

RESEARCH BRIEF

# Comparative Analysis of WW II Japanese Comfort Women and Its Derivative Contemporary Filipina Transnational Prostituted Women System

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This research compares and contrasts the emergence of the 21st century Philippine global, transnational, and domestic prostitution system with its predecessor, the Japanese Comfort Woman (JCW) scheme of the 20th century. Its ultimate goal is to bring into focus the relationship between the two models with the former as the foundational template for the expansion of the latter. The outcome is the conceptualization of a 21st Century Filipina Comfort Woman social construct (Tanaka, 2002; Kutschera, 2016).

Historically, the work force composition for both these models has included an admixture of exploited and victimized Filipinas, forcibly or voluntarily engaged in military prostitution, sex tourism, or intermittent involvement in the sex trades. Captured in this highly stigmatized, marginalized, and violent human activity, and in the case of Filipinas ensnared in military prostitution with their biracial Amerasian children, they were at considerable risk for vilification, psychosocial risk, somatic stress, and verbal harassment (Kutschera, 2010; Kutschera & Caputi, 2013; Kutschera & Talamera-Sandico, 2013; Kutschera et al., 2015). At the socioeconomic margins and emotionally traumatized, they were swept up in an unrelenting military-turned-sex tourism prostitution network, particularly since its emergence in global consciousness in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s (Elias, Bullough, & Fann, 1998; Jeffreys, 2009; Ralston & Keeble, 2009; Raymond, 2013). These developments warrant comparisons of both models to understand the evolution of the contemporary Philippine trans-global sex trade organization and population (Hicks, 1994; Kutschera, 2016).

The data for these comparisons are from existing estimates from different sources, which will provide the dimensions and consequences of these commercial enterprises. No truly current, coherent, or comprehensive scientific data, either from the Philippine government or other sources, is available, and this topic is seldom studied through empirical research. Given these significant limitations, the estimates represent the current thinking of the dimensions of the significant social problems at play and their repercussions.

First presented are the foundational aspects of the Imperial Japanese Forces (IJF) Comfort Woman system in its historical development and operational analysis. Then, an overview of the contemporary Philippine architecture of its transnational prostitution apparatus falls into focus. Analysis, differentiating, and correlating the material, history, data, and research literature follow. Concluding the presentation are conceptual models of the IJC and Philippine global and domestic prostitution systems, comparing their similarities and differences.

### Overview of the Imperial Japanese Comfort Woman System

Tanaka (2002) claimed that the shroud surrounding the IJF system was astonishingly secretive. Initially, little was known about when the first *ianjo* (i.e., comfort stations or military brothels for the sole use of commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted personnel) came into existence. But later evidence revealed that the first IJF comfort stations were in Shanghai in the then Nationalist Republic of China in early 1932 for the Nippon navy (Tanaka, 2002; Henson, 1999). The Japanese army quickly followed suit and established a handful of stations in the wake of provocative attacks and rapes by Japanese Army troops on Chinese civilians and women in an episode, known as the Shanghai Incident (Henson, 1999, p. ix).

Japanese historian Yuki Tanaka reported the high-level policy revision, in effect formalizing the system, occurred in 1937, shortly after Imperial Japan spearheaded the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 (Henson, 1999, p. x). Chang (1997) linked the comfort station explosion directly to the estimated

killing and sexual molestation of approximately 20,000–80,000 Chinese civilians (December 11–13, 1937) in Nanking (p. 26), the Nationalist Chinese government capital.

Characterizing the comfort station-brothel apparatus as a huge underground system of military prostitution, Chang (1997, pp. 52–53) posited that the atrocities performed by Japanese troops on Chinese civilians in the Nanking Massacre cleared the way for its expansion. Hence, the Nanking rape horror, proof that Japanese troops needed to control their sexual excesses, resulted in the formal recognition and opening of the first comfort military prostitution system for Japanese forces in 1938. This sanction covered not only the already ensuing Sino–Japanese War, but also the subsequent Asia-Pacific War (1941–1945).

This organized, official system of exploitation (i.e., de facto human trafficking, enslavement) of East/Southeast Asian women developed into embedded or involuntary or forcible military prostitution in service of Nipponese commissioned officers and enlisted troops (Hicks, 1994; Chang, 1997; Yoshima, 2000; Tanaka, 2002; Raymond, 2013). Generally, comfort women were young adult women and teenagers; in the case of Filipinas the average age was 17.6 and in some instances ranging in age from 15 to as young as 10 (Henson, 1999, p. xvi). Eighty percent of comfort women were believed to be Korean nationals, predominantly from impoverished backgrounds (Henson, 1999, p. 17; Tanaka, 2002). The remaining JCWs, including a number of Dutch East Indies (Netherlands) Caucasian colonial nationals, Eurasians, and Indonesian natives, were mostly drawn from Nationalist China, Formosa (Taiwan), the former French Indo China (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) and the Philippine Commonwealth, with a scattering from Burma (Myanmar) and Siam (Thailand). Comfort stations were also reported in most all these locations and as distant as Timor, the city of Rabaul, New Britain in the former Australian Territory of New Guinea, and the Western Pacific islands including, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and Micronesia (Hicks, 1994).

