans for an American-controlled, multilateral, international economic system.[164] For the Pacific Rim, this meant that the original intent to reform Japan's militaristic culture and democratize its socio-political order "reversed its course" by 1949 to institute Japan's Recovery Program.[165]

This recovery program was created for two reasons: to revive Japan as a functioning member of the world-system and to prevent the Sino-Soviet world of communism to draw in the rest of the Pacific region. In pursuit of the first goal for economic revival, there was a tremendous effort by Washington and SCAP (Supreme Command for Allied Powers - the bureaucracy representing the U.S. Occupation) to encourage Japanese economic renewal and growth in her devastated postwar aftermath, to "prime the pump" of Japanese industrial plants and thus to increase her production for exports.[166] In order to carry out this plan, the U.S. subsidized and promoted Japanese trade and successfully overcame numerous Japanese crises which posed a threat to the program's realization.[167] An intricate part of this plan also included the Korean war, as Japan experienced a great economic boom by producing the military supplies for the U.S. forces.

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[163]Thomas J. McCormick, America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War

As for the second goal of deterring a communist take-over (China fell under the "Kremlin design" in 1949), this dealt with American fear of the Soviet threat. Japan's role as a deterrant was one factor which partook to create (what John Lewis Gaddis labeled) the "long peace" of the Cold War. Japan's recovery process was taking place simultaneously as Congress was mustering up a means to convince its constituency of passing National Security Council #68 (NSC 68), adopted from the original "containment" policy of formulated by George Kennan in his famous "X" Telegram. What NSC 68 called for was an increase in military strength as a fundamental necessity in fending off the "Kremlin design." This need for national security from the communist threat was not the main reason that urged the passing the NSC 68. It was the Korean War that "came along and saved us," as Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated.[168]

In Bruce Cumings overview of the Cold War, he explains that the rationale that created the "long peace" from the east-west bipolar world that sustained the need for a strong military design was not just about the containment of the Soviet Union. Rather, there was a "double containment" that both the U.S. and USSR agreed upon: containment of Japan and Germany, so they could never acquire the hegemonic status they had attained during WWII. This second aspect of the Cold War was part of the global hegemonic plan of the U.S., which called for interventions in the Third World to sustain the immense military-industrial complex that pump-primed money into various sectors of the American economy. In other words, Cumings describes the institution of the military-industrial complex as a perpetual-motion machine whose mechanisms were created to serve the twin projects of Soviet/allied-containment and U.S. hegemony. In light of the end of the Cold

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(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 73, 74.
[164]William S. Borden, The Pacific Alliance, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin, 1984), 6.
[165]Ibid., 3.
[166]Ibid., 5.
[167]Ibid.
[168]Cumings, 90. This war galvanized Congress and the American public against the real danger of communism. The government passed NSC 68 whose policy would create the U.S. institution of a military-industrial complex with its tremendous bureaucratic build-up from the CIA to the Office of Policy Coordination (whose main operations involved covert action), from the Department of Defense to the Economic Cooperation Administration. Simply stated, there was a quadrupling of the military budget from $14 billion in 1950 to $52 billion in 1952. McCormick, 94.

War, Cumings argues that "nothing really changed in American policy…[because] the real conflict we have fought for the last four decades [was] that between the United States and the Third World…from Korea through Iran, Guatemala and Cuba, to the debacle in Vietnam."[169]

It is within this complex structure of American hegemonic desires and Japanese economic build-up which created the conditions for Koreans dependence upon both these countries for economic and (U.S.) military support. It is also within this situation when Japan and Korea signed their 1965 Normalization Treaty, in which Japan promised to invest $300 million to help boost Korean good and services and to provide $200 million in low-interest loans.[170] Japan states today that all problems concerning property and compensation claims were absolved with this Treaty. However, there was no mention of compensation to the war victims of the colonial government. This unfairness is also demonstrated in the San Francisco Treaty of 1952 that Japan signed with 49 states which allowed Japan to forego reparation payments from the war. Only the states which were occupied by Japan had the right to raise claims for compensation; however, China, Taiwan, and both North and South Korea were not invited to the negotiations.[171]

It is no wonder that these women's voices were unheard. First, there was already the Confucian precedent. Then, the post-colonial, socio-economic and political structure that was put into place within east Asia did not allow the past injustices and sufferings of the Korean people to come to the forefront of international concern. Finally, the post-colonial context within the Pacific rim helps explain why the Japanese men's books (no matter how condescending or "exoticized" the books may have been) were also not debated. Even if people cared and wanted this issue to be debated, Korea's geo-political position did not allow their concerns to be heard, especially the topic of concern dealt with women who were poor and felt ashamed about their experiences.

