

## Research and Movements Related to the Chinese Comfort Women Issue

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### Introduction

Until recently, comfort women for the Japanese military often seemed to be discussed entirely in the context of Korean comfort women, and it was relatively rare for Chinese comfort women to be mentioned.

From around June 2014, when China announced that it would be applying for historical documents related to comfort women and the Nanjing Incident to be registered as part of UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, the existence of Chinese comfort women started to garner attention. However, the existence of Chinese comfort women remains relatively unknown even today, and the general public is unaware of the issue.

Here, after surveying the history of research into the issue and the history of movements on comfort women—in both Japan and China—we examine the testimonies of the 34 Chinese comfort women—to the extent that they can be documented—in order to verify the extent to which progress has been made in shedding light on the Chinese comfort women issue.

### Origins of research on Chinese comfort women

First, we would like to comment on trends in Chinese comfort women research (including wartime sexual violence against Chinese women) from a viewpoint on the history of research on the issue and the history of movements on comfort women. Attached at the end of this report is the "List of Japanese Documents Regarding Chinese Comfort Women and Wartime Sexual Violence" (Appendix Table (1)). The document numbers used in this report are based on the documents listed in this "List of Japanese Documents." (For example, "(1) No. 1" refers to Yoshiaki Yoshimi's "Collection of Materials on Comfort Women," but "(1)" may be omitted if its use would be confusing.)

Research on this issue began in Japan in 1992 (all of the documents from No. 1 onwards are from 1992 or later). On the other hand, the Chinese comfort women issue gained attention "as the comfort women issue was reported on and introduced in Japan and South Korea," and reports on the subject date back to 1992. (No. 31). Su Zhiliang, a leading comfort women researcher in China, also began his comfort women research in 1992 when a Japanese professor stated that the "comfort women system of the Japanese military originated in Shanghai" (No. 14).

The year 1992 was when the Asahi Shimbun published misleading reports alleging the coercive recruitment of comfort women (see the February 2015 report released by an independent committee to examine the Asahi Shimbun's comfort women reporting for further details). Research on, and movements on the Chinese comfort women issue were triggered by the reporting. It was in December 1992 that Wan Aihua—who was the first former Chinese "comfort woman" (sexual violence victim) to come forward—came to Japan (No. 70).

## Overview of the Chinese comfort women lawsuits

However, since Chinese victims other than Wan Aihua were slow to come forward, Japanese attorneys and activist groups took the lead in the search for victims.

In October 1994, around 10 attorneys visited Beijing to interview comfort women victims, coercive recruitment victims, families of the victims of Unit 731 (a Japanese military formation that conducted chemical warfare research), and victims of the Nanjing Incident about their pain and suffering. "These attorneys played a central role in filing lawsuits against the Japanese government for individual damages, starting in August 1995." (No. 57)

Since then, three lawsuits involving Chinese comfort women have been filed (Lawsuit I was broken down into a first and second phase), and rulings were handed down for all of them. (The plaintiff numbers correspond to the numbers in Appendix Table (2) "List of Testimonies by Chinese Comfort Women and Sexual Violence Victims" at the end of this report.)

- I Chinese "comfort women" damages lawsuit (First Phase): August 1995 to April 2007 (appeal dismissed)  
Plaintiffs: 4 from Shanxi Province ((2) No. 7 to 10)  
Chinese "comfort women" damages lawsuit (Second Phase): February 1996 to April 2007 (appeal dismissed)  
Plaintiffs: 2 from Shanxi Province ((2) No. 11, 12)
- II Damages lawsuit for sexual violence victims in Shanxi Province: October 1998 to November 2005 (appeal dismissed)  
Plaintiffs: 10 from Shanxi Province ((2) No. 13, 16 to 24)
- III Damages lawsuit for wartime sexual violence victims on Hainan Island: July 2001 to March 2010 (appeal dismissed)  
Plaintiffs: 8 from Hainan Island ((2) No. 25 to 32)

The Supreme Court of Japan dismissed appeals from the plaintiffs for all of the cases, and the plaintiffs lost due to the absence of state liability. On the other hand, it is also true that "facts were recognized" in rulings handed down by district courts and high courts with regard to the harm suffered by the plaintiffs ((1) No. 69).