While some experienced prostitutes entered the system and may have volunteered, the majority were not prostitutes. Former prostitutes most likely avoided some of the most traumatic experiences of comfort

women. But the vast majority of others were very young, usually from poor families, and often virgins when they were entered into the system (Edwards, 2013, pp. 55–56). Initially, the Ministry of War and the IJF command may have envisioned only Japanese women and primarily former or current prostituted women staffing military sanctioned brothels. However, following the Nanking and Shanghai atrocities, a discreet and strategic search took shape to recruit women, primarily Koreans, often of indigent origins, to amply populate comfort centers at multiple locations.

Edwards (2013) conceptualized three distinctly different recruitment strategies to draw females into the comfort-military brothel scheme: 1) recruitment, 2) deception or trickery, and 3) coercion or force (p. 38). Voluntary recruitment was probably the least likely possibility. However, Hicks (1994) indicated that Japanese prostituted woman could be tempted to sign on. Starting in 1942, the Japanese colonial government wrongfully appropriated the National Labour Association Service law to draft residents into industrial, factory, and service jobs. Spinoff organizations (e.g., Women's Voluntary Service Corps) from that law, involved Korean teenagers and young adults directly pressed into JCW woman service. Many "so-called *karayuki-san* (women travelers) of poor family backgrounds" (Henson, 1999, p. x) comprised the early character of IJF comfort women entrants. This socioeconomic dynamic continued as the Asia-Pacific war progressed, resulting in a system comprised of predominantly destitute and low socioeconomic origin women (Tanaka, 2002). In some parts of the JIF empire, women were simply forced or abducted into the comfort women system. Henson (1999) related her personal forcible abduction in 1942 by Japanese invading forces from a street in Pampanga, Luzon.

What was the initial justification and rationale for the comfort woman apparatus? Researchers contend that the formation of comfort stations was a way to instill military order, and control rape, and molestation incidents affecting the local female populace. It encouraged the cooperation and dampened the resistance of residents under occupation. The IJF military, unlike Allied military forces during World War

II, generally forbade their troops rest and recreation leave. Consequently, the high command thought it productive and efficient to make some effort to satisfy the troops' carnal needs. The common wisdom was that an organized, controlled, and embedded military prostitution system could help prevent dreaded sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), a threat to military preparedness and readiness. Moreover, such control of troops and their social contacts with JCWs could actually heighten and improve operational security and relations with local populations (Hicks, 1994; Henson, 1999).

Essentially, at least three distinct comfort station environments existed. Edwards (2013) identified the *kempeitai* (i.e., Japanese military police) as controlling the facilities, usually supervised under often inhuman or barbaric conditions. Most commonly, week-to-week operations, especially behind battle lines, were the province of privatized brothel contractors operating in paramilitary style. (Edwards, (2013, pp. 28–30, 69–86) outlined the three-tier environment architecture:

*Environment 1. Permanent Type Housing on Military Bases (Safer Rear Headquarters/Operations Areas)*

By comparison, these facilities had more amenities, usually including scheduled physical examinations with access to medical treatment for STDs. Provisions included were military rations and regularly prepared meals, often in troop mess halls. Moreover, a structured ticketing system was in place and in theory gave the women entitlement to some financial remuneration for scheduled military servicemen encounters.

The financial reward system was significant in that during the recruitment process, women became indebted to recruiters or brothel operators. The indebtedness took the form of charges for room and board at the comfort station or other expenses (e.g., transportation and housing). In these settings, comfort women were often closely guarded in living conditions resembling prisons. Oftentimes, an ample number of Japanese woman were exclusively assigned to entertain officer clients.

*Environment 2. Mobile or Mechanized Troop Unit Comfort Stations (Often Attached to Division or Brigade Level Headquarters)*

These women moved with the troops. The supervisory arrangements were similar to those in permanent basing with the military in charge of overall supervision. These units were not as well-organized or supplied with fewer Japanese women. Korean women predominated. Officers and enlisted men often had to settle for the services of Korean or other foreign females.

A significant number of these women did not speak Japanese. Hence, beatings may have been commonplace with conditions generally harsher, especially to overall living conditions, food allowances, and communications issues. Even in mobile unit arrangements, comfort women could have time off once per week to rest or due to menstruation periods. Tragically, many teenagers entrapped in the system were too young for menstruation and therefore compelled to service troops without rest or recuperation (Henson, 1999).

