

Presentation 1

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Korean Wartime Labor and the Sado Mines

1. Overview of Korean Wartime Labor

I would like to begin by providing an overview of Korean wartime labor.

Though the wartime mobilization of Korean workers began in September 1939, it is worth noting the following Cabinet decision which was made five years earlier in October 1934, stating the "urgent need to further reduce the number of Koreans traveling to the mainland."

<The overpopulation and poverty in many areas of southern Korea have recently caused a significant spike in the number of Koreans traveling to the Japanese home islands from the southern provinces. Not only has this caused a marked worsening in unemployment among domestic Japanese and the difficulties they face in finding employment, but it is also having an increasingly negative impact on the unemployment of Koreans already residing in the home islands. This has given rise to various crimes involving Koreans, disputes over leased housing, and various other issues. In addition to hindering the integration of Koreans into Japan, it is also causing a worrying situation in terms of security.

In order to address this situation, appropriate measures must be adopted in both Korea and in the home islands. In other words, there is an urgent need to stabilize the living arrangements of Koreans both on the peninsula and the mainland while also relocating those in densely populated regions to Manchuria and to further reduce the number of Koreans traveling to the home islands. >

During this period, those who wished to travel from Korea to the Japanese home islands had to appear at either their local police station or sub-station, provide evidence including that they had found employment, that they had at least ¥10 JPY of surplus funds in addition to travel expenses, and that they had not been recruited by a broker, after which they had to obtain a letter of referral for passage to the home islands addressed to the Busan Coast Guard. Without meeting these criteria, they could not travel to the mainland.

With the Cabinet decision of 1934, however, it became difficult to acquire this letter of referral. It is also worth noting that according to the statistics of the Government-General of Korea, in the six years from 1933 to 1938, 727,094 people applied at police stations to travel to the home islands but were denied travel permission. Thus before the start of wartime mobilization, there were many Korean workers on the peninsula who wished to go to work in the Japanese home

islands and were seeking ways of traveling there.

There were many illegal travelers who did not follow the required formal procedure; according to the statistics of the Ministry of Home Affairs, 39,482 illegal travelers were discovered in the home islands over the course of 13 years between 1930 and 1942, of which 33,535 were deported back to Korea.

What should not be overlooked here is the fact that even in the middle of wartime mobilization, 19,250 of the 22,800 illegal travelers apprehended in the home islands in the four years between the start of mobilization in 1939 and 1942 were deported back to Korea.

The fact I would like to emphasize here is this: the “recruitment” stage of Korean wartime mobilization, began in September 1939 as an exception to the Cabinet decision in 1934 to “further reduce the number of Koreans traveling to the home islands”.

Following the promulgation of the National Mobilization Law in April 1938, conscripted labor began in the Japanese home islands, though it did not yet extend to Korea. Then, in July 1939, the Vice-Ministers of both the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Welfare announced a policy whereby Korean laborers would be introduced into Japan as an exception to the October 1934 Cabinet decision.

What I would like more Japanese and Koreans to understand is the fact that, although a Cabinet decision had been passed which intended to curb the number of migrant Korean workers traveling to the Japanese home islands in search of work (a number which, if left unchecked would swell enormously), the wartime mobilization of Koreans began as an exceptional measure to this decision. Though it had only been intended as an exception, once the gate was open, all those would-be laborers who had thereto been unable to travel due to the severe restrictions descended on the mainland like an avalanche.

2. Korean Wartime Labor at the Sado Gold Mines

Next, I would like to outline the Korean wartime labor at the Sado gold mines. Primary sources, that is, contemporary documents from the mines either at the time of, or immediately following, the enactment of wartime labor, and the testimonies of those concerned at that time are scarce; the only known sources are the three listed in Notes 2 to 4 of HARC’s recent newspaper advertisement.

Hirai Eiichi’s edited History of the Sado Mines (Volume II) in Note 2 is an unpublished manuscript compiled in 1950. Hirai Eiichi, a former mining section chief who managed the Sado mining operations, summarized the history of the Sado mine across two volumes spanning from the Edo period to the Showa era at the request of Mitsubishi Metals.

The whereabouts of the original copy of this historical document are currently unknown. Although facsimiles are stored in both the Aikawa Local History Museum in Sado City and

the Mitsubishi Historical Archives, the document was not released to the public. On January 26, the Historical Awareness Research Committee, of which I am the chairman, obtained, from a certain source, photographs of the table of contents and “Section 9: The Circumstances of Korean Laborers” on pages 844-846 from the manuscript, and published them on the Committee homepage.

