

I racconti di dodici vittime di deprogrammazione in Giappone

1	Mr. Toru Goto's Case	<p>Mr. Toru Goto (31) visited his home and was kidnapped by his family. He was confined to three apartments in total over a period of 12 years and 5 months,. A professional faith-breaker frequently visited the third apartment together with his family and ex-members, during which Mr. Goto was severely harassed . Each time he tried to approach the entrance his family responded with brutal violence leaving his face and hands bloodied. After giving up on escaping by using force, he decided to go on hunger strikes: 21 days, 21 days, and 30 days.. Finally, in February 2008, they threw him out of the apartment. By that time, he had been virtually reduced to skin and bones and had great difficulty walking. He had been kidnapped and confined when he was 31. He was now already 44 years old. He managed to reach to Unification Church headquarters in Tokyo and was rushed to a hospital where he stayed until March 31.</p> <p>In May 2008, he filed papers with the Ogikubo district police accusing those who had forcefully confined him. In February 2009 the police sent the case to the prosecutors' office. Unfortunately, on December 9, prosecutors refused to indict them.</p>
2	Mrs. Hiroko Tomizawa's Case	<p>In June 1997, a group of about twenty thugs, including an ex-policeman and personal detectives, armed with an electric stun gun, iron chains and an iron pipe attacked an UC local church, Tottori Church. They injured four church members and forcibly abducted Ms. Hiroko Tomizawa. Next day, a staff member tried to file a criminal complaint at Tottori police, but the police officer chased him out saying, "We are busy. You should not bring such a case." Hiroko was confined in three apartments over the next fifteen months. Mamoru Takazawa, a Protestant minister, visited her in the confinement rooms and tried to conduct faith-breaking on her. UC finally, accused the attackers with the assistance of an attorney and Hiroko also accused the kidnappers after her escape. However, the police would not begin hearing from victims until a Diet hearing on deprogramming issues against the chief of National Police was performed in April 2000. Finally, the prosecutor of Tottori Prosecutor's office rejected each case, though he admitted the illegal activities by suspects. On the other hand UC filed civil lawsuit against Hiroko's family members and won it. Hiroko also sued Minister Takazawa and her family members and the court issued judgment in favor of her.</p>

3	Mrs. Rie Imari's Case	<p>The first church member to bring a lawsuit in a case of an apartment-detention was Rie Imari in 1999. On January 10, 1997 she and her husband were walking to their car in the parking lot of a Denny's Restaurant when at least six people surrounded them, assaulted her husband and forced her into a van. Over the next five months she was confined in three different apartments until she escaped in June of that year. Sakae Kurotori and Yoshio Shimizu, both associated with the United Church of Christ in Japan (UCC-J), were involved in the incident and Shimizu visited Imari in the apartment frequently in order to "persuade" her to leave the Unification Church. She had been kidnapped and confined twice by her family members. In order to prevent a third confinement, Imari and her husband both submitted an accusation document (complaint??) to the Miyamae Police in September 1997. The case was brought to the Yokohama District Prosecutors Office, but their appeal was rejected. They also sued her family members and the two ministers, but both the Yokohama District Court and the Tokyo High Court rejected the claims. Finally, in March 2006, they appealed to the Supreme Court. A settlement was reached in which both parties promised to respect each others' religious freedom..</p>
4	Ms. Mitsuko Ishikawa's Case	<p>The first faith-breaking case in Japan to reach the Supreme Court is the case involving Mitsuko Ishikawa, who had been confined in private apartments in 1996 and again in 1998 for periods of fifty-two and seventy days respectively. The parents had read a book by Kyoko Kawasaki and consulted with Yoshio Shimizu, both UCC-J ministers, and Shimizu even visited the place on ten occasions. She jumped out a window to escape. Subsequently she and her husband filed a civil lawsuit in the Tokyo District Court against her parents and Shimizu. She demanded compensation from the minister and a court injunction for every defendant as a safeguard. The court knew that she had been in a locked room and her "spiritual and physical freedom had been restricted," and that Shimizu hit the plaintiff and shouted threats such as "you should stay in a room with iron bars your entire life." However, it dismissed all the claims, saying the incident was a "family matter." As for Shimizu, the court recognized that on all ten occasions he visited the room he did not know that she was locked in the room. The plaintiffs appealed, but both the high court and the Supreme Court rejected their appeals.</p>