## Comfort women must be clearly distinguished from wartime sexual violence (rape) victims

There has been some confusion in terms of the concepts involved even in the lawsuits mentioned above. For example, the term "comfort women" was used in Lawsuit I, while the term "sexual violence (victims)" was used in Lawsuit II and Lawsuit III. Given this, we will first clarify the definition of comfort women. The term "comfort women" refers to women who engaged in prostitution at comfort stations established in war zones as an extension of the public prostitution

system in Japan. They were considered legal at the time, and as rape occurred frequently during the Second Sino-Japanese War, comfort women were recruited and comfort stations were established to in an effort to prevent this.

On the other hand, wartime sexual violence (rape) was considered to be a major crime even at that time, and people in wartime could be charged for rape under general criminal law. However, the army revised the criminal law in February 1942 to establish the crime of warzone rape, and added a new clause that stated that "a person who rapes a woman on a battlefield or in a territory occupied by the Imperial Army will be sentenced to life or one year or more in prison" (Article 88-2 of the code).

The perpetrators of such war crimes during the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Greater East Asia War (World War II) were put on trial in the war crimes tribunals convened by the Allies (Tokyo Trials and Class B and C War Crimes Trials), which ended with Japan accepting the rulings. For example, the 11 Japanese military personnel and civilian workers who masterminded the forced confinement and rape of Dutch women in Indonesia under the Japanese military occupation (the Semarang Comfort Station Incident) were tried after the war as Class B and C war criminals.

However, it is also important to note that these war crime cases were not acts that the Japanese military was systematically involved in, but rather illegal acts conducted by individual military personnel. In that sense, these wartime sexual violence victims need to be clearly distinguished from comfort women.

The "sex slave" concept, which has been frequently used recently to refer to comfort women, is also an emotional term with an extremely vague definition. Since the publication of the United Nations Coomaraswamy Report in 1996, the misconception has spread in the international community that comfort women were sex slaves. However, comfort women clearly fall under a different category from "slaves," as comfort women received monetary rewards as compensation for their labor, and in principle, they were freed if they repaid their debts. Comfort women should not be grouped together with sex slaves using vague definitions.

### **Testimonies of Chinese comfort women that lack supporting research cannot be considered factual evidence**

In *Chinese Comfort Women* (Oxford University Press, 2014), which Su Zhiliang co-authored with Chen Lifei and Peipei Qiu, Su wrote that he recorded the testimonies of 102 Chinese comfort women, out of which 87 were directly abducted by the Japanese military. The book is based on the testimonies of the 12 Chinese comfort women whom Su and Chen interviewed, but the testimonies of the victims alone cannot be recognized as facts.

Needless to say, the testimonies of the comfort women are merely their memories from over 70 years ago. For the testimonies to be verified as facts, it is essential that they first be corroborated by the testimony of the corresponding perpetrators. Additionally, as supporting evidence, physical evidence proving the testimony of individuals, as well as supporting testimonies from close

relatives, friends, and acquaintances, are also required. One-sided testimonies from individuals without detailed supporting research are insufficient as evidence.

### Verifying the testimonies of the 34 Chinese comfort women

Taking the above as the basic premise, let's consider how the testimonies of the Chinese comfort women can be verified.

The present author has managed to confirm the following breakdown of the individuals who provided testimony.

- Chinese plaintiffs in the comfort women trials (lawsuits filed between 1995 and 2001): 24  
(First Phase : 4; Second Phase: 2; sexual violence: 10; Hainan Island: 8)
- People who provided testimony for Su Zhiliang's *Studies on Comfort Women* (1999): 3
- Witnesses in the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (2000): 2
- People who provided testimony for *Sexual Violence in the Villages of the Yellow Earth* (2004), edited by Yoneko Ishida and Tomoyuki Uchida: 10
- People who provided testimony for the exhibition brochure "One Day, the Japanese Army Came" (2008): 18
- People who provided testimony for '*Comfort Women*' Taken by Force (2008) by Taichiro Kajimura, Takamitsu Muraoka and Koichiro Kasuya: 1
- People who provided testimony for *Chinese Comfort Women* by Su Zhiliang, Chen Lifei and Peipei Qiu (2014): 12
- People who provided testimony for the movie "Give Me the Sun" (2015), directed by Ban Zhongyi: 7

According to the above information, the total number of women who testified is 77. However, there is quite a lot of overlap among those who provided testimony and if this overlap is removed, the number is 34. (For details on the overlap, refer to Appendix Table (2) "List of Testimonies by Chinese Comfort Women and Sexual Violence Victims.")

