

## Combined Enemy Alien Preliminary Interrogation Reports (May 21, 1945) prepared by 163<sup>rd</sup> Language Detachment

Annotation Source: Seoul Metropolitan Archive

Annotation and Image Link: <https://archives.seoul.go.kr/item/44>

Immediately after a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan attacked the Philippines under American rule and occupied the entire territory of the Philippines by May 1942. The U.S. forces started to attack Leyte Island in October 1944 to reclaim the Philippines and successfully took over Leyte Island in December 1944. Following the success in Leyte Island, the U.S. forces proceeded to attack Luzon Island starting in January 1945. This report is an interrogation report of five Korean “comfort women” who were captured near Dingalan Bay, Tayabas Province in Luzon, Philippines, created by the 163<sup>rd</sup> Language Detachment, G-2, Headquarters I Corps, U.S. Army that participated in the attacks on Luzon. Their names were Yanagi Matsumoto, Momoko Kanemoto, Yoi Kanemoto, Kinran Sonoda, and Soran Sonoda.

Kinran Sonoda and Soran Sonoda were sisters. According to this report, they became “comfort women” for the Japanese military in Taichung City, Taiwan and returned to Korea briefly. On April 29, 1944, sixty-two Japanese and Korean women including the two sisters were sent to the Philippines and then to various Japanese army camps as “comfort women” after they were split up into small groups. The document describes clearly how the Japanese military recruited, managed, and transported “comfort women” in accordance with the demand of the military. The five Korean women who testified for the report had to serve the needs of the Japanese military in various areas in the Philippines. As the battle intensified, they were separated from the Japanese troops and eventually rescued by the U.S. forces. At the time of their rescue, they waved their arms and shouted for help on the coastline.

In 1996, a researcher from the Institute of Korean Chongsindae (the “Voluntary” Labor Service Corps), a Korean non-governmental organization, met with Soran Kim (a pseudonym) and confirmed that she was Soran Sonoda as revealed in this report. At the time, she also testified about her experiences as a “comfort woman.” Her account is consistent with her previous testimony included in the report. Soran Kim was interrogated in the First POW camp in Luzon and transported to various camps including the civilian internment camp inside the Bilibid Prison in Manila. On October 29, 1945, Kim and other forty “comfort women” went aboard a ship *Mari*, and sent to Busan, Korea via Japan. The historical value of this report is significant given its inclusion of sources based on interrogations of Korean “comfort women.”

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