However, the Foundation for Victims of Forced Mobilization by Imperial Japan, a South Korean government agency that is conducting field surveys and research in a bid to prevent the registration of the Sado Mines as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, received these same documents from “an anonymous Japanese researcher” earlier this year on January 14. This researcher reportedly obtained it in August 2015 from the World Heritage Registration Promotion Office in the Cultural Affairs Department of the Education Bureau of Niigata Prefecture. This is according to the paper “New Material: Hirai Eiichi’s A History of the Sado Mines” by Jeong Hye-Gyeong (ARGO Institute for Research in Humanities), recorded in the reference material of the aforementioned foundation’s January 27 webinar titled “How Japan’s World Heritage Registration Distorts the History of Forced Labor at the Sado Mines”.

Written utilizing internal documents from the Sado mining operations, A History of the Sado Mines discloses previously unknown data on the total number of Koreans mobilized every year as well as the number that remained at the end of the war as follows.

"We recruited a total of 1,519 workers from Korea to come and work at the mines: 98 in February 1940, 248 in May, 300 in December, 280 in 1941, 79 in 1942, 263 in 1944, and 251 in 1945. Of these 1,519 workers, 1,096 were immediately repatriated following the end of the war. "

In addition, as briefly summarized below, not only was the treatment of these Korean laborers the same as that of domestic Japanese workers, but management took great care in treating the laborers well, such as by providing them with lodgings and meals.

“There was no discrimination between Koreans and domestic Japanese workers in terms of how they were treated in the workplace, the wage system, or incentive schemes. Laborers were employed primarily as pit workers and paid based on a piece-rate system according to how much they mined. A bonus for work attendance was awarded once a month based on days worked, rice purchases were subsidized according to the number of family dependents and the number of days worked, and a bonus for diligence was granted twice a year. In general, for those with families, company housing was provided free of charge, there were communal baths, rice, miso, soy sauce, and other daily necessities could be purchased inexpensively through the company store, and medical examinations were conducted for sick or injured family members. Those who were single were permitted to stay in one of the three dormitories for free. Meals were the same as for the Japanese, the daily cost of which was ¥0.5 JPY with

any difference in the actual cost being borne by the company. Bedding was rented out for ¥0.5 JPY per set per month, while utility costs and bathhouse fees were covered by the company. Other daily necessities such as work supplies, clothes, and footwear were also sold cheaply through the company store. Whenever there was a shortage of vegetables, stocks were replenished from a farm under the direct management of the mines”.

The second primary source is the document in Note 3 from the Sado mining operation titled Concerning Korean Personnel Management. This is a report that was submitted by the Sado mining operations to the “Committee on the Management of Korean Workers”, a gathering of personnel managers from mines nationwide that employed Korean workers which was organized by the Tokyo Mining Supervisory Bureau and held on June 7, 1943 at the Sado mining operations. Shigeru Nagasawa, a researcher of the history of Korean residents in Japan, received this report from a person named Shizuo Suto. Published by Nagasawa in 1983 in issue 12 of Studies in the History of Korean Residents in Japan, it has since been widely used by researchers. As this report was also created based on internal documents of the Sado mining operations, it often overlaps with Hirai's account. Naturally, however, it provides no account of the situation after June 1943.

What this historical document reveals is that all Korean laborers hired to come work at the mines across six waves in the period between 1940 and 1942 were hired on a recruitment basis, as well as the total number of these workers. 98 were hired in February 1940, 248 in May, 300 in December, 153 in June 1941, 127 in October, and 79 in March 1942, for a total of 1,005. It is also clear that the contract period was three years for the first three waves of recruitment in 1940 and two years for the three waves from 41 to 42.

421 people left the Sado mines for various reasons, and as of the end of May 1943, 584 Korean workers remained. The reasons for leaving are also organized and accounted for. There were ten deaths, 148 runaways, six repatriations due to injuries sustained on the job, 30 repatriations due to non-work-related injuries, 25 repatriations for misdemeanors, 72 temporary returns to Korea, and 130 transfers.

What I would like to focus on here is the 25 repatriations for misdemeanors. In other words, those who did not do their job efficiently were deported to Korea. If this was, in fact, forced labor, that would most certainly not have been the case. In a sense, for those who wanted to work in the Japanese home islands, “repatriation” would have been seen as a punishment. In 1943, gold mining was suspended with only the mining of copper for its use as a war material being permitted, and because there was a surplus of workers, Korean laborers were sent to construction sites in areas such as Saitama Prefecture.