*Environment 3. Combat Stations (Near the Forward Edge of the Battle Line)*

Deemed the lowest, most unstable, insecure, and irregular assignments and managed at battalion level, these units sometimes include a small number of women to service individual companies or battery level small units. Such operations were almost always in tents and subject to housing insecurity due to weather or rapid tactical movements at the whim of military controlees. Civilian management influences were unknown and medical support, sanitary or precautionary STD measures were crude or absent.

Some women in this type of setting were compelled to service between 30 and 40 men per day. Others claimed that soldiers had confided in them that having sexual relations, especially with a virgin-like woman, was good karma (i. e., a safeguard against becoming a battle loss). Most often, local, national, or indigenous women who staffed these stations were forcibly taken into service or captivity against their will or by abduction.

Prostitution and its *sub silentio* characteristics, socially stigmatized nature, and often criminal classification make it difficult to uncover evidence-based realities (Falk, 2001; Raymond, 2013). Such difficulties extended to researchers of the JCW system. For instance, disagreement and disparity arose among experts as to the total number of comfort women terrorized by the IJF system (Henson, 1999). Tanaka (2002) estimated approximately 100,000. "If we assume a ratio of 50:1, then the total of some 7 million (Imperial Japanese) troops from all theaters of war indicates that there would have been about 139,000 comfort women at most" (Hicks, 1994, p. xix). Chang (1997, p. 52) projected 80,000-to-200,000. Edwards (2013, p. 100) estimated 100,000-to-200,000 victims.

Equally undocumented in academic research, as well as from both official and anecdotal sources, are the number of JCWs who died in captivity. Estimates ranged from a fraction of the total. Estimates ranged from a low of one-sixth the total number of a total of approximately 139,000 (Hicks, 1994, p. xix), to as many as 75 % of a total of 100,000 to 200,000 (Edwards, p. 100). They perished for a variety of reasons (i.e., murder and homicide, general medical and physical illness, plagues or influenza outbreaks, assorted STDs often including gonorrhea or venereal infections, random or mindless violence and attacks, abuse and rape, suicides, combat related deaths, and disappearances or escapes) (Henson, 1999; Hicks, 1994; Tanaka, 2002).

### **Domestic and Localized Philippine Prostitution Apparatus**

The United Nations-Geneva International Labour Office study produced a germinal report in 1998 on contemporary systems of prostitution and sex industry services. The Lim (1998) research concentrated on structural prostitution in developing nations of Southeast Asia and emphasized that the primary push-pull factor motivating women to enter prostitution was chronic poverty. Contemporarily, most features described in the study remain well in place and some augmented throughout the Philippine archipelago and abroad one-and-one-half decades into the 21st Century (Kutschera, 2016). The study examined organizational



structures of prostitution in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

Lim (1998, p. 105) posited that Filipina sex workers could be found in one of four material categories: 1) the self-employed, 2) the employed, 3) the enslaved, and 4) the exported. Lim also outlined three transactional categories: the *bought*, the *buyer*, and the *business* (p. 105). Furthermore, Lim reported that the actual framework in the Philippines was more labyrinthine and consisted of at least four different components with Kutschera (2016) adding a fifth: Low Profile, Localized and Barrio/Barangay-Level Prostitution.

### *1. Female Club Workers, Hostesses, or Bar Girls (Also Known as Entertainers or Hospitality Women)*

This is the most visible, studied, and representative face of prostituted women and sex toilers; today they are employed or operate in a variety of public venues (e.g., cocktail bars, discos, karaoke and KTV bars). This grouping functions in luxury hotel lounges and beach resort bar venues and emerged in popularity and public consciousness during the heavy influx of Japanese and Taiwanese sex tourists in the 1970s and 1980s. They were integrated with or followed by Australian, Singaporean, Malaysian, North American, Western European, and most recently South Korean, Hong Kong and mainland Chinese tourist and visitor itinerants (Kutschera, 2016).

In the last decade, an upsurge of transgender persons filtered into some of these entertainment venues. A variant of such public establishments are saunas, health clubs, or massage parlors, and sometimes Internet cafes and barber shops, known places for potential to purchase sexual relations. Lim (1998, p. 106) maintained that such emporiums are usually structural and configured as a regular business with business hours, staff, and regulations.

Federal, provincial, and local Philippine law designates all prostitution as illegal and subject to criminal penalty though such laws are often entirely unenforced, or enforced sporadically or arbitrarily (Kutschera, 2016). Depending on the locality, some women working in these establishments are registered sex workers or entertainers. Others have periodic pap

smears at the municipality's social hygiene clinic. Girls in these arrangements often are required to sit or entertain patrons with the objective of them buying as many drinks as they may be seduced into drinking. Though most but not all Philippine law regards the age 18 as the age of majority, underage and minors historically are encountered in club environments (Ralston & Keeble, 2009).