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[169] Cumings., 89, 90, 91.
[170] Forced Prostitution, 39.
[171] Ibid.

CONCLUSION

An inquiry into why there was such a prolonged silence from the surviving Korean "comfort women" about their experiences as military sexual slaves under Japanese colonial rule has revealed its founding precursors in the Confucian ideology and its structuring aftermath in Korea's geo-political subordinate status. The socio-economic, political framework that was established in the Pacific rim also goes to explain why the Japanese men's previously published documents did not gain the popularity or interests as when these Korean *halmunis* went public with their oral testimonies.

I have discussed how others view their disclosure, how I myself understand it, but here, in my concluding space, I want to allow some of the *halmunis'* voices to be. All speak of their humiliation, shame, and disgrace; yet, they speak. Their motivation ranges from anger against the Japanese for denying their involvement to the need to tell the "truth," as they experienced it. I realize that there are few who survived, fewer who have come public with their past, and even fewer whose testimonies I have read, seen, or heard. However, even the sparse numbers cannot prevent my thinking that these women were/are brave, courageous, and somehow spirited enough to be compelled to break through the seams and cracks of their social strongholds and voice their untold histories. There is certainly a sense of empowerment for some to watch one another gain international attention, as journalists come from all over the world to interview them. They themselves travel to various parts of the globe to testify and shed light to the past with their oral histories. For me though, there is a significance and a compelling gravity to their words, not because of the mass media attention or the empowerment they give to each other and to other women, but because of the fact that they have not allowed their past to go unnoticed. They thought it important enough to voice their opinions; they made the decision to go public with their stories. They have in their own personal way maintained their dignity and given a little back to their worth and their existence as women and as humans. Their definition of womanhood or human-ness differs. Some tell their stories out of sympathy

for others, so that they will never experience such atrocity again, while others have disclosed their past because they have nothing to lose, because either their husbands are dead, or because they have no other family. In the end, their disclosure will never erase the past nor their life-long suffering. No one will feel their pain or their shock or their shame as they did in those distant years. No one may empathize with their physical condition and emotional pain today, but they have done something for themselves that no one will take away. Their stories are out there, and their voices will flow. The power of words is extraordinary, and no one can stop them.

Noh Chong-Ja

> I live in a rented room without running water or a toilet. The 40,000 (about $500) won rent takes up all my money--I get by on social security. But the 30,000 won and the 10 kilos of rice we receive in payment is not enough to live on.[172] Sometimes, I think of suicide. To be honest, I will confess that until today's interview, I had decided to kill myself in May. But until I have confronted Japan with all that I need to and erect a grave for my father who died away from home, I have changed my mind and decided to endure my life.[173]

Kang Soon-Ae:

> Before my husband died, I refused to speak up, feeling dreadfully ashamed of having my past exposed to the public. But now that my husband has died, and as resentment grows such that even my only living brother avoids me because of his hatred toward my having been a comfort woman, it is my firm determination to restore my honor before an abominable society.
>
> I, as a person who has suffered indescribable humiliation, am determined to dedicate myself to solving this issue by telling of my experience.[174]

Kim Hak-sun:

> I only want to say one thing to the Japanese government: even if we were paid ¥20 million for damages, we will not get back our past life. We hope that Japan will recognize the historical fact, that it forced us Korean women into prostitution for soldiers, and that numerous women were raped as a consequence, and that it will enlighten the younger generation about this. In

[172]The Korean government passed a new legislation entitled "The Social Security Law for the Comfort Women of the Japanese Army during the Japanese Colonial Rule" on 19 May 1993. It guarantees each survivor a lump sum of 5 million won ($6,250) and a monthly allowance of 150,000 won ($187). Additional social security measures include 10 Kg of rice, 2.5 Kg of barley, 20,000 won ($25) for food, 15,000 won ($18.75) for fuel, free medical insurance, and renting priority for government housing. "International Activities Against Military Sexual Slavery," (Seoul, Korea: Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, July 1993), vol. 1, no. 2, 10. This bi-yearly pamphlet documents the current events of the Korean Council and the former Korean "comfort women."
[173]Helen Koh, 9. Her father died of an illness when she was eight.
[174]Kang Soon-Ae, War Victimization, 25.