In addition, the report also discloses the average, highest, and lowest monthly incomes. In April 1943, the average income was ¥83.88 JPY, the maximum was ¥169.95 JPY (28 days

attendance), and the minimum was ¥4.18 JPY (1-day attendance). In May, the average was ¥80.56 JPY, the maximum was ¥221.03 JPY (28 days attendance), and the minimum was ¥6.75 JPY (2 days attendance). Since wages were calculated based on a piece-rate system, there was a considerable difference between the highest and lowest wages, but considering that the starting salary of public elementary school teachers in Tokyo at the time was ¥50 to ¥60 JPY, these were quite substantial wages. Can this really be described as “forced labor”?

As we have thus seen, these primary sources testify that the Korean labor at the Sado gold mines was not the reputedly inhumane “forced labor” it has been made out to be.

South Korean and certain Japanese researchers cite the fact that Koreans were primarily engaged in dangerous underground work as evidence of “forced labor”, but it was precisely because Korean workers performed such dangerous work that they were paid the high salaries mentioned earlier. The designation of this work to Korean workers fit the interests of both the Koreans, who sought to earn as much money as possible in a short period of time, and those who ran the mines, which were understaffed due to the drafting of its young, male, Japanese miners. It is therefore unjustifiable to assert that this was "forced labor".

3. Concerning Descriptions of “Forced Mobilization” in the History of Niigata Prefecture and Aikawa Town

Finally, I would like to point out that in Japan, too, there are many media, political parties, and scholars who claim that there was “forced labor” and offer a counterargument to their claims.

On February 2, the Mainichi Shimbun published a column “The Peril of the Sado Gold Mines” by editorial board adviser Kou Koga, in which I was singled out by name for criticism. Mr. Koga wrote:

<In response to the South Korean backlash against the Sado mines as a site of “forced labor”, Korean researcher Tsutomu Nishioka wrote in his counterargument in the Sankei Shimbun on January 26 that the mines were “inundated with applications” from Korean laborers and that “they were treated quite well”. Nishioka’s argument is based on A Comprehensive History of Sado Aikawa (1995), compiled by what used to be Aikawa Town.

However, in a comment on January 29, chairman of the Communist Party, Kazuo Shii, advised him to look to the negative history of the mines, quoting the “unusual cases of forced labor of Koreans at the Sado mines” written in the same book.

The eighth edition of A Comprehensive History of Niigata Prefecture: Modern History Volume 3 (1988), published before the history of Aikawa Town, contains a more incriminating description: “although the labor mobilization plan initiated in 1939 changed in name from “recruitment” to “official mediation”, to “conscription”, this does not change the

fact that Koreans were forcibly mobilized.”

Though it may have been independently compiled by a local government, there is no doubt that this public history constitutes an inconvenient truth for the Japanese government, which maintains that there was no forced mobilization.

In his comment on January 29, Communist Party chairman Kazuo Shii argued the following: <It is an incontestable historical fact that at the end of the Asia-Pacific War, the forced labor of Koreans, who at the time were under Japanese colonial rule, was carried out at the Sado mines. The eighth edition of A Comprehensive History of Niigata Prefecture: Modern History Volume 3 compiled by Niigata Prefecture attests to “the fact that Koreans were forcibly mobilized”, and A Comprehensive History of Sado Aikawa: Modern History, compiled in the erstwhile town of Aikawa on Sado Island, not only offers a detailed account of the circumstances of Korean workers at the mines but also describes how “the unusual measure of forced mobilization of Koreans to the Sado mines began as part of the wartime national policy of gold mining and only came to an end with the conclusion of the war.” It is unforgivable to deny or ignore this history.>

I would here like to refute the claims of both Mr. Koga and Mr. Shii. In discussing history, the most important thing is primary sources. The terms “forced labor” and “forced mobilization” did not exist at that time; left-wing Japanese scholars began to use these terms in the 1960s, some 20 years after the end of Japanese rule in Korea, and they later began to be used in South Korea. In other words, this is a historical evaluation (or theory) formulated in a presentist, ahistorical way.

The descriptions of “forcibly mobilized Koreans” and “unusual measure of the mobilization of Koreans” in the History of Niigata Prefecture and History of Sado Aikawa quoted by Mr. Koga and Mr. Shii are simply the theories of the scholars who wrote them. These are outdated theories of the 1980s and 90s, when the study of this issue was dominated by the left-wing.