First, the 34 women are **concentrated in a very narrow range of areas, in terms of where they were allegedly victimized**. Of the 34 women, 18 (53%; (2) No. 7 to 24) were victims of sexual violence in Yu County (Shanxi Province), while 8 (24%; No. 25 to 32) were attacked on Hainan Island (see "Location" in Appendix Table (2)). In other words, most of the Chinese comfort women and sexual violence victims who have come forward until the present time (26 out of 34 [76%]) are concentrated in only two locations in the vast expanses of China. This concentration is very unnatural and deserves to be questioned. A discussion of this matter is provided in the next section.

Second, judging from the content of the testimonies, some of the 34 women who testified were comfort women while others were sexual violence victims (see the "Comfort woman" column in Appendix Table (2)). Of the 12 people who provided testimony that Su Zhiliang discusses in *Chinese Comfort Women*, 4 were comfort women (No. 1, 2, 4, and 5) and 8 were sexual violence victims (No. 3, 6, 13, 16, 26, 27, 29, and 33), but Su does not make any distinction between these two groups and talks about them equally as "Chinese comfort women." However, as mentioned earlier, **comfort women and sexual violence victims are completely different in nature so they must be considered separately.** In fact, Wan Aihua (No. 16), who Su Zhiliang describes as a "Chinese comfort woman," testified in his book that "I am not a comfort woman. No matter what people say, I am not a comfort woman. I was taken by force because I was a communist" ((1) No. 98). However, the book treats sexual violence victims like her as if they were the same as comfort women. Probably because many sexual violence victims, including Wan Aihua, disliked the term "comfort woman," they filed a suit as "sexual violence victim" plaintiffs in the comfort women trials mentioned above (II and III) separately from the Chinese "comfort women" trial (I). This also indicates that the two groups should be distinguished, but Su puts them in the same group or seems to be intentionally confusing them.

Additionally, if we examine the 34 who gave testimony as a whole, very few—only 4 of the 34 (12%; (2) No. 1, 2, 4, and 5)—can be considered comfort women, and **the vast majority (30 [88%]; No. 3, 6 to 34) were victims of sexual violence and cannot be considered "Chinese comfort women."** This applies particularly to all of the sexual violence victims (26) from Yu County (Shanxi Province) and Hainan Island (refer to the "Location" column and "Comfort woman" column in Appendix Table (2)).

Third, we should note that **some of the women gave multiple testimonies that were conflicting.** For example, Zhou Fenying ((2) No. 2) is the only comfort woman who voluntarily testified that she received money (her testimony can be translated as follows: "There was also an old Chinese woman who supervised the women and collected fees [from Japanese soldiers]. The woman gave us a yuan or so every month to buy daily necessities, but the money was far from enough"; *Chinese Comfort Women*, p. 91). However, the same individual gave totally conflicting testimony in a different setting, stating, "I did not receive money even once" ((1) No. 39, p. 13).

It is because of such conflicting statements by comfort women that we stated that the testimonies alone are insufficient as evidence. In the case of Zhou, is it possible that, despite specifically testifying to Su that she received money, she testified in a different setting that she did not receive money even once because she intentionally pretended she did not receive money to exaggerate her pain and suffering? In that sense, the testimonies of comfort women or sexual violence victims cannot be recognized as facts on their own without corroborating evidence.

Below, we examine the backgrounds to the sexual violence in both Yu County (Shanxi Province) and on Hainan Island in order to investigate the cause of the geographic concentration that we pointed out above.

### **Background to the sexual violence in Yu County (Shanxi Province)**

The testimonies of the 18 sexual violence victims ((2) No. 7 to 24) from Yu County (Shanxi Province) were all tragic, with all of them being abducted and taken by force by the Japanese army and then tortured and/or raped while being confined for a long period of time. The number one reason why they were victimized was that this region was close to the communist guerrilla base and they were suspected of having relationships with the Chinese Communists' Eighth Route Army (7 of them (No. 9 to 12, 15, 16, and 21) testified to this). The most notable example of this was Wan Aihua (No. 16), who testified that "I was taken by force because I was a communist" ((1) No. 99).

It was in January 1938 that the Japanese army occupied the Yu County castle. Until just before that, in October 1937, the Eighth Route Army had their headquarters in Mount Wutai, located just north of Yu County, which served as a communist guerrilla base. In August and September of 1940, the Japanese army in the area suffered major losses from a surprise attack by the communist guerrillas (an operation known as the Hundred Regiments Offensive), and the Japanese army launched a retaliatory operation in Jinzhong to "completely destroy the communist army."

