

Hajime Kondo, a former Imperial Japanese soldier

Animation directed by: Junki Kim

Created with the voices of the witnesses

Video link: <https://youtu.be/mdrlrn1JoSA>

English
This video is rated for viewers over 12 years old so anyone over the age of 12 can watch it.
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This video is a follow-up to the short animation "HerStory," produced with the support from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.
Initially, this video was designed to elicit Japan's reflection on its military "comfort women" (especially the Korean "comfort women") issue, through the conscientious confessions of the Japanese people who were actually involved in the "comfort" system as Imperial Japanese soldiers and the "comfort station" operators.
However, collecting testimonies was challenging, because the witnesses were extremely reluctant to testify about the "comfort women" issue, more so than about other war crimes, and the bereaved families withdrew their permission to use the testimony while this film was being produced.
Notwithstanding these challenges, thus shorter footage than anticipated, we still believed these testimonies are historically important records that remind us of the dignity of human beings and the egregious violation of human rights of women during war. With that and our initial intention in mind, we went ahead and completed this video.
Also, we have edited several scenes in consideration of the ages of the viewers.
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The voices in the video are of the actual members of the Japanese military during the war.
Stories Untold
<i>Hajime Kondo: We gathered in front of the Heian Shrine in Kyodo on December 2, 1940.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: In Okazaki Park, a 38-type infantry rifle was first handed over to me saying, "You are an infantry."</i>
You must have received 38-type infantry guns.
The rifle is a precious gift from the Emperor.
You'll be executed if you damage or lose it.
From now on, the rifle should be cared for more preciously than your body.
Now you will be trained with that rifle.
<i>Hajime Kondo: What that meant is that, since the Emperor gave us the rifle, we were now the "soldiers directly under" the Emperor.</i>
<i>This implanted the idea in our head that "We are now the Imperial Army."</i>
<i>Hajimae Kondo: It was in December 1940 when the troops arrived in China.</i>
<i>The unit name was Dokhon (Independent and Mixed), 2nd Company, 13th Battalion of 44th Brigade.</i>
<i>Hajimae Kondo: A month or two after the training,</i>
<i>Hajimae Kondo: They told us to gather at Southeast Square.</i>
The reason I asked you to come here is to teach you how to kill people.

Today, I will show you how to behead.

Did you see that? This is how to kill people.

It's nothing difficult.

From now on, you should train yourself and get used to it.

Hajimae Kondo: I was watching it thinking, this is what cutting people is like.

Hajimae Kondo: We were told to gather at Dongnam square again in a week or ten days.

Hajimae Kondo: I wondered what it was about this time.

Today, we are training to stab people.

I will teach you how to kill people.

Hajimae Kondo: I saw what was going on.

Hajimae Kondo: This time, two Chinese were tied to each tree.

Stab!

Next!

Next!

Hajimae Kondo: I learned how it feels to stab a person at that time.

Joju Nemoto: They built a small room in the outskirts of Qiqihar city in China.

Joju Nemoto: There they built a "comfort station."

Joju Nemoto: Soldiers went there to have fun.

Is Shizuka your partner again today?

Of course, it's been two weeks.

You like her so much, right? But be sure to use a condom.

I will do it really fast and do it again today!

You are going to use up all of your salary then.

Joju Nemoto: Our commander took us there.

Joju Nemoto: Each time, an officer gathered 10 to 15 soldiers

Joju Nemoto: and took them to the "comfort station."

Masaru Nemoto, Grandson of Nemoto Joju.

Masaru is running a website with his grandfather's testimony regarding Korean "comfort women"

Masaru Nemoto: I wanted many people to know about my grandpa's testimony

Masaru Nemoto: When I first heard the story, I was really shocked.

Masaru Nemoto: Because I had never imagined that grandpa would have experienced "comfort women" issue.

Hajime Kondo: We built tochkas (blockhouses) every 500 to 1000 meters.

to block the advance of China's Eighth Route Army who was moving from Shanxi to Hebei.

Hajime Kondo: I was on the mission building those blockhouses.

Hajime Kondo: One day, the Commanding Officer brought a woman.

Huh? What is it?

It's a girl!

Wow, he's great. He's got a nice girl.

We've been working hard. Let's take a break.

Shhh be quiet!

Do you wanna see your baby being killed?

Who's gonna go first?
I am!
Just hold this.
Anyone, do something with this crying baby!
<i>Hajime Kondo: There was a chamber in the pit. We put the woman in there.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: and gang raped her, taking turns from the highest to the lowest ranks.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: If they gang rape or rape someone, they would usually kill the woman in order to keep her silent.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: But this time, they wanted to bring her along.. I don't know what they were thinking.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: So we brought her along while we marched.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: One day, a senior soldier suddenly got up and took the baby from her.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: and threw the baby down from a cliff, 20-30 meters high.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: When I saw this, I thought, 'Ah... that's too much.'</i>
<i>Joju Nemoto: They recruited Korean girls to serve the Japanese military. They took them and made them "comfort women."</i>
How old are you?
I am 17.
Are you Korean?
<i>Joju Nemoto: She was crying.</i>
<i>Masaru Nemoto: "Comfort women", poison gas weapon of the Unit 731, and Nanjing Massacre.</i>
<i>Masaru Nemoto: We need to teach people about those things, just as what Japan did.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: I suggested to test the performance of the type 38 rifles. I said, let's see how far the bullets could penetrate human bodies.</i>
<i>We shot people standing in line with type 38 rifles from 20-30 meters away.</i>
What? Only four bodies? That's it?
<i>Hajime Kondo: And we threw those four dead bodies in a big pigpen made of stones.</i>
<i>Things like human dignity was never our concern.</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: Why had we become like that? What made us to become such people?</i>
<i>Joju Nemoto: Couldn't we have returned at least some of those girls back to their hometown?</i>
<i>Masaru Nemoto: Japan took tens of thousands of Korean women.</i>
<i>Masaru Nemoto: And forced them to become "comfort women" and killed them, right?</i>
<i>Masaru Nemoto: What do you think?</i>
<i>Hajime Kondo: Now I regret that we did something horrible, even though I know it doesn't help how much I regret now..</i>
<i>So those things that happened then... Even 50 or 60 years later,</i>
<i>It wouldn't disappear from my memory</i>
<i>So whenever they talk about war, all I want is that there is never another war</i>
<i>I just hope that people have that in mind</i>