In response to these obsolete theories, I published an article utilizing primary historical documents (namely the statistics from the Ministry of Home Affairs) in the Sankei Shimbun on January 26, in which I denied these claims and submitted the new theory that <although there was a virtual avalanche of Korean workers that came to the Japanese home islands to work, they were methodically allocated to plants and factories necessary in carrying out the war. That is what the wartime mobilization was. These notions of “forced mobilization” and “forced labor” are in contravention of the historical facts.>

I first introduced this theory in my 2005 book The Truth about Japanese-Korean “Historical Issues” (PHP Institute). As I continued my research, I published The Fabrication of the Forced Labor Issue in 2019 (Soshisha Publishing) and later developed this theory further in 2021 in the book The Realities of Korean Wartime Labor (National Congress of Industrial

Heritage), which I also edited. Academia advances with new research. Simply quoting an outdated theory is not sufficient to disprove mine. I would like to request a counterargument that takes full account of the basis of my theory.

Also, I did not write that there was no forced labor based solely on the History of Sado Aikawa, and I would like to add that I did not say that Korean laborers “were treated quite well” based on the History of Sado Aikawa, but on the basis of the above-mentioned document Concerning Korean Personnel Management (1943) from the Sado mining operations, which is a vital primary source in understanding the situation at that time.

Furthermore, although Mr. Koga failed to mention it, I also cited Hirai Eiichi's A History of the Sado Mines as the basis of my January 26th column, as it is also a first-class primary source. In other words, I wrote that there was no forced labor based on primary sources. However, the “forced labor” faction has refused to address my argument directly, instead merely opting to take up the defunct theories that appear in these books from Niigata Prefecture and Sado City. We must continue to assiduously refute these ill-informed claims within Japan, utilize historical documents in clearly broadcasting the historical fact that there was no forced labor of Koreans at the Sado mines to both South Korea and the international community, and secure the listing of the mines as a UNESCO Cultural Heritage site at any cost.

4. Analysis of South Korean Expert Chung Hye-kyung's Forced Labor Theory

As the principal researcher at the Research Center for the Forced Mobilization of Imperial Japan and Peace Studies, a longtime researcher for the Foundation for Victims of Forced Mobilization by Imperial Japan, and for the research she has conducted on wartime labor, Ms. Chung Hye-kyung may be considered one of the South Korean forced labor faction's most prominent researchers today.

In December 2019, Ms. Chung issued a research report (hereinafter referred to as “Chung 1”) for the Foundation for Victims of Forced Mobilization titled “The Actual Circumstances of the Forced Mobilization of Koreans in Japan's Regional Mines and Coal Mines, Focusing on Mitsubishi's Sado Mining Operations”.

Moreover, at an academic seminar held by the foundation on January 27 titled “How Japan's World Heritage Registration Distorts the History of Forced Labor at the Sado Mines”, Ms. Chung delivered a presentation titled “The Reality of the Forced Mobilization of Koreans at the Sado Mines as Indicated by Documents” (hereinafter referred to as “Chung 2”) , which is recorded in the reference materials of the seminar.

Chung's arguments are based heavily on a 2000 paper by Japanese left-wing researcher Teizo Hirose (“Korean Laborers and the Sado Mines (1939-1945)”, Proceedings of Niigata University of International and Information Studies Faculty of Informatics and Sciences,

March 2000, hereinafter referred to as “Hirose”).

According to Nishioka’s analysis, Ms. Chung cites the following 13 points as the basis for the theory of forced labor.

- (1) Koreans were mobilized to prevent silicosis infection in Japanese
- (2) Koreans were assigned to dangerous underground labor
- (3) The contract system (piece-rate system) was disadvantageous to Koreans
- (4) There were many deductions, and net income was negligible
- (5) Workers were forced to continue working even after their contracts expired
- (6) There were many fugitives
- (7) Testimonies of mobilized Koreans
- (8) Forced mobilization began on Sado even before the wartime mobilization policy
- (9) Recruitment also qualifies as forced mobilization
- (10) Recruitment, official mediation, and conscription all violate the International Labor Convention
- (11) High mortality rate among Koreans
- (12) Workers could not receive their deposited wages
- (13) Wages, treatment, and payment methods were unilaterally dictated by the employer

These are all factually obscure and structurally flawed concepts that can be easily rebutted. I would here like to introduce my simple counterarguments for each of these 13 points.

Furthermore, points (1) to (5) are practically verbatim copies of Hirose's claims as they appear in his paper. The veracity of Nishioka's theory that South Korea has been fueled by the arguments of leftist Japanese researchers is also demonstrated here.

It should also be noted that, while Mr. Hirose wrote in the prudent and circumspect manner of a researcher, Ms. Chung reflected his arguments in a crudely affirmative tone; Mr. Hirose wrote reservedly on point (1), using the phrase “if this is the case”, and avoided assertion concerning points (3) and (4), using the words “it would seem that”. However, Ms. Chung deleted all these parts and wrote as though Mr. Hirose were relating facts.

