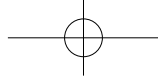


The *Asahi Shimbun* and the Comfort Women Issue

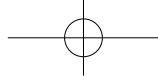
The Damage Done by One Newspaper

**The Independent Investigation Committee on
the *Asahi Shimbun*'s
Comfort Women Reporting**



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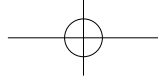
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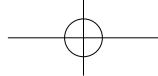
An incorrect view continues to grow internationally regarding the so-called “Comfort Women” issue, namely that the Imperial Japanese Army kidnapped 200,000 girls from Colonial Korea and brought them to the battle front to serve as “sex slaves.”

The main reason for this international misunderstanding is the fact that the *Asahi Shimbun*, one of Japan’s largest newspapers, launched a reporting campaign that was intentionally full of lies.

South Korean President Roh Tae-woo’s comments in 1993, “In actuality, a person associated with a public opinion organization raised this issue, igniting anti-Japanese feeling within our country, and inflaming the public,” were directed at Japanese media outlets, led in particular by the *Asahi Shimbun*.

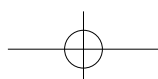
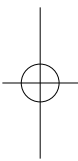
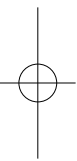
I have pointed out that the campaign by the *Asahi* since 1992 is full of mistakes, and in 2014 published two English language pamphlets on this issue.

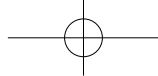
Finally, that same year, the president of the *Asahi Shimbun* admitted that there were some falsehoods in the paper’s reporting on the comfort women issue, and apologized. However, the *Asahi* admitted to only falsifying some of its reporting, and has not taken responsibility for the negative consequences internationally for its reporting. Moreover, the examination conducted by the “third-party panel,” established by *Asahi*, was incomplete and incorrect in the extreme.



As Japanese scholars who have long-studied this issue, we formed the “Independent Investigation Committee” and have autonomously examined the false reporting of the *Asahi Shimbun* as well as the international consequences of its reporting. We have translated here the principal parts of our report. We hope that everyone who is interested in the comfort women issue references this study.

Nishioka Tsutomu
Deputy Chairman, Independent Investigation Committee,
and Professor, Tokyo Christian University





Part 1

Overview: The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” and the *Asahi*’s Responsibility

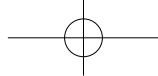
Nishioka Tsutomu (for the Committee)

Introduction

The *Asahi Shimbun* devoted special coverage in its August 5 and 6, 2014 issues to reviewing its earlier reporting on the comfort women issue. Although long overdue, such self-examination would have been laudable had it been undertaken with the intention of acknowledging and correcting the newspaper’s past mistakes. But its purpose was to instead rebut recent criticism of their coverage on the issue and provide excuses. This, combined with the absence of an apology and the paper’s misreporting of the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant, caused criticism of the newspaper to reach unprecedented levels. In response, the *Asahi*’s president held a new press conference where he apologized and requested that a “third-party panel” conduct an examination of the newspaper’s coverage of the issue.

The report of this seven-member “third-party panel” was released on December 22, 2014 and can be applauded for identifying some of the problems with the *Asahi*’s self-examination. It must be regarded as insufficient, however, as it provides no analysis of the background against which the newspaper’s flawed comfort women reporting occurred. The panel also failed to take a stance as to the influence of the *Asahi*’s reporting vis-à-vis the international community, choosing to instead list the differing views of its members side by side.

As such, we formed the Independent Investigation Committee on the *Asahi*



Shimbun's Comfort Women Reporting in December 2014 with the following members:

Nakanishi Terumasa	Professor Emeritus, Kyoto University (Chair)
Nishioka Tsutomu	Professor, Tokyo Christian University (Deputy Chair)
Araki Nobuko	Researcher on Korea
Shimada Yōichi	Professor, Fukui Prefectural University
Takahashi Shirō	Professor, Meisei University
Katsuoka Kanji	Research Center for Postwar Educational History of Japan, Meisei University (Executive Director)

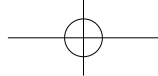
The committee has also received a great deal of support in its operations from the Japan Policy Institute (Itō Tetsuo, Director).