Usually a complicated and often degrading system of remuneration exists with many entertainers subject to various negotiated bar fines (i.e., payment in exchange for various sex services). In such circumstances, a customer or friend may wish to spend time outside the establishment with the bar girl. These fines are for either a short period of several hours or overnight or extended term through fee haggling on a sliding fee scale. In such instances, a fraction of the bar penalty fine accrues to the worker with the remainder divided between the bar owner or manager and possibly other third party actors (Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1992; Jeffreys, 2009; Ralston & Keeble, 2009).

Jeffreys (2009, p. 132) noted that a specific consumer hierarchy characterized contemporary Philippine sex trade club scene. In order of status are the Japanese and Taiwanese sex tourists (the most expensive, requiring the most luxurious settings). European, Australasian, and North Americans constitute the middle ground, with the lowest level constituting working class Filipino men. More contemporary entrants are the South Korean nouveau riche sex tourists marauding the Philippines, who tend to favor central Philippines resorts including Cebu, Puerto Galera, and Palawan. Hong Kong and Peoples Republic of China (PRC) visitors are also widely observed to frequent luxurious high rise hotel night spots and neon lit gaming casinos in Metro Manila (Kutschera, 2016). Many segments of the Korean and Chinese grouping have also entered the premium or luxury club clientele classification.

### *2. Quasi-self-employed or Independent Operator Call Girls (Traditional Female Escort Services)*

This category is near the summit of sex labor and the professional classification that social scientists, researchers, and the news media refer to when attempting to make the point that prostitution can

be a lucrative, even glamorous occupation. Many practitioners “operate independently or within a loose, pimp or patronage system, such as call-girls or escort prostitutes who cater to foreign business, local politicians, and upper-class businessmen, or their clients” (Lim, 1998, p.105).

These women tend to be highly attractive and comfortably immersed and secure in their sexuality. A number may function on an on-call basis for meeting and entertaining dates in luxury hotels, motor inns, beachside hideaways, or executive offices and suites. Unlike stereotypic bar girls or other sex workers, they may operate relatively freely with a broad level of independence in selecting patrons and choosing their own work conditions. While usually reserved for a select hierarchy, this arrangement is the holy grail of prostitution praxis.

### 3. *Streetwalkers (Classified as So-called Freelancers or Independent, Common Hooker Sex Laborers)*

While resembling higher priced call-girls in terms of job description (i.e., dealing mostly with independence to operate and a semblance of choice of consumers), this group occupies one of the lowest classifications within the trade. In colloquial Filipino parlance they may be referred to as *pokpok* or *pakarat*, or in English slang as entertainers or “hookers” (Williams, 2005, pp. 165–166). Their dangerous toil often involves multiple or serial sexual counters on a routine or daily basis. Their work space comprises the back streets and alley ways of the red light or tenderloin districts, public plazas or parks, main commercial thoroughfares, or known pick up spots at the barrio (neighborhood) level. Often they may be homeless or jobless women, solo parents searching for money for food to buy their children, drug dependent, minor-age teenagers, or underage runaways. They loiter commercial thoroughfares or their side streets, hotel lobbies and the edges of known sexing districts. They casually or aggressively approach potential clients in different locations with or without the assistance of a pimp (Lim, 1998, p. 105).

Such hazardous working conditions make them highly prone to acquiring STDs, developing unwanted pregnancies, and encountering violent stalkers/

customers who refuse to use condoms or take any other sex protection precautions (Ralston & Keeble, 2009, p. 99). Predatory pimps exert control over these women by obtaining clients and protecting them from the police or job-related harassment. The women share their meager earnings and rely on these figures for security in an unusually toxic and hazardous job setting.

### 4. *Brothel or Casa Workers (As They Are Colloquially Known)*

These practitioners are generally regarded as the lowest grade and most at risk sex toilers in the archipelago and often become enslaved or highly exploited. Operating in the shadows, “They are kept as virtual prisoners in small rooms in the backs of karaoke joints, truck stops and patio bars, accessible only by guards and owners, They make 300 pesos (USD\$8.00) for two weeks’ work servicing 5–15 customers a night” (Ralston & Keeble, 2009, p. 99). With a primarily Filipino working-class clientele, Lim (1998) described a working environment uncannily resembling the 20th Century JCW model: Being at the call of the customer at any hour, without refusal rights and subject to infrequent or irregular levels of enumeration from the operator.

Highly prone to illegal fraud, deceit, and human trafficking practices, *casa* brothel workers are routinely under age minors from wholly indigent circumstances. Often forcibly recruited or abducted from the rural provinces (or urban barrio slums), they sometimes are sold into prostitution by their parents. They are prone to being raped into submission and physically abused or molested by caretakers both at the time of initiation and during their time in the *casa* (Lim, 1998). Such physical abuse permeating from *casa* brothel environments were eerily similar to related narratives of an IJF comfort woman, Maria Rosa Henson, an Angeles, Pampanga native and one of the first Filipina JCWs to come forward in the early 1990s and disclose her violent experiences. Henson (1999) related:

Even the Japanese doctor who checked me every week did not spare me. Once, after the check-up, he asked me to stay behind. And then

he raped me. I cried and cried because it hurt so much. His penis was very big. (p. 42)

Yet of all these categories, this group is one of the least known or documented, in part due to the illegal, nature and often human trafficked method of their original procurement and their association with underworld or criminal class elements. The secretive locations, dire circumstances, and daily living ordeals are unimaginable by normal community standards.