- (1) Koreans were mobilized to prevent silicosis infection in Japanese

Hirose: <The reason why the Sado mining operations entered upon the Korean “recruitment” was that the labor division staff at that time reported that “the prevalence of silicosis among many domestic Japanese pit miners and the drafting of young Japanese workers into the army are affecting mining quotas”. If this is the case, the aim of the recruitment was not just to alleviate the labor shortage due to the conscription of Japanese workers but also to prevent silicosis infection in Japanese. > p.7 [underline added by Nishioka both here and below]

Chung 1: <It is evident that Koreans were mobilized for two reasons: to prevent silicosis infection in Japanese and to solve the personnel problem caused by conscription> Page 120
Whereas Hirose expressed a certain degree of uncertainty in writing, “if this is the case,” Chung arrived at her conclusion without having presented any evidence. Hirose’s argument is based on the testimony of a recruiter, Mr. Soji Sugimoto, which is recorded in the History of Sado Aikawa. Mr. Sugimoto's testimony lacks credibility, as the period he gives for the first recruitment is absurd, and the total number of mobilized laborers he claims is incorrect. The company implemented dust control measures to prevent silicosis infection, and there was also a hospital. Silicosis generally develops after continuous inhalation of dust for more than five years, and it has not been confirmed that many Korean workers contracted the disease.

(2) Koreans were assigned to dangerous underground labor

Hirose: <A high proportion of Koreans were engaged primarily in pit-mining jobs such as transport, drilling, external driving, and timbering, while a high percentage of Japanese worked in construction, refinery, general labor, and other jobs. One of these “other jobs” which was performed solely by Japanese workers was mineral processing. From this, it can be seen that Koreans were responsible for the dangerous underground labor of transport, drilling, and timbering. > p.10

Chung 1: <Most Koreans were mainly allocated to unskilled but dangerous labor, such as drilling, transport, and external driving. > p.124

Korean laborers worked underground because the young, domestic Japanese workers had been conscripted, not due to any kind of discrimination. In addition, the piece-rate system meant that underground mining could be quite lucrative for those who were motivated and greatly benefited Korean workers who wished to earn a considerable amount of money in a short period of time before returning to Korea.

(3) The contract system (piece-rate system) was disadvantageous to Koreans

Hirose: <The “contract system” that required laborers to be technically skilled seemed to place Koreans (who were former farmers) at a disadvantage as compared to the Japanese. > Page 11

Chung 1: <The contract system, which required Koreans (whose background was in agriculture) to be technically skilled, placed them at a disadvantage in comparison to the Japanese. > Page 126

Hirose qualifies this statement with the phrase “seemed to,” but Chung does not indicate the grounds for her definitive conclusion that the contract system was disadvantageous to Koreans. The average monthly salary of Korean workers was ¥80 JPY or more, and the maximum

monthly salary was over ¥200 JPY in some months. This can hardly be described as disadvantageous.

(4) There were many deductions, and net income was negligible

Hirose: <Because the cost of tools required for labor was deducted from workers' wages, it seems that the actual wages they received were quite exiguous. > Page 11

Chung 1: <Because the cost of tools was deducted from workers' wages, the actual wages they received were quite exiguous. > Page 126

Here, too, despite Hirose's use of "it seems", Chung once more fails to demonstrate any evidence for her assertion. However, this claim has no historical basis, as no historical documents pertaining to deductions have been found at the Sado mines. According to a study by Lee Woo-yeon, the average monthly income of Korean workers at Japan's Emukae Coal Mine was ¥100 JPY, and even after various deductions, the take-home pay was ¥42 JPY (Anti-Japanese Tribalism, Part 1, pp. 7, pp. 90-91).

(5) Workers were forced to continue working even after their contracts expired

Hirose: <Since the period of "recruitment" was initially three years, more and more Koreans whose period of "recruitment" had elapsed began to appear at the Sado mines from January 1942. The policy of the Sado mining operations was "in all events" to peremptorily "continue the employment of all workers". "Later, after considering their individual, familial circumstances, Korean laborers who were weak and ailing or whose extenuating circumstances obliged them to return to the peninsula temporarily were repatriated in due course following discussion with the Korean government and the local police". At the Sado mining operations, the "continued" employment of Koreans was achieved by "providing considerable incentives and individual commendations to those who completed the extended term of employment in due course". These facts would indicate that while this was all technically under the form of "recruitment", it was essentially forced labor. > Page 12

Chung 1: <Miners who were allocated to work at the Sado mines beginning in February 1939 were supposed to be permitted to return home upon the expiration of their three-year contracts in January 1942. However, management had set a policy of "continuous employment for all" and decided to repatriate those whose poor health or familial circumstances obliged them to return home briefly after consulting with the Korean government and police. This meant that Korean workers who fell outside of these categories were not granted temporary leave to return home. Koreans were kept on Sado Island through considerable incentives awarded to individuals who completed the extended period of employment. This situation wherein workers were denied the freedom to return home can only be described as coercion.