5	Mrs. Kozue Terada's Case	<p>Kozue Terada, who had married a Korean husband and lived in Korea, visited her home in Japan to see her mother who was under treatment for her ear at a hospital. During her stay, her relatives abducted her to an apartment and confined her for 66 days. Minister Mamoru Takazawa, who was the defendant in Hiroko Tomizawa's civil law suit at that time, visited the confinement apartment frequently and tried to break her faith through threats and insults. At one point she dropped a memo through a small hole at the entrance door pleading for rescue. A police officer visited the room. Screaming for help, Terada tried to reach the entrance, but her parents forcibly blocked the door. Takazawa then came to the door and persuaded the police to leave. Finally, Terada escaped and filed papers accusing those who confined her to the Higashi Yodogawa Police. The prosecutor of the Osaka Prosecutor's Office acknowledged that illegal arresting and confinement had occurred, nevertheless he decided not to prosecute. This was the same result as in the Hiroko Tomizawa case in which the same minister had been accused. As a result, the minister still continues his faith-breaking activities, despite having the lost civil lawsuit filed by Miss Terada.</p>
6	Ms. Emiko Motoki's Case	<p>The most outstanding example of police intervention on behalf of church members occurred in November 2002, when the police directly intervened to locate and rescue Emiko Motoki, who was being held under duress in a room at a Lutheran Church in Akita City. She had been visiting her home in Japan with her Korean husband when that night her family members attacked them and kidnapped her. Motoki's husband reported the case to the Yamagata police, but with no result.. He then appealed to the Korean Consulate in Sendai and the Korean Embassy in Tokyo. Apparently, Korean officials from both offices called the local Japanese police station in Yamagata and an official from the Korean Embassy even wrote a letter to the chief of the National Police Agency demanding that the police investigate. Within ten days after receiving the report, the police discovered the place and a squad of ten officers went to the church, took her into the police station for a hearing, and then allowed the woman to leave with her husband. Although Motoki and her husband lodged a criminal complaint against the minister of the Lutheran Church, the prosecutor of the Yamagata prosecutor's office decided in June, 2004 not to bring charges against the suspects. .</p>

7	Ms. Namiko Katagiri's Case	<p>In November, Mrs. Namiko Katagiri visited her older brother's home and was abducted by her family members. They brought her to Hokkaido by station wagon and car ferry. She was confined to an apartment in Sapporo city for five months. Before she left home, she wrote a letter to her husband saying, "If I do not come home, please ask the police to come to my rescue." He brought the letter to the police but they did not treat it as a criminal case. He filed civil lawsuits, but her relatives did not appear at the court. Finally he was able to locate the confinement apartment and through an attorney asked the Machida police to rescue her. However, the police rejected the demand saying they could "do nothing." Then he decided to go to the police box nearest the apartment and ask for her rescue without mentioning anything about the UC or her family members' involvement. The police visited the room and liberated her. After her release, Mr. and Mrs. Katagiri made a settlement out of court, in which her parents apologized for the damages, promising to pay compensation and not to repeat any activities against her will.</p>
8	Mrs. Takako Fujita's Case	<p>Mrs. Takako Fujita, who married a Korean believer and lived in Korea, visited her home in Ehime prefecture in Japan alone, to attend a Buddhist funeral ceremony. During her stay in her parents' home, she was kidnapped and brought to Kyoto city where she was confined in an apartment for about four months. Apparently a Christian minister was involved in her confinement. Finally, she attempted suicide in the bathroom and was brought to a hospital, where she later died. The police were aware of the situation but did not treat it as a criminal case. In the end, no one was arrested or indicted. Her husband came to Japan in an attempt to attend her funeral ceremony, but her family refused to admit him.</p>