> order to pass on these historical facts correctly, I have testified here despite the shame and the loss of my reputation.[175]

Mun Ock-ju:

> Out of shame, I remained silent about my past, earned my living as a housekeeper and led a life full of worry…Despite unmentionable pain and deep suffering, I could not take my life. When I recently read in a newspaper article that the Japanese armed forced even abducted small school children as "forced prostitutes," my nightmares from that time were revived in my memory. Since then, I cannot sleep properly, even with sleeping pills.[176]

Kim Yong-Sil:

> I have lived a life of shunning people, out of fear of revealing my disgraceful past. I decided not to marry because I was so ashamed of my past. Throughout my life, I have suffered a deep rooted bitterness.
>
> This year it was a great shock for me to see on TV former "comfort women" disclosing their past. That encouraged me. After long and deep thought, I made up my mind to bring to light the atrocities committed by the Japanese army. Without a husband or child, I have nothing to fear, and I could not close my eyes, even in death, without exposing my heart-breaking rancor.
>
> I tell the world about the barbarous and heinous atrocities committed by the Japanese and appeal to all the fair-minded people of the world…How can we pardon their crimes? The Japanese authorities are still reluctant to frankly admit and apologize…They ought to acknowledge such crimes, conduct a thorough investigation, clearly reveal the truth, apologize for the Japanese imperialists, make appropriate compensation and pledge not to repeat such crimes.[177]

[175]Forced Prostitution, 7.
[176]Ibid., 10.
[177]War Victimization, 58, 59.

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APPENDIX: PHOTOS TAKEN SUMMER OF 1994
SEOUL, KOREA

Wednesday
Demonstrations

Photo 1
Taken by:
Regina Muelhauser

Photo 2
Taken by:
Regina Muelhauser

Photo 3 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 4 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 5 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 6 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 7 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 8 by Hi-Joo Son
Drawing done by artist Lee Kyung-shin
and the six *halmunis* from the "Sharing House"
Translation: "We Demand an Apology"

Photo 9 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 10 by Regina Muelhauser

The "Sharing House"

Photo 11 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 12 by Hi-Joo Son

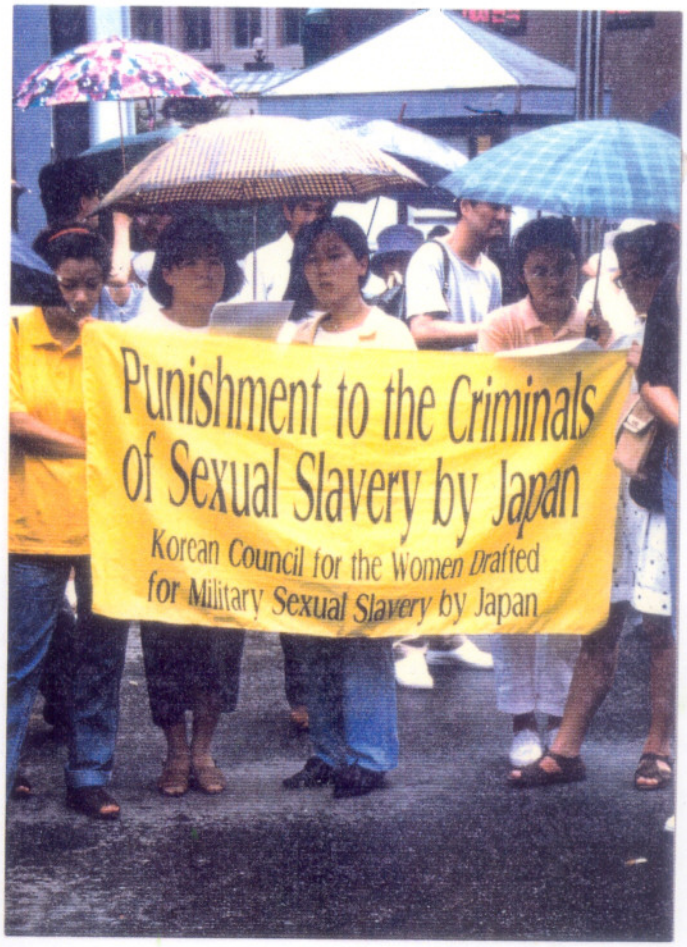
The "Sharing House"