The Independent Investigation Committee investigated the problems with the *Asahi Shimbun* and “third-party panel” reviews as well as the influence that the *Asahi's* comfort women reporting has had outside of Japan.

Investigation Framework

The framework of the committee's investigation will be explained first. Many members of the committee have been critics of the *Asahi Shimbun* since 1992, having realized that its coverage of the comfort women issue incorporated many factual errors and damaged the reputation of both Japan and our forefathers. Criticism of the *Asahi's* reporting on this issue has also come from the *Sankei Shimbun* and *Yomiuri Shimbun*, two other Japanese national newspapers, since 1997 (for example, see the April 1, 1997 *Sankei* editorial “The *Asahi's* Bankrupt Comfort Women Reporting - No More ‘Coercive Recruitment’?” and the April 13, 1997 *Yomiuri* editorial “Fifty Years After the Constitution - The Spell of the ‘Inherently Evil Japanese’ Still Remains”).

The *Asahi's* special coverage was undertaken in response to this criticism for the purpose of justifying their past reporting as having been essentially accurate. Additionally, no existing critics of the *Asahi's* comfort women



coverage served on the “third-party panel.” To truly act as a “third-party,” the panel needed to listen to both the *Asahi* and the paper’s critics equally before reaching any conclusions. But it not only failed to include any experts who had criticized the paper, it also neglected to call on any to participate in its hearings. It is thus doubtful that this panel can truly be considered a “third-party.” We therefore wish to make clear from the start that the following investigation has been undertaken from the standpoint of those experts critical of the *Asahi Shimbun*’s comfort women reporting.

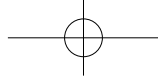
The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment”

The Independent Investigation Committee would like to first show what we perceive to have been the greatest problem with the *Asahi*’s comfort women reporting. The *Asahi Shimbun*’s condemnation of Japan over this issue began in its reporting in the 1980s and, from 1991 to January 1992, the paper repeatedly misreported on the testimony of Yoshida Seiji, former comfort women, and former members of the Women’s Volunteer Corps, as well as on documents that supposedly showed “military involvement.” As a result, the baseless propaganda that “the Japanese military coerced Korean women into becoming comfort women using the Women’s Volunteer Corps as a pretext” was disseminated, both within Japan and overseas.

We refer to this as the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.” The greatest failing of the *Asahi Shimbun* is that it took until August 2014 for the paper to clearly retract and correct this propaganda. It instead engaged in sophistry, claiming that “coercion in the broader sense” and “women’s human rights” were the actual issues involved, and thereby continued to damage the reputation of both Japan and our forefathers. We outline our specific issues with this propaganda below.

Establishment of the Propaganda with the January 12 Editorial

In a January 12, 1992 editorial entitled “Not Facing History,” the *Asahi* wrote about “the so-called Korean comfort women who, having either been persuaded using the name of the ‘Women’s Volunteer Corps’ or coercively recruited, were made to service soldiers and others at bases throughout Asia,



China, and the Pacific.” It was the only national newspaper to run an editorial including such a falsehood. The day before the editorial was published, the *Asahi* had reported in a large front page headline that “Documents Showing Military Involvement” had been discovered. The discovered documents were not actually evidence of the coercive recruitment of Korean comfort women; they were concerned with tightening up the controls meant to prevent private brokers from using kidnapping when recruiting comfort women from the Japanese mainland. Despite this, the *Asahi* included a glossary within the same article that read “with the beginning of the Pacific War, women, mainly Koreans, were coercively recruited under the pretext of joining the Women’s Volunteer Corps. They reportedly numbered 80,000 or 200,000”; between this and the following day’s editorial, the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” was established.