However, the number of soldiers that the Japanese army could deploy in the vast expanses of China was limited and they had no choice but to deploy small detachments over a wide range of areas. As these small forces were distributed in various locations, there were areas where supervision by the military police or by senior officers was insufficient, and military discipline—particularly among experienced non-commissioned officers—became relaxed. This resulted in the creation of hotbeds for war crimes. The Japanese military headquarters in the northern regions of China also recognized this and made the following statement in a document called "Measures for Increasing Military Discipline" (December 1942).

We deeply regret that heinous crimes that run contrary to the spirit of a healthy army and that undermine military discipline ... such as rape, looting and other offenses that need to be avoided, are still occurring frequently.

The addition of the crime of warzone rape following the above-mentioned revision of the army criminal law (February 1942) was likely an immediate response to such conditions on the front line.

Many of the victims of sexual violence from Yu County (Shanxi Province) testified that they were abducted and taken by force by Japanese soldiers to gun batteries at the mountain top or cave residences called yaodong, where they were repeatedly raped and tortured on a daily basis, and that they were finally released after paying ransom money. Detailed interviews were conducted by Yoneko Ishida and Tomoyuki Uchida about these incidents, and the testimonies of the victims were carefully recorded and backgrounds investigated ((1) No. 82).

On the other hand, although extremely few perpetrators (former Japanese soldiers) testified, Mr. Masayoshi Matsumoto, who was a military medic for the troops stationed on guard in Yu County, testified as follows.

One day, we went out for a sweep as usual. Normally, when we raided villages there were only chickens and pigs, but somehow on that day, there were villagers who had not managed

to escape. So we captured 7 or 8 women, took them back to our base, and confined them in the barracks. . . .

The commander was a sergeant major promoted from the ranks whom I looked up to. However, despite the character of the commander, he could not stop the actions of his troops.

Among the troops, there were some hardcore cases who were seen as permanent privates first class, never to be promoted. . . .

Military discipline did exist, but on the front line, it was as if it did not exist. . . .

The commander must do a good job handling such hardcore cases, as they are the ones that achieve so-called "military results." They capture the Chinese, kill the ones they capture, or rape them if they are women, and find pleasure in such actions like hunters do when they bring down their prey. In such a state, there is nothing you can do.

I was given the task of testing these women for sexually transmitted diseases. I would caution the soldiers while handing out the mountains of condoms that we kept in the medical office. Looking back, I should have refused, but I couldn't, or rather I didn't. Prevention of sexually transmitted diseases was the job of a military medic. . . .

After about a week, the commander gathered the soldiers and said: "That is enough. Let's return them." We released the women, and in return, ordered the village chief to bring to the barracks two women who were selling sex for a living. Testing those women for sexually-transmitted diseases was also my job. This is what we, in fact I, actually did in the detachment in Shangshezhen. (No. 95)

Questions remain about whether the forced confinement and rape described above are real events that Mr. Matsumoto actually witnessed (in other testimony, Mr. Matsumoto responded that it was not a fact that he witnessed war crimes such as rape; No. 98). What is noteworthy in this testimony is that the commander released the confined and raped women after a week, and placed comfort women in the barracks instead. It is because the commander was aware that confinement and rape were crimes that he released them and replaced them with legal comfort women.

However, the detachments who directly confronted the communist guerrillas normally did not have comfort women. In the memoirs of Shunjiro Aoe, who served as a pacification officer responsible for coordinating work with civilians in Shanxi Province, we found the following quote.

Japanese prostitutes were rarely "supplied" in the field. Dust-covered Korean women were brought by truck every few months to stay only four or five days. They were literally like "angels."

(Shunjiro Aoe "Pacification Officer of the Japanese Army")

So, what happened when they could not "source" comfort women? Yoneko Ishida, mentioned above, interviewed the residents of Shangshezhen (Shanxi Province) and concluded the following about the "pain and suffering inflicted on women" in the region.

When the Japanese military came here, they brought about a dozen Korean "comfort women" to central Zhen and built a "comfort station" (prior to the Hundred Regiments Offensive). The women left together with the Japanese army following the Hundred Regiments Offensive, and such a facility was not built after that. Prior to the Hundred Regiments Offensive, Japanese soldiers were relatively disciplined and did not commit many horrific acts. But they became savage after the reoccupation. They began taking women by force to the gun batteries around that time. (No. 84)

What we can understand from the above is the following: The existence of comfort stations and comfort women were in fact effective in deterring rape and maintaining military discipline, but military discipline declined when the comfort women were gone, and it became normal to abduct and take women by force.