Photo 13 by Hi-Joo Son

Photo 14 by Hi-Joo Son

Photo 15 by Hi-Joo Son

APPENDIX: PHOTOS TAKEN SUMMER OF 1994
SEOUL, KOREA



Wednesday
Demonstrations

Photo 1
Taken by:
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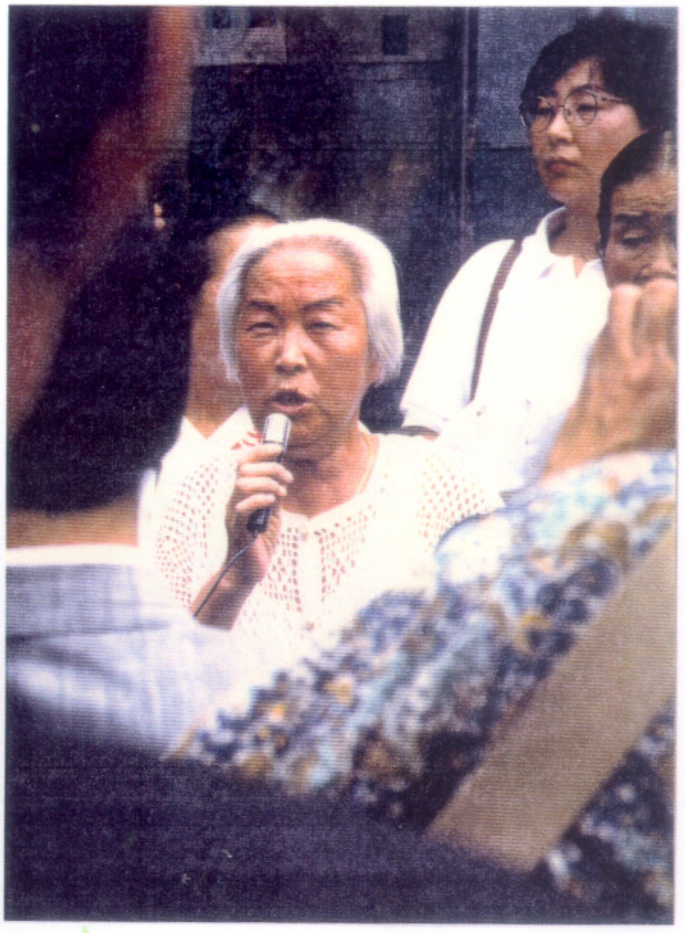

Photo 7 by Regina Muelhauser

Photo 8 by Hi-Joo Son
Drawing done by artist Lee Kyung-shin
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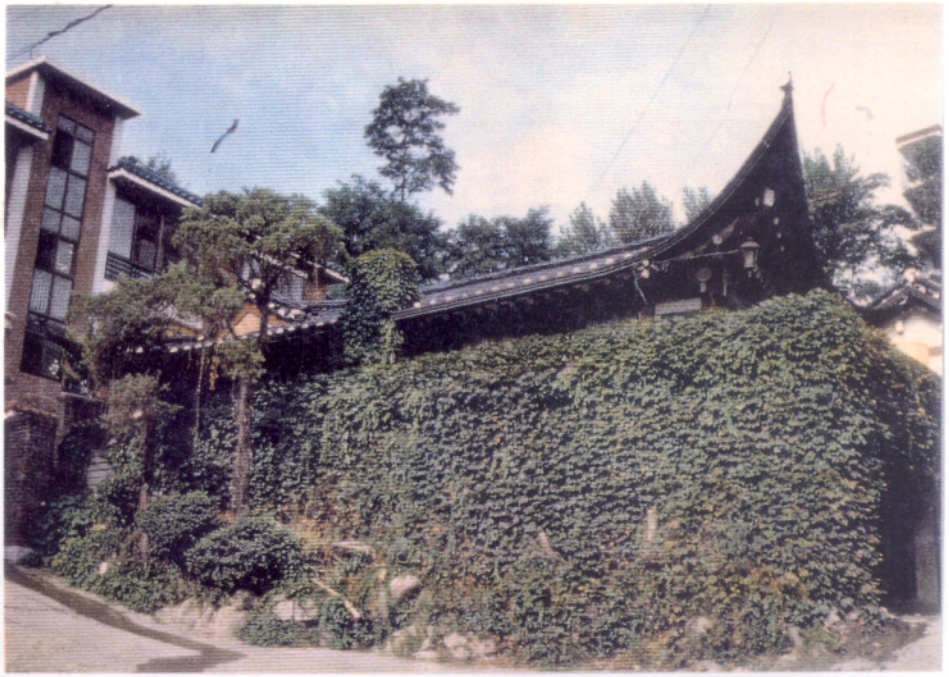

Photo 12 by Hi-Joo Son

The "Sharing House"

Photo 13 by Hi-Joo Son

Photo 14 by Hi-Joo Son

Photo 15 by Hi-Joo Son