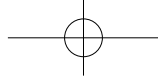
For example, Sawada Fujiko, a noted period novelist, contributed a short, emotional piece entitled “A Crime Against Humanity” to the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (December 21, 1991 evening edition) that echoed this “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” exactly. As Sawada lived in Kyoto, she had likely read the *Asahi*’s Osaka Head Office’s 1991 articles on comfort women.

Three former comfort women who had been dragged from the Korean Peninsula to the battlefield under the dignified name of the “Women’s Volunteer Corps” [...] have filed a suit at the Tokyo District Court seeking compensation. Japan is said to have coercively recruited 100 to 200 thousand women from the Korean Peninsula during the war, including girls as young as twelve. As a fellow woman, the physical and emotional suffering of these women is painfully clear to me.

The False Reports and Yoshida Testimony that Propped Up the Propaganda

The misreporting that supported this propaganda is analyzed in depth in Part2 of this report. An overview will be given here.

The *Asahi Shimbun* has, after thirty-two years, finally acknowledged that

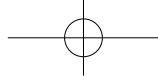


Yoshida Seiji's testimony was false and retracted eighteen articles (it was sixteen initially, but an additional two were added based on the third-party panel's findings). The *Asahi* first reported on Yoshida in the Kawasaki-Yokohama Eastern edition of its March 7, 1980 issue, although that article did not mention the recruitment of comfort women. The paper later reported in the September 2, 1982 issue of the Osaka edition that Yoshida had stated at a meeting in Osaka that "Korean comfort women were sent to battlefields as the 'Imperial Army Comfort Women's Volunteer Corps.'" This statement was the prototype of the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Articles on Yoshida appeared in the *Asahi* sporadically afterwards: three times in 1983 and once each in 1984, 1986, and 1990 (the 1984 and 1990 articles were in the Osaka edition). These articles focused on the impressment of laborers, however, and did not touch upon the recruitment of comfort women on Jeju Island, a subject that had been mentioned in the 1982 article and in a book Yoshida published in 1983. The content of these articles is so fantastic as to make one suspect that the paper must have had doubts about their veracity. Two articles appeared in 1991 that did deal with Yoshida's recruitment of comfort women in detail, however. These were part of the Osaka Head Office's "The Women's Pacific War" series which will be discussed later. The recruitment of comfort women was also taken up in a January 1992 editorial column, the author of which then wrote a column in March in which he scolded readers who had written the paper expressing their doubts concerning Yoshida's testimony. The *Asahi Shimbun* thus gave Yoshida's account of comfort women recruitment its complete endorsement. The 1991 Osaka reporting and the January 1992 editorial column became pillars helping to prop up the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Misreporting that Women were "Taken under the Women's Volunteer Corps as a Pretext"

Next the *Asahi's* misreporting regarding the "taking of comfort women using the Women Volunteers Corps as a pretext" will be reviewed. According to a study by Committee Member Katsuoka, the paper misreported this information in at least thirty-three articles. The first time was in the previously



mentioned September 2, 1982 article on Yoshida's lecture. Afterwards there was one article each in 1983, 1984, 1988, and 1989, twelve in 1991, thirteen in 1992, two in 1995, and one in 1997. The database records for sixteen of these thirty-three articles, nearly half, make no reference to this fact, thus showing the laxness of the *Asahi Shimbun* and third-party panel reviews.

What in particular should not be overlooked here is that three of these articles were explanatory notes providing descriptions for the terms used. Readers base their understanding of articles and editorials on such notes. Given that context, they bear a large responsibility for false reporting.