> Page 138

Extended employment was not achieved by means of coercion but by compensation; various benefits such as financial rewards, allowing workers to summon their families, and arranging specially qualified teachers for Korean children were offered in order to persuade laborers to continue working. Of the 1,500 mobilized Koreans at the Sado mining operations, 1,000 remained at the end of the war, while 500 (one-third) chose not to. This statistic is proof that it was not coercive.

(6) There were many escapees

Hirose: <In order to protect their lives and their health, Koreans were left with no choice but to flee. As shown in Table 2 above, there were 148 fugitives during the three years and four months between February 1940 and June 1943, accounting for 14.8% of the total number of Korean laborers. Before coming to Sado, the first group of Koreans in February 1939 said that “many of us fled upon arriving in Shimonoseki and Osaka”. > Page 14

Chung 1: <So what was it that drove Koreans to try to escape like this? Furthermore, why did the company run rigorous search parties using the police and employment agencies? It is precisely this point that the claims of those who deny forced mobilization neglect. Today (2019), certain [Korean] economists are disseminating the claim that “there was no forced mobilization of Koreans” and “Koreans worked of their own volition and earned money” through publications and independent broadcasts. However, these “free Koreans” posited by forced mobilization deniers were perpetually trying to escape, and both the company and the Japanese authorities exerted considerable effort in pursuing these fugitives. The situation was the same everywhere, whether it was the Konomai mining operations, the Sado mines, or the Hashima Coal Mine. Those who were captured were beaten and lynched. In documents, these incidents were listed as “runaway”, not “resignation”. Common sense would dictate that this could not possibly be considered “freedom”. This is nothing if not an indication of the coercive conditions and detainment Koreans were subjected to. > (Pages 66-67)

<As can be seen in the category “runaway” in [table 16], the escape rate was extremely high. It is unclear at what stage these escapes occurred, whether they were before or after entering the mines. Typically, most cases of “escape” among victims of forced mobilization were before arriving in Japan on the Kampu Ferry, that is, in Korea. Considering that Sado is an island, escaping would have been quite difficult after arriving at the mines. Although it does not necessarily substantiate the above-mentioned “runaways”, the first group that arrived at the mines in February 1939 claimed that “many of us fled upon arriving in Shimonoseki and Osaka”.

“Runaway” rather than “resignation” means that Korean miners were not free to leave. The

existence of such “runaways”...is a prime example that testifies to the coercive nature of the labor> (p. 121).

The fact that some workers ran away en route to the company means that the reason for escape cannot be attributed to the harsh working environment. Many laborers ran away in search of better work offering better wages and conditions.

As amply demonstrated, Ms. Chung has copied points (1) to (6) directly from arguments made by Mr. Hirose.

In particular, points (1) to (5) from his thesis appear almost entirely unchanged in Chung 1. However, although the use of “if so” in point (1) and “seems” in points (3) and (4) convey Mr. Hirose’s reservation and willingness to avoid assertion, these parts were all deleted from Chung 1, transforming Hirose’s arguments into definitive conclusions for which she proffers no evidence.

The following points (7) to (13) are claims which do not appear in Hirose's paper and are cited by Ms. Chung as evidence of forced labor.

(7) Testimonies of mobilized Koreans

Chung 2: <In the thrust and parry over the issue of the comfort women of the Japanese military, one of the more well-known phrases in the cliched rhetoric of the perpetrators is “if there are any documents or records on the forced mobilization, present them!” They exploit the fact that victims cannot leave behind official documents in the name of “empirical evidence” and use it as justification for their attacks. This strategy has also been employed by Holocaust deniers; “if the Nazis carried out the Holocaust, there would have been documents attesting to Hitler’s orders, but no such documents have been found”.

While victims cannot leave behind official documents, they can leave records. For example, records produced by the Korean government and verbal statements from those who experienced the mobilization. > p.23-24

Chung unfoundedly compares the mobilization of Koreans during the war to the Nazi Holocaust. This is an unforgivable calumny that is in contravention of the facts. Victims of the Holocaust have also expressed their opposition to applying the term to the Korean wartime mobilization and the comfort women system, as the Holocaust was a singular crime.