However, if we look into whether such confinement and rape was normal practice for all of the detachments that had been left without comfort women, it looks like this was not the case. Mr. Hajime Kondo, who served in the detachments in Liao County (Shanxi Province) at that time, testified that he personally took part in gang rape just once (No. 84, 87) during Operation Hebei (believed to be springtime operations in the Taihang mountains) in 1943. However, he has no recollection about the confinement of women. Shigeru Aoki, who compiled the interview with Kondo in a book, wrote the following.

There were many detachments in the unit that Kondo belonged to, but he believes none of the units detained women as "comfort women." It appears to be that treating women as "comfort women," rape, and gang rape were carried out in entirely different ways depending on the unit, the commander, the region, and the period. (No. 87)

Kondo points out the following in this regard.

The military can be completely different depending on the location, the unit, or even the year or period in which you joined.

The nature of the subordinate soldiers will differ under different company commanders. (No. 84)

The fact that the carrying out of cruel acts such as rape and torture depended on whether the company commander took the lead in such acts can be seen in the testimony of Setsuro Kuwajima, who was a military medic in Shandong Province.

On June 4 (1944), a unit engaged in a sweep captured five young women in Donggongliumi Village (東公留蜜村), east of Hanli (寒里). They were all around 20 years old, with bobbed hair, which was rare deep in the mountains. They seemed educated and at first it appeared that they were female agents from the Eighth Route Army. Company commander Kashiwazaki would immediately strip and torture such women without question, but company commander Ogawa did not engage in such violent acts, and he only tied them up and brought them with the company.



If the company commander did not engage in cruel acts, neither would his subordinates. The First Company became a very quiet company after Ogawa became its company commander [after company commander Kashiwazaki was transferred]. The so-called Three Alls Strategy ("kill all, burn all, loot all") or the killing of residents probably didn't happen if the company commander on the front line didn't take the lead in carrying out such acts. (Setsuro Kuwajima, *Record of War in North China*)

The maintenance of military discipline on the front line depended largely on the person at the top. Mr. Kondo, mentioned above, also stated the following.

To begin with, in our company the non-commissioned officers were more arrogant than the commissioned officers. The commissioned officers for the troops in the Fourth Independent Mixed Brigade were mostly former officer candidates and were looked down on, with the troops thinking: "You intellectuals can be pretentious in the outside world, but in the military, what counts is the number of meals that you have eaten here rather than the number of stars on your epaulettes."

Among the detachments, there were normally commissioned officer detachments led by a second lieutenant and non-commissioned officer detachments led by a non-commissioned officer. The commissioned officer detachments were generally orderly, but in the non-commissioned officer detachments the non-commissioned officers and old-timers did as they pleased. (No. 87)

"Hardcore soldiers doing as they pleased" were likely to have been found in detachments led by non-commissioned officers.

As such, rape and confinement did not occur just anywhere in the vast expanses of China.

First, such acts were isolated incidents that could only occur on the frontlines where the Eighth Route Army and the Japanese army fought one another (in other words, where supervision by the military police was insufficient). Second, even on the frontlines, if the company commander was of solid character, military discipline was strictly maintained and illegal acts such as rape and confinement did not occur. Third, in cases when the "non-commissioned officers were more arrogant than the commissioned officers" and "no matter what the character of the commander, he could not stop the actions of his troops," there were times when senior officers could not stop the cruel acts of their subordinates, so rape and confinement went unchecked. However, these are all clear war crimes that fit in the category of warzone rape.

Ishida and Uchida, mentioned above, stated, without grounds, that "The case in Yu County is not an isolated incident, but a typical example of a phenomenon that occurred widely" (No. 82). How could they make such an assertion? The acts of sexual violence that occurred in Yu County (Shanxi Province) were isolated incidents that are believed to have occurred as a result of multiple coinciding factors, as mentioned above. Such isolated incidents should not be generalized as "occurring widely" without a rational reason. There is no evidence anywhere that similar acts were occurring all over the vast territory of China.

## Background to the sexual violence on Hainan Island

Next, we will examine the background to the sexual violence in Hainan Island.

The Japanese military occupied Hainan Island in February 1939, but the area was originally full of strong anti-Japanese forces, and the Japanese constantly suffered in conflicts with the communist guerrillas that fought in flying columns. The navy, which had occupied Hainan Island, carried out military operations called Operation Y nine times during the occupation, but despite these repeated operations, the enemy forces showed no signs of weakening. According to the "Hainan Guard Office Wartime Journal," the enemy forces were said to number around 10,000 as of June 1942, but gradually increased in strength. By March 1944, the situation was that "the Communist Party is expanding its organization island-wide," according to the Journal, with enemy forces exceeding 15,000.