##### 5. *Low Profile Prostitution Pursuit (Barangay/Barrio Level Urban and Rural or Farming Area Sex Service Providers)*

This *calmato* neighborhood genre is seldom described and there is little extant empirical research on its existence (Kutschera, 2016). It primarily involves freelance, part-time, or casual sex toilers, often functioning in-and-out of their own households. They may meet neighborhood patrons for dates at various accommodations for a quick, short-term, and possibly longer term erotic liaison. Such marginalized providers may be: (1) Mothers or even grandmothers, solo housewives, single, college, high school or underage girls most often seeking to earn income for the modest household larder, family medical emergency, educational, or personal needs; (2) Addicts supporting a drug or alcohol dependency, or (3) Women in debt or paying off a pimp with an extra time business or romantic customer.

The prostituted woman's behavior is often of a *sub rosa* character, except to a small circle of family members or neighbors. Sometimes living conditions are so desperate and deprived that mothers will hustle customers for their daughters, children as young as 12, or vice versa. Preliminary ethnographic field research by the Philippine Amerasian Research Center in Angeles, Pampanga found that this practice is especially prevalent in chronically poor and disadvantaged resettlement and impoverished public or privately held relocation districts. Other locations are squatter, trespasser slum or ghetto zones consisting of temporary shacks or *kubos*. Often domiciles are illegally placed on building lots owned by another or unknown landowner. Such behavior is stringently

driven by economic need and the quest for life sustaining necessity, with the chance of becoming embedded into the cultural firmament. At many local levels, such prostitution practices may reach the level of normalization (Kutschera, 2016).

Lim (1998) also described the somewhat related phenomenon of rural prostitution (i.e., the transit of local or distant sex workers to field camps to service seasonal agricultural workers). "The agricultural workers pay roving prostitutes with whom they have sex in the fields after work with one cavan" (i.e., one sack of rice, per transaction) (p. 110). Other areas of occupational and migratory specific prostitution include: Philippine military field training camps, mining and construction sites, logging areas, and maritime seaport docking areas.

### **International Globalized Philippine Prostitution Architecture**

The international nature of prostitution structure is significantly younger than the domestic variety and has expanded exponentially in the past 35 years, particularly with the "trans-nationalization of the sex industry, the rise of sex tourism and the participation of international crime syndicates, such as the Japanese *yakuza* (mafia), in sex trafficking" (Lim, 1989, p. 106). Kutschera and Galang (2014) and Kutschera (2016) outlined the fluid and adaptive transnational character and chronology of the Philippine prostitution experience. It was initially leavened by U.S. colonial, neo-colonial, and militarization of the Philippines, which included a long-standing system of military prostitution surrounding permanent U.S. military bases. This system emanated from the Philippine–American War (1899–1902) and existed on and off until the 1991–1992 forced withdrawal of U.S. permanent bases. In the late 1970s and 80s, the landscape eroded began full transformation into hotel and resort sex tourism with a huge spike in predatory sex commercialism beginning in the late 1970s (sources: Japan, Taiwan, Australia, North America, Western Europe, Singapore and Malaysia with South Korea, Hong Kong and mainland PRC-China most recently added) (Kutschera, 2016).

Comparatively speaking, the early Philippine experience differed markedly from neighboring

mainland China. Historically, in the 19th century, Tong (2000) found that “Chinese prostitutes followed their countrymen to the inhospitable sub-regions (usually in California or the U.S. Northwest) east of the Pacific Coast to offer social relations and intimacy to men, who, in the search for conjugal ties, could not or would not cross racial lines” (p. 14). In fact, noteworthy numbers of Chinese prostituted women relocated to various cities of the U.S. West Coast in the 19th and early 20th century.

Few Filipinas accompanied their men to these early assignments. In fact, the abject lack of female companionship sometimes drove Filipino arrivals into biracial relationships with Caucasian or other local women. These relationships routinely caused racial flare ups with the area population and later became one of the underlying causes of latent discriminatory labor practices against Asian minorities including Filipinos, Japanese, and the Chinese (Tong, 2000). Therefore, while no specific evidence exists that in the first half of the 20th century Filipinas became victims of trafficking, or were exported abroad for purposes of prostitution, from mid-century on to the New Millennium the landscape altered dramatically.