Chung 1: <For the miners who experienced forced mobilization and tried to survive by escaping, life on Sado is a painful memory.

Born in Nonsan-gun, Chungcheongnam-do, on December 20, 1919, Im Tae-ho, who was mobilized to Sado in November 1940, is one such victim. Yasunabe Hayashi, who lived in Kawasaki City, Kanagawa Prefecture, until his death in September 1997, left a short dictation just before his death in May 1997. This dictation is the only surviving account by a survivor

of the Sado mines. > p.100

Here Chung introduces the testimony of Yasunabe Hayashi, which was published in Japan in 2002 in Survey Records of the Forced Mobilization of Koreans: Kanto Edition by the Research Group for the Forced Mobilization of Koreans. Hayashi's testimony is unreliable and riddled with dubious points, which I will indicate below as they pertain to Chung's account.

The first question is that of Hayashi, who alleges that he was “conscripted” and mobilized to Sado during the 1940 recruitment phase. I would like to begin by quoting from Hayashi’s testimony, as summarized by Chung.

<Under the form of “recruitment”, Yasunabe Hayashi stepped off a narrow ship thronged with Koreans onto Japanese soil with his young friends in November 1940. He was just 20 years old. When he arrived at Sado Island in Niigata Prefecture, there was a bunkhouse (worker's dormitory) at the top of the secluded mountain. The place was called Aikawa. He was told that he had been recruited and left his hometown for Sado in November 1940, believing this meant “free recruitment”. However, when he arrived, he found that it was not “recruitment”, but “conscription”. > p.100

Evidently, not even Chung thought that this testimony could be taken at face value, adding the following labored commentary:

<All Korean miners who entered the mines in November 1940 were mobilized in the form of “allocated recruitment”. What Yasunabe Hayashi means in his account is that although he went to work at the mines under the impression that he was a free worker, he was, in fact, working under compulsion. Mobilization was carried out under the form of allocated recruitment, but what the victims actually experienced was a conscription-like forced mobilization. > p.101

Conscription did not begin until September 1944; in November 1940, mobilization was still in the recruitment phase. Chung's commentary is entirely unconvincing.

The second point of suspicion is the claim that it took an hour and a half to walk from the dormitory to the worksite.

<It took an hour and a half to walk from the bunkhouse to the worksite. It was not a flat road either, but very rough and wildly undulating terrain. The hot summer was tough, but the cold winter was excruciatingly painful; we had to trudge through snow up to our waists, making the journey to and from work harder than the work itself. > p.100

In my field survey, I discovered that the distance between the Korean dormitory and the work site was less than 30 minutes by foot. The very notion that the dormitory would have been built so far away is simply ludicrous.

<Yasunabe Hayashi worked underground mining ore. The precarious nature of working underground meant that he lived in constant fear for his life. Cave-ins were an almost daily

occurrence, and Hayashi worried every day that he might not get out alive. Even after they died, workers were not treated humanely or afforded any condolences. > Page 100

If cave-ins really did occur on a daily basis, they would have been recorded, but no such records exist; the Sado mines are made of solid rock and rarely caved in. Although, as of May 1943, 10 Korean laborers had perished in accidents, they were, of course, treated with dignity, and their remains were returned to their families. It is believed that “those who had been working for more than three months were enrolled in group life insurance, with the company paying for the insurance premiums of all enrollees. In the unlikely event of death, a death benefit of ¥300 JPY was provided” (Sado mining operation, Concerning Korean Personnel Management).

Hayashi alleges that although he was seriously injured in an accident, he was not admitted to the hospital and was simply left unattended.

<Fortunately, Hayashi Yasunabe managed to survive his ordeal. However, while working underground, he narrowly escaped death when he fell from the ladder and was seriously injured. He was conscious until he was carried to the surface, at which point he lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness, he found himself not in the hospital but lying on a bed in the bunkhouse. Having badly injured his hip in the fall, he was unable to get up and go to the hospital and spent about ten days lying down. When he was finally able to get up, he had to get back to work again. Even sick or injured workers were not permitted to rest for more than two days, but seeing as Hayashi had already been absent for ten days, any further rest would have been absolutely impermissible. > p. 100-101

The mining operations had a hospital for workers and their families. Korean workers were brought in to compensate for the gap in the labor force; neglecting to take care of them by not bringing them to the hospital would have been unthinkable. According to the above-mentioned historical document from the Sado mining operations, it is clear that some Korean laborers worked only several days a month. Because it was a commission system, this would have subsequently been reflected in their wages, but they were free to rest if they so wished.