Under these conditions, the Japanese military stated that for Operation Y6 in June 1942 "we will try to avoid the burning of homes, etc., unless it interferes with the execution of the operations." However, for Operation Y7 in November of the same year, their position shifted to "we will clean out communist villages" and "anyone connected to enemy bandits will be severely punished." The following is a typical testimony by a villager.

Communist flying columns were active in this village . . . and the Japanese military captured young men on the assumption that they belonged to the flying columns. The Japanese military forced them into labor, such as drawing water to build a watchtower. The flying column once attacked the watchtower and killed 13 Japanese soldiers.

After the attack on the watchtower, the Japanese military raided Baisha village in retaliation and burned down all of the homes. (No. 109)

This is similar to the operation in Jinzhong after the Hundred Regiments Offensive, and the situation on Hainan Island must have been very similar to Yu County (Shanxi Province). Under these circumstances, wartime sexual violence may have been an everyday affair as a result of waning discipline among soldiers on the front line, where military police supervision was insufficient.

Looking at the testimonies of the eight victims of sexual violence ((2) No. 25 to 32) from Hainan Island, the majority of them were abducted and confined by the Japanese military and raped for a long period of time. However, apart from such cases, one villager testified about a Japanese soldier who committed rape and was later executed.

A woman who died last year was assaulted by a Japanese soldier back then. She smeared dye on the clothing of the Japanese soldier. The Japanese soldier was later executed by a superior officer as punishment. He was probably executed for staining his military uniform with dye, rather than for committing rape. ((1) No. 109)

Since it is unlikely that the soldier was executed just for staining his military uniform, it makes more sense to believe that he was questioned about the stain on his military uniform and was executed due to the discovery of the rape, rather than being "executed for staining his military uniform with dye."

Additionally, Ban Zhongyi, who interviewed four victims on Hainan Island, made the following interesting point.

The four are different in terms of the location where they were victimized and the ranks of their perpetrators, but they had several things in common, such as having certain individuals whom they "served," that they were not compensated, and that they were allowed to take a break for two or three days only when "comfort women" arrived from the "authorities" (headquarters). (No. 103)

This clearly shows that the women were not comfort women authorized by the military, but were victims of sexual violence. They were allowed to take a break only when the troupes of comfort women authorized by the military arrived. In other words, the women were victims of war crimes (rightfully subject to punishment, if revealed), and the crimes were secretly carried out unnoticed by senior levels of the military, with the knowledge among the perpetrators that their acts were against military discipline.

On Hainan Island, there were many cases where several Japanese soldiers formed groups and had one soldier stand guard while they carried out rape or gang rape. For example, Huang Youliang ((2) No. 26) stated that "There were always soldiers guarding the gate and they would not let us go anywhere" ("Chinese Comfort Women," p. 128), and Lin Yajin (No. 29) testified that "The door was double-locked and there were always Japanese soldiers standing outside guarding the house." "Normally, three or four Japanese soldiers would come into my room together. One of them would guard the door" (ibid., p. 137). There is no doubt that the Japanese soldiers themselves were aware that they were committing crimes.

For Hainan Island, there are no testimonies from former Japanese soldiers, only from the victims, but we must see these cases as exceptional war crimes—similar to those committed in Yu County (Shanxi Province)—that occurred outside the supervision of senior officers and the military police. The findings of the second hearing (2009) for the damages lawsuit on wartime sexual violence on Hainan Island stated that "There is no choice but to say that there is no accurate evidence to confirm that these acts were carried out under a formal order, operational activity, or occupational policy of the Japanese military. It is presumed that the Japanese soldiers involved carried out the acts to satisfy their sexual desires, away or apart from operational activities, not based on any authority or formal orders." This is a valid judgment.

### **The issue with the number of Chinese comfort women**

Lastly, we would like to point out some errors in the view that there was a total of 400,000 comfort women, of which 200,000 were Chinese comfort women, as claimed by Su Zhiliang.

Su first published such views in his *Studies on Comfort Women* (Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 1999), but the basis for his calculations is very weak. The view that there was a total of 400,000 comfort women should actually be 360,000 to 410,000 to be precise, and this figure is based on the following calculation.