The current data and knowledge relating to the transnational orientation of the new globalized Philippine sex scene includes, but is not necessarily confined to:

### 1. *Government Data*

Such documents as the U.S. Department of State’s (2015) Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report identified the Philippines as “a source country and, to a much lesser extent, a destination and transit country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor” (p. 279). The report outlines but does not always distinguish between the myriad categories of trafficking (e.g., illegal procurement, enslavement, movement or physical mistreatment of male or female workers and laborers, women victims primarily as victims of rape, sexual abuse, molestation or prostitution, and children for both illicit labor or sexual purposes). In addition to these offenses, such victims, exploited either domestically or abroad, also may experience “threats, inhumane living conditions,

nonpayment of salaries, and withholding of travel and identity documents” (p. 279). Significantly, “an estimated 10 million Filipinos migrate abroad for work, and many are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor including through debt bondage” (U.S. Department of State, 2015, p. 279). These conditions and circumstances plausibly suggest that tens of thousands of Filipinas are engaged in prostitution or the sex trade abroad, either voluntarily or in embedded or forced labor circumstances (Kutschera, 2016).

### 2. *The Philippine President’s Commission on Filipinos Overseas*

Estimates of at least 50% of the 10 to 11 million Filipino Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) abroad are females; their primary motive is economic in an effort to escape the archipelago’s pervasive poverty. Of this number, the majority of women generally fall into younger numbers than their male counterparts with the majority in their 20s, 30s to early 40s (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, 2013; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2014). Unknown is how many Filipina OFWs at any given time may be engaged out of the country, either systemically or independently, in the international prostitution network or globalized sex trade. Some of the major assignment destinations of OFWs, where Filipinas have been observed in prostitution or sex district entertainment toil include: the United Arab Emirates, 822,000; Malaysia, 790,000; Canada, 720,000; Australia, 400,000; United Kingdom, 220,000; Singapore, 200,000; Hong Kong, 203,000; Kuwait, 200,000 and Japan, 180,000 (Raymond, 2013; Commission on Filipinos Overseas, 2013; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2014; Kutschera, 2016).

The Philippine Amerasian Research Center obtained anecdotal reports from OFW sources that numerous women of various nationalities (i.e., including Filipina entertainers, bar hostesses, waitresses, and sex industry workers) toil in a variety of entertainment districts or related locations throughout the world. For example, Butler (2010) reported that as many as 30,000 of the 1.5 million residents of Dubai, UAE are believed to be engaged in prostitution, and an unknown, but possibly significant fraction, may be Filipinas. Raymond (2013) reported heavy trafficking and employment of Filipina



sex toilers in Hong Kong, Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, and other destinations.

### 3. *The Globalization or Trans-nationalization of the Philippine Sex Industry*

Lim (1998) and Seagrave (1988) maintained that the underlying international crime syndicate and human trafficking nexus introduced and fostered under dictator President Ferdinand E. Marcos by several underworld organizations (e.g., Japanese *yakuza*, Chinese triad) took hold and remained a contributing and sustaining factor in this internationalization. The secret agreements made decades ago created a pathway for broad scale human trafficking of Filipina nationals for designated work in Japan and Okinawa as sex entertainers known as *Japayuki-san* (Kutschera & Galang, 2014, p. 6).

In addition to exploitive trafficking or export of females for ultimate purposes as entertainers in the sex industry, other subterfuge mechanisms evolved, such the *mail order bride* and *domestic helper* schemes (Lim, 1998, p. 106). Such devices increased their velocity through enhanced communications technology and also led to the more contemporary and trending adaptations including the Internet dating scene and Internet sex chat camera websites which overtly suggest availability of services. The Japanese Filipina *Japayuki-san* and Nippon male sex tourism experience was particularly offensive, given that it offered two distinct levels of exploitation:

**Level 1. Overseas Performing Arts Program.** Originated and nurtured to full fruition under Marcos, and carried forward into the 21st Century, despite several reforms by succeeding federal administrations is this de facto sex industry oriented visa program. Under this special Japanese work visa classification, tens of thousands of Filipinas trained for jobs as entertainers when in reality they were often prepared to work in Japan's swelling sex industry districts (Seagrave, 1988; Raymond, 2013). Most of these Filipinas, duplicating the fate of IJF Comfort Women dispatched to far-flung corners of the empire, ironically wound up in locations back in Japan employed as sex toilers. Many of them faced heavy debt bondage once arriving at assignments.

“They were often also eagerly sought after and impregnated by Japanese males where they were known popularly as *Japayuki-san* in Japan proper, and called *Japayuki* when they returned home to the Philippines” (Kutschera & Galang, 2014, p. 6). Thousands of these Filipinas became impregnated by Japanese men, either in a customer or client-consumer work environment or in casual or intended liaisons developing into long-term, often romantic relationships. When pregnancy occurred, they were often summarily deported back to the Philippines ultimately giving birth to mixed-blood Japanese-Filipino Children (JFCs) or colloquially known as *Japinos* (Kutschera & Galang, 2014, abstract).