9	Mr. Hirohisa Koide's Case	<p>On June 13, 1992, Hirohisa Koide, a medical doctor, was kidnapped while he was busy taking care of many patients at a hospital. He was confined for almost two years. During his confinement Hiroshi Hirata, a lawyer, visited the confinement place. Despite the obvious criminal law violations he witnessed, Hirata told Koide's parents and relatives the confinement was legal. Consequently, Koide's period of confinement was prolonged. After one year in confinement, Yoshifu Arita, a reporter notorious for criticizing UC-J, came to Koide's confinement place. In his report about Koide, even though he was aware Koide was being confined, he conveniently excluded this information from his story. One of the deprogrammers who visited Koide in the confinement place was Minister Yasutomo Matsunaga. Matsunaga holds lectures about the UC-J in which he encourages parents of UC-J members to kidnap and confine their adult children. He also organizes two-day seminars in which he teaches kidnapping and confinement methods and teaches persuasion techniques (to help parents effectively lure their children to a place suitable for confinement). Koide describes his experience in his book "Hitosarai Karano Dasshutsu [Escape from Kidnappers]" (Tokyo: Kogensha, 1996).</p>
10	Mr. Soichiro Kobayashi's case	<p>Soichiro Kobayashi was kidnapped twice. In Nov. 1992, his family confined him in to a tenth floor apartment. He broke the window and shouted for help.. Policemen visited the apartment. However, after listening to his father's explanation, they went back saying, "Do not disturb them. This UC issue is a family affair." In April 1997 [not clear if he escaped the first time-editor], while he was walking on the street, about 20 people, including his relatives, attacked him and forced him into a van. A police car chased the van and led it to the police station. However, the attackers shouted all at once, "This guy is mind-controlled," and the policeman let them go. His relatives carried him to a second floor apartment and bound his hands and legs. Minister Yoshio Shimizu visited him twice a week. Once, he passed blood in his urine and asked his family members to let him see a doctor. Minister Shimizu would not easily bring him to a hospital, but finally relented, sending family members to prevent his escape. In Sep. 1997, he tried to escape but was caught. Three police officers came there and one said, "I understand you, but you should never bother your parents." In November 1997, he finally escaped from the apartment</p>

11	Rape Case	<p>Although her real name cannot be revealed, a female member of the UC was raped by a professional faith-breaker during her detention. Her story is told under the pseudonym of “Ms. Keiko Itokawa” in the book, "Our Unpleasant Neighbor: Tragedy of a Female Believer Who was ‘Rescued’ from the Unification Church," and written by investigative reporter Kazuhiro Yonemoto.</p> <p>About thirty years ago, when Keiko was a college student, she was kidnapped by her father and confined to a "correctional facility" operated by a professional faith-breaker. Thirty-six days later, she was forced to send notification of her resignation from the church. The faith-breaker moved her into his own apartment, where he confined her for 65 days and raped her more times than she could count. Finally she escaped from the apartment and charged him with abduction, confinement, and rape. The case was investigated by police and prosecutors. However, fearful that her experience would be made public, she dropped charges before the case went to court. Her father, who had hired the faith-breaker and subsequently came to learn of the rape of his daughter, regretted so deeply what he had initiated that he eventually killed himself.</p>
12	Ms. Mariko Ono’s Case	<p>In November 1995, Mariko Ono visited her home and 17 or 18 members of her relatives kidnapped her. They confined her for one year and four months in a third floor apartment where several devices prevented her from opening the entrance door and windows. Minister Katsuhiko Nakamura visited the apartment frequently to attempt to convince her to quit the UC. Finally, he asked for Minister Mamoru Takazawa’s help, who is famous for his unique method of faith-breaking: using a knife. He began to visit the apartment regularly. One time he gave her a knife and said, “If you hate me, kill me and run away.” She protested by cutting her own leg. In October, 1996, she broke a window with her hand, cutting a two-inch gash in her wrist. Although she was bleeding profusely, they did not let her go to see a doctor. In March 1997, some UC members came to the apartment, took off the iron rail, broke the window and liberated her. She tried to report the case to the police through a lawyer, but they refused, saying, “If you accuse them, we will arrest those who broke in and rescued her.”</p>

13	Mrs. Akemi Suzuki's case	<p>Akemi Suzuki was kidnapped in Oct. 1997 by her family, and confined to a sixth floor apartment in Tokyo. After about 20 days of confinement, she escaped from the room to the next apartment through the balcony, borrowed the phone and called the police. They came to the apartment and she asked to be rescued. However, they brought her to the Fukagawa police station to see her family members: the kidnappers. The policemen sought to persuade her to go with them but she refused steadfastly. She explained that she was going to join in a church wedding and that her family members had confined her to prevent her from attending. However, the policemen rejected this and finally arrested her without a warrant. They then brought her against her will to an intersection and passed her to her family. Her family abducted her once again and confined her in a room in an inn for seven days. The owner of the inn said that he accepted them because the police requested it. She escaped from the window of the restroom and ran away through the bushes. She wrote a letter to protest the police's abuse of authority (Article 194 of the Criminal Law) and requested an apology. So far they have not responded .</p>
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