First, the total number of Japanese soldiers is presumed to be 3 million and this is divided by 29. This figure of 29 means there was 1 comfort woman for every 29 soldiers. This appears to be based on the views of Yoshiaki Yoshimi ((1) No. 1 comments), who stated that "The use of the phrase "niku-ichi" ("two-nine-one") was quite widespread," but there is no evidence that this was true. In fact, Yoshimi himself made calculations using a ratio of 1-to-100 (No. 4), while some researchers (Ikuhiko Hata 1993) performed their calculations using 1-to-50 as the ratio and still others did their calculations with a ratio of 1-to-150 (Yoshiaki Itakura and Ikuhiko Hata 1999).

Next, the value produced by dividing the total number of Japanese soldiers by the ratio between comfort women and soldiers is multiplied by the replacement rate (turnover rate) of the comfort women, which was 3.5 to 4. The replacement rate is the rate at which comfort women were replaced due to illness, death, or retirement. This also varies according to the researcher, with some performing their calculations using a 1.5 replacement rate (Ikuhiko Hata and Yoshiaki Yoshimi) and others using 2 (Yoshiaki Yoshimi). A replacement rate of 3.5 to 4, which is an extremely high number, is used only by Su Zhiliang.

Using a replacement rate of 3.5 to 4, the total number of comfort women is between 360,000 (with a replacement rate of 3.5) and 410,000 (with a replacement rate of 4). In coming up with the figure of 200,000 Chinese comfort women, Su relied on the view that there were 142,000 Korean comfort women, and seems to have simply subtracted this from the total number of comfort women. There were numerous Japanese among the comfort women and, according to Ikuhiko Hata, there were more Japanese women than not only Chinese women but also Korean women (No. 9). However, Su completely forgot to include the Japanese comfort women, who were the largest in number, in his calculations. Therefore, his calculations are simply absurd.

Furthermore, the view relied on by Su that there were 142,000 Korean comfort women is the result of a figure produced without any basis whatsoever by Seijuro Arafune, a lawmaker in the Japanese House of Representatives. Su's view that there were 200,000 Chinese comfort women is also criticized by the Asian Women's Fund as follows.

Professor Su Zhiliang learned of Arafune's speech from the paper written by Kim Il Myon, accepted it, and used the figure of 142,000 Korean comfort women to estimate that there were 200,000 Chinese comfort women, out of the 360,000 to 410,000 he estimated to have existed. Regrettably, this mistaken conjecture, too, is simply based on Arafune's inflammatory remarks. (Extract from "Number of Comfort Stations and Comfort Women," Digital Museum "The Comfort Women Issue and the Asian Women's Fund")

No Japanese researcher indicates as large a number of comfort women as that claimed by Su Zhiliang. Yoshiaki Yoshimi indicates the total number of comfort woman as follows: "Excluding cases of confinement for a fixed period or rape, there were at least approximately 50,000. If we include those cases, it far exceeds 50,000" (No. 40). However, he does not indicate the number of Chinese comfort women. Ikuhiko Hata estimates the total number of comfort women to be "approximately 20,000, at most" and states that "locals," including Chinese women, constituted around 30% (6,000) of them (No. 9). This is very different from the claim made by Su Zhiliang that there were 200,000 Chinese comfort women.

## Conclusion

What we can see from the above is that research on Chinese comfort women has been done only in an extremely distorted way.

As typified by Su Zhiliang's research, much of the work by Chinese investigators has equated or intentionally confused comfort women with wartime sexual violence victims, and the vast majority of the testimonies given by "Chinese comfort women" are simply cases of victims of wartime sexual violence, which was a war crime even at that time.

Some researchers in Japan clearly distinguish between the two. For example, Ishida and Uchida point out that in Shanxi Province, "Wartime sexual violence in frontline rural areas was a type of violence that fell between the "comfort station" type of sexual violence and the Nanjing type of sexual violence [gang rape during invasion]" and "the actual conditions of the sexual violence in Yu County cannot be fully ascertained through only 'comfort stations' and 'comfort women'" ((1) No. 82).

Nevertheless, their research is basically based solely on the testimonies of victims of wartime sexual violence, and despite efforts to gather evidence for these testimonies by conducting multiple field surveys, no verification has been carried out to determine whether the acts were organized crimes by the Japanese army or deviant acts by some soldiers, or whether the acts were similar to other acts occurring throughout China or were exceptional phenomena. Moreover, researchers have basically given up on conducting research on Chinese comfort women other than through the lens of sexual violence. Regarding this point, Ishida and Uchida admit that "We need to be aware of the fact we do not have a full picture of the situation." (No. 82).

That said, why are the victims of wartime sexual violence concentrated in Yu County (Shanxi Province) and on Hainan Island? The investigation of this question was clearly neglected in previous research. As mentioned earlier, both were special regions where the Japanese army had to directly confront communist guerrillas. Were there any other similar regions?