Some survived and stayed on in Japan if “fortunate enough to marry or remain, protected as a mistress, second wife or concubine by a Japanese national while toiling in or out of the entertainment sector” (Kutschera & Galang, 2014, p. 9). Estimates of as many as 100,000 bi-national Japino children or JFCs were born as a direct result of this experience. Many Japinos and their Filipina mothers became destined to live impoverished, disadvantaged, or stigmatized lives upon their return to the Philippines, where few sufficiently functioning social welfare services existed for the poor or needy.

**Level 2. Sex Tourism.** Conversely, millions of unaccompanied Japanese males, businessmen, or vacationers traveling in sex tour groups have flooded the Philippines since the mid-1970s. In 1980, as many as 80% of Japanese tourists were men (Ralston & Keeble, 2009). Thus, while possibly engaging in other vacation pursuits including golf outings, casino tours, and sightseeing excursions, an asymmetrical number of these visitors were seeking sexual liaisons (Kutschera & Galang, 2014; Kutschera, 2016).

In the absence of confirming governmental census or demographically empirical data, it is widely acknowledged that the number of bi-national JFCs or Japinos in the Philippines approximates 200,000+ (International Organization for Migration, 2008; Suzuki, 2010). There are also scattered numbers in Japan; however, many Japino children in the islands were left abandoned, estranged and/or unsupported with their Filipina national mothers, family members, or guardians by Japanese fathers. The total number of Japino children, adolescents, and young JFC adults

today included a sizeable but empirically unquantified number who were sired by Japanese itinerants via casual or intended encounters with Filipina prostituted women and sex toilers; yet there is compelling anecdotal evidence many were also the result of normal man and woman social relationships (Kutschera & Galang, 2014; Kutschera, 2016).

Adding to this total were unaccompanied male visitors and sex tourists since the late 1980s to the present. These Taiwanese, South Korean, Hong Kong, and mainland PRC-China sojourners fathered as many as 30,000+ biracial South Korean Philippine Children, or *Kopinos*, and an estimated 6000+ Chinese Filipino or *Chipino* or *Sinopino* infants, children, and young adults birthed under similar circumstances. As with military Amerasians and Japinos, many are abandoned or estranged and become stigmatized and/or impoverished, stressing an already drastically under-resourced Philippine social services network (Strother, 2014; Kutschera & Galang, 2014).

### Comparing the Models

In conceptualizing the IJF comfort women system and comparing it to the Philippine domestic and transnationalized prostitution network, distinct and multiple similarities occur, and some nuanced differences occur. For example, the IJF system in contrast to the Philippine system was highly centralized in terms of authoritarian control, yet localized and designed for the Japanese military in different deployment settings. In contrast, the Philippine system was based on many elements of the IJF organization including the original military prostitution architecture. Such an element was foundational and necessary in order to build and expand the variation of services, that is, sex tourism provided by Filipinas in domestic, regional, and global settings and for different financial purposes. Control functionality tended to be more centralized domestically; there was less centralization and more evolutionary and adaptive features abroad.

In multiple ways, the term comfort woman to describe the 21st century Filipina sex toiler is conceptually based on the IJC model upon which the Philippine model developed its contemporary strain and variants. The 20th century Japanese IJF Comfort

Woman system, as described by Tanaka (2002) was a scheme of organized sexual violence and brutality committed by the Japanese Imperial forces against women. Its centralized and authoritarian powers emanated from the Japanese system of military sexual slavery (p. 1). Theoretically, its availability was to the seven million Japanese IJC troops within the bounds of the empire's temporal Pacific empire (Hicks, 1994).

Tanaka (2002) maintained that the criminal nature of the IJF prostitution regime was similar to the US and other Allied forces' use of military-controlled prostitution with its oppression and enslavement following World War II. Raymond (2013) posited that the IJF system and its use of authoritarian, embedded features was instrumental in developing succeeding U.S. military prostitution models. It even had elements of at least one established U.S. military prostitution system, the Filipino colonial prototype, which dated to the Philippine–American War. Post–World War II U.S. American military prostitution models included those developed or in place in Okinawa, the main islands of Japan, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and West Germany which functioned throughout the Cold War Era (1948–1990) with the full knowledge and compliance of the U.S. Defense Department. Indeed, Raymond (2013) described a chronological *gerade aus* linking Philippine–American War colonial prostitution, the IFJ comfort woman system, and post-WW II military prostitution. These provided bedrock and set the stage and tempo for the grand transmigration to regional and trans-national sex tourism in the Philippines. These roads have inevitably led to contemporary globalized sex networks where new and future generations of penurious Filipinas court victimization. Raymond (2013) encapsulated the dynamic by observing, “Women have become the sexual playthings of the post-colonial, migrating, and military global economy. Those from developing countries (prominently represented from the Philippines) are major earners of foreign exchange in prostitution. Prostitution is further globalized in the explosion of international sex tourism” (p. 165).