(8) Forced mobilization began on Sado even before the wartime mobilization policy

Chung 1: <The mobilization of Koreans at the Sado mines began in February 1939, prior to the official commencement of Korean mobilization. This is because the Sado mines tried to mobilize and manipulate Koreans using a contract system. Forced mobilization was thus carried out at the Sado Mines even before a policy had been set forth by the government authorities. > p.117

It would seem that this argument is based on Mr. Sugimoto's remarks as recorded in the History of Sado Aikawa, but they are negated by the above-mentioned historical document.

(9) Recruitment also qualifies as forced mobilization

Chung 1: <Allocated recruitment also falls under forced mobilization. The forced mobilization carried out by the Japanese authorities included the mobilization of people, materials, and funds. The human resources mobilized were laborers, military personnel, and Japanese military “comfort women”. Allocated recruitment was a form of mobilizing workers. It, therefore, naturally follows that it was congruent to forced mobilization in the damage it wrought.> p.120

This is an outdated theory based on the same weak grounds previously mentioned.

(10) Recruitment, official mediation, and conscription all violate the International Labor Convention

Chung 1: <The Japanese government established a system of general mobilization on the legal basis of its 1938 National Mobilization Law, mobilizing all human, material, and financial resources across the entire breadth of the Japanese Empire to wage the Asia-Pacific War. This human mobilization was in violation of the Forced Labor Convention (No.29), which Japan itself had ratified. > page 120

The Forced Labor Convention stipulates that wartime labor mobilization is not included in forced labor. That is, Article 2 of the Convention contains the following exceptions.

Article 2

1. For the purposes of this Convention the term forced or compulsory labor shall mean all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.

2. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this Convention, the term forced or compulsory labor shall not include--

(a) any work or service exacted in virtue of compulsory military service laws for work of a purely military character;

(b) any work or service which forms part of the normal civic obligations of the citizens of a fully self-governing country;

(c) any work or service exacted from any person as a consequence of a conviction in a court of law, provided that the said work or service is carried out under the supervision and control of a public authority and that the said person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations;

(d) any work or service exacted in cases of emergency, that is to say, in the event of war or of a calamity or threatened calamity, such as fire, flood, famine, earthquake, violent epidemic or

epizootic diseases, invasion by animal, insect or vegetable pests, and in general any circumstance that would endanger the existence or the well-being of the whole or part of the population.

Of course, the wartime mobilization of Koreans is included in the “work or service exacted...in the event of war” in (d) of Article 2.

(11) High mortality rate among Koreans

Chung 1: <The death of 10 Koreans meant the mortality rate at the Sado mines was high compared to the mortality rate of coal and mining workers in Japan at the time. The mortality rate of Korean laborers in Japan was 0.9% (based on the standards between October 1939 and October 1942)> p.121

10 out of 1005 is 1%, approximately equivalent to an average of 0.9%.

(12) Workers could not receive their deposited wages

Chung 1: <The deposit money of 1,140 Koreans at the Sado mines amounted to ¥231,059.59 JPY. This record has two implications. First, at least 1,140 Koreans were forcibly mobilized. Second, they could not receive their salaries, savings, and various insurance claims, which were instead deposited. Moreover, since the deposit records contain no individual information, it is impossible to ascertain precisely how much is owed to whom. Although Korean miners expected money to be accruing in their accounts, the compensation for their labor that they so hoped for was deposited and has never been recovered. > p.128

This was settled under the 1965 Japan-South Korea agreement on the settlement of problems concerning property and claims. The South Korean government used the funds it received from Japan to reimburse these unpaid salaries and savings on two separate occasions.

(13) Wages, treatment, and payment methods were unilaterally dictated by the employer

Chung 1: <Whether or not wages were received and whether they were considerable or paltry (the wage theory) bear no relevance to the issue of coercion. It must be understood that the “workers” during the wartime regime were not workers. They could not secure working conditions or claim workers' rights under the law enacted by the Japanese national powers or under contractual relationships with capitalists. All treatment, including the wages of “workers”, was unilaterally dictated by the employer, with the wage payment method also being unilaterally transacted. Yet despite this, today (2019), South Korean deniers of forced mobilization cite the reception of wages as evidence in denying this coercion. Their arguments betray a flawed understanding of the system and circumstances of the time. > (p. 128-129)

I wonder if Ms. Chung would care to point out the country in which workers mobilized during

the war could claim their right to working conditions. Legal wartime labor mobilization does not constitute forced labor.