The Japanese army divided Hebei and Shanxi Provinces into the following three types of districts: "hostile districts (with anti-Japan bases)," "semi-peaceful and orderly districts (with anti-Japan flying columns)," and "peaceful and orderly districts (occupied zones)." It appears that there was a significant difference in the incidence of sex crimes between the "semi-peaceful and orderly districts" and the "peaceful and orderly districts."

The Chinese women in the "semi-peaceful and orderly districts" suffered, with rape and gang rape being common. Since the victims could appeal to the Japanese military police in this district, there were many cases of murder after a rape or gang rape to hide the evidence, literally on the basis that "dead women tell no tales." In the "peaceful and orderly districts," assaults against women were strictly prohibited by the Japanese military and Japanese soldiers were aware that rape was not tolerated within such districts. Therefore . . . hardly any organized sex crimes occurred in cities in the "peaceful and orderly districts" in Hebei Province. (No. 7)

In other words, we can see from the above that the sex crimes committed by the Japanese military were frequent only in areas where efforts to maintain peace and order by the military police fell short, and where the Japanese military was directly or indirectly confronting the Eighth Route Army (in "semi-peaceful and orderly districts" with anti-Japan flying columns). This is probably not unrelated to the fact that the Chinese sexual violence victims who came forward are concentrated in Yu County (Shanxi Province) and on Hainan Island.

Triggered by the Korean comfort women lawsuit (filed in 1991) and the Asahi Shimbun's misleading reports alleging the coercive recruitment of comfort women (1992), many Japanese rushed to both of these regions from 1994 to search for plaintiffs, resulting in the discovery of sexual violence victims. However, this also shows how even though searches for comfort women have been conducted all over China, women who could become plaintiffs were only found in Shanxi Province and on Hainan Island. On top of that, only wartime sexual violence victims, not comfort women, were found.

Thus, the sexual violence committed by former Japanese soldiers towards Chinese women has gained a lot of attention to date, but many researchers do not view such wartime sexual violence as "deviant acts by some soldiers." They now conclude that these acts were "organized acts, in accordance with military operations" (No. 74) and were "undoubtedly caused by Japanese military operations . . . and were definitely not accidental incidents committed by individual bad soldiers in a private capacity." (No. 82). However, are these views fair?

Some Japanese researchers blindly believe in the "Three Alls Strategy," which is just political publicity by the Chinese, and proclaim that the above-mentioned operation in Jinzhong, which aimed to "completely destroy and wipe out" the Eighth Route Army in Shanxi Province, was organized "genocide" (No. 26). However, they intentionally ignore and do not report warnings issued against such acts, such as the one below from the Japanese army's "Detailed Battle Report on the Operation in Jinzhong."

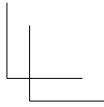
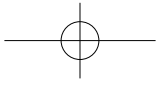
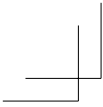
We should avoid causing suffering to innocent residents, but villages that are clearly of the enemy and serve as enemy bases can be burned down if needed.

However, even in such cases, actions similar to massacres and looting need to be strictly prohibited. ("Precautions for units engaged in sweeps")

Needless to say, these "actions similar to massacres and looting" include wartime sexual violence (rape). Additionally, barely any reports mention that the Japanese army referred to "looting, rape, arson, and abduction" as "the four evils" and often ordered their eradication.

Looting, rape, arson, and abduction are referred to as the four evils and are the actions most despised by the Chinese people. They will have a major ill effect on the friendship between Japan and China. (First Army "Crime Report File," 1942)

Additionally, according to the notes by the chief of staff for the North China army (dated June 27, 1938), the army for this area took a tough stance on rape from the very beginning, as indicated below. Moreover, there is nothing to indicate that this policy was subsequently changed and that



rape became something that the soldiers could do as they pleased, or that there was a change toward a "genocide" policy.

Rape occurring frequently in various locations is not only a criminal offense, but also a major act of treason that harms peace and order, obstructs the operational actions of the entire army, and brings disaster to the nation. Anyone responsible for commanding their subordinates must value discipline and admonish others for the national army and for the nation, and prevent such acts from occurring ever again. If there is a commander who does not question such acts, that commander shall be considered disloyal. (No. 1)

The sex crimes committed by Japanese soldiers in Yu County (Shanxi Province) and on Hainan Island were war crimes occurring in areas outside of military control, despite all of the efforts to maintain discipline, and they are simply exceptional cases.