The following nine specific environments and conditions (Table 1) are conceptually congruent between the IJF Comfort Woman regime and the present-day scheme of Philippine globalized, transnational, and domestic prostitution:

**Table 1**

*Comparison of the Similarities between the IJF Comfort Women System and Contemporary Philippine Globalized and Domestic Prostitution*

Similarity Component	IJF Comfort Women System	Philippine Domestic/Globalized Prostitution
1. Socio-economic backgrounds of women	Predominant number of women are destitute, indigent, impoverished, and marginalized.	Domestic and international prostitution recruited or embedded from predominantly indigent, impoverished, and marginalized female base.
2. Rape as orientation to prostitution life	Raped or sexually assaulted as routine means of initiation or orientation.	If victim of human trafficking, similar practices found in many domestic or trans-national club entertainment venues, or <i>casa</i> brothel toiler scenarios.
3. Human trafficking	Commonplace as method of recruitment...involuntary or embedded prostitution features prevailed throughout.	Recruitment of Filipinas embedded in <i>casa</i> brothel and club sex work and significant involuntary involvement in globalized employment in the sex industry.
4. Recruitment of minors	Many are underage girls (below age 18, but as young as 10–12) victims of trafficking and enslavement across IJF system.	Widely occurring throughout the model, affecting sex workers at domestic and multiple trans-national levels.
5. Violent and risky sexual activity	Servicing multiple (30 or 40 male soldier consumers) daily, particularly before or following battle engagements.	Serial intercourse and oral sex episodes widely practiced among Filipina sex toilers in many settings: streetwalker, club bar fine encounters, <i>casa</i> brothels and neighborhood/workplace sex.
6. Sexually transmitted diseases/infections (STDs/STIs)	Often contracted and became chronic in IJF comfort stations, particularly if medicines or anti-biotic were in short supply, with sustained liability during periods of serial sexing chores.	Clients may refuse to wear condoms or engage in alternate protections. High liability among low income Filipinas in club districts, <i>casa</i> brothels, maritime, mining camps, migratory agriculture, and street walker and barrio prostitution levels.
7. Compensation	Destitute conditions. Irregularly paid, often received no monetary income. Often times, required to do housework and cooking during the day and sexual services for troops at night	Filipina prostituted women catering to working class Filipinos had discernibly lower pay level and penury for services provided. Bar fine club workers are often subject to under payment or fraction of fee in both domestic and trans-national settings.
8. Heavy bondage debt	Woman owed money to their recruiters or managers of comfort stations for necessities (i.e., clothing bedding, mattresses, and blankets), even anti-STD pharmaceuticals.	International and globalized debt age venues: 1. Applicants for OFW jobs abroad end up as human trafficking victims at prostitution nightclubs, 2. Filipinas sent to Japan on Overseas Performing Arts visas faced heavy fees and years of penalties upon arriving at assignments, 3. Domestic sex toilers human trafficked into club and <i>casa</i> brothels faced <i>de facto</i> permanent bondage debt.
9. Geographical and organizational structure	Transnational reach throughout IJF Empire, highly centralized and authoritarian, with some decentralized command autonomy.	Global, transnational, regional reach, with evolutionary tendencies, less centralized control. More centralized domestically, ubiquitous characteristics, with horizontal autonomy features.

In summary, penury and its linkage to push-pull socio-economic factors compelled Filipinas to enter the sex industry, either forcibly or voluntarily, informs and invites contrasts in significant ways to the 20<sup>th</sup> century IJF comfort woman model. Contemporary Filipina sex workers draw significant correlations and comparisons to the JCW construct at numerous levels including organizational workplace structure and susceptibility to human trafficking and its attendant personnel recruitment excesses. Victims of both experiences shared similar levels of exploitation, including debt bondage, rape, physical abuse and violence, STDs/STIs, and risky and threatening work environments. In reality, steady and unrelenting levels of high un- and under-employment, indigent, and extreme levels of poverty contribute to provide an endless stream of sustenance to the contemporary domestic and transnational prostitution scourge. This epidemic and its tentacles are so powerful it has lent itself to high vulnerability internationally to sexual human trafficking and leverages millions of Filipinas seeking employment overseas. Once abroad, their liability to sexual predation and risk to personal safety and welfare increases exponentially (Lim, 1998, p. 106; Kutschera, 2016).

These contemporary women and their children, often sired by foreign sex tourists and sexual predators, are clearly the marginalized and socio-economic sufferers from the greed generated by global trafficking and prostitution. The demonstration that the 21<sup>st</sup> century Filipina Comfort Woman is the quintessential casualty that in so many ways resemble their iconic JCW predecessors is authentic and palpable. Their voices are seldom heard, but their suffering persists, in times of flourishing wealth, ruthless life circumstances, and unending sexual appetite. Without support and services, they are destined to entrapment. Without intervention and sustentation, these Filipina women, like their JCW counterparts, become forever embedded in a treacherous *Sisyphian* scheme and remain its continuing victims and martyrs.

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