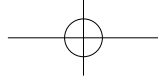
The first article was an explanation that appeared on December 24, 1983 under the title "Memo":

According to research performed by the Korean Red Cross and others, Japan forcibly took away 720,000 Koreans in the name of "impressment" and "recruiting" from 1939 to its defeat in 1945. As many as fifty to seventy thousand of these are said to have been comfort women sent to the frontline under the name of the "Women's Volunteer Corps." It's estimated that approximately one third of these died before the end of the war. Forty-three thousand Koreans currently remain on Sakhalin, of whom more than two thousand are believed to be "stateless," waiting and hoping to return home to Korea.

This was included in an article from Seoul reporting on Yoshida Seiji's visit to Korea and erection of a monument of apology.

The next was a December 10, 1991 explanation entitled "Military Comfort Women (Term)":

Popular term for women dispatched to the frontlines beginning shortly before the start of the Second World War under names such as the "Women's Volunteer Corps" and forced to prostitute themselves to Japanese military personnel at comfort stations. There has been no official investigation, but they are said to have numbered from 100 to 200,000.



As this practice occurred during Japan's colonization and control of the Korean Peninsula, the majority of these women are believed to have been Korean. The Japanese government has denied its involvement, stating that this practice "was unrelated to work carried out under the National Mobilization Law. The comfort women seem to have been taken by private operators." Former soldiers and comfort women in Korea and elsewhere have recently pressed for Japan to take responsibility, testifying that "the comfort stations were under military control."

Three former comfort women and thirty-one former soldiers and military-employed civilians filed the first [comfort women-related] lawsuit against the Japanese government in Tokyo District Court on the 6th, seeking twenty million yen per person in compensation. They assert that "as with the Nazi war crimes tried during the Nuremberg Trials, these were crimes against humanity under customary international law."

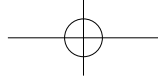
The third was on January 11, 1992, "Military Comfort Women (Term)":

As rapes by Japanese soldiers in China were frequent, comfort stations were established in the 1930s to curb anti-Japanese sentiment and prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. About eighty percent of these women were Korean according to testimony from former military personnel and doctors, beginning at the time of the system's creation. With the outbreak of the Pacific War, women, primarily Koreans, were forcibly taken under the name of the "Volunteer Corps." These women are said to have numbered 80,000 or 200,000.

The second and third of these explanatory notes became another pillar supporting the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Misreporting the Backgrounds of Former Comfort Women

Finally, let's take a look at Uemura Takashi's articles on former comfort



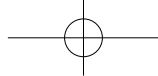
women. He wrote in an August 11, 1991 article that “one of the ‘Korean comfort women’ sent to the frontlines under the name of the ‘Women’s Volunteer Corps’ and forced to prostitute herself to Japanese soldiers is still alive and living in Seoul.” Uemura falsified this woman’s background to make it appear that she had been a victim of the “taken under the pretext of the Women’s Volunteer Corps” scheme that Yoshida Seiji had presented. Furthermore, even though the woman had repeatedly stated in legal petitions and interviews that her impoverished mother had sold her to a kisaeng house and that it had been the owner of that kisaeng house who had then taken her to a comfort station, that important fact was left out of Uemura’s December 25, 1991 article on her. The article, written after the women had filed a lawsuit, was meant to fabricate an image of the woman as a victim of coercive recruitment.

Married to the daughter of the one of the leaders of the group that had filed the former comfort women’s lawsuit, Uemura was an interested party in the suit. It is therefore suspected that he was using the paper in an attempt to make things more favorable for his mother-in-law’s lawsuit when he wrote these articles.

The Background for the *Asahi*’s Misreporting

Next, we’d like to think about the reason why the *Asahi*, as just discussed, focused on numerous pieces of misinformation. During the paper’s special coverage in August 2014, it retracted the articles that had been based on Yoshida Seiji’s testimony as false and corrected its prior confusion of the comfort women with the Women’s Volunteer Corps. As will be seen, however, it has attributed its mistakes to a dearth of historical resources and the poor state of research into the subject. Also, although the paper has acknowledged that there were insufficient supporting materials for its articles, it has not accepted that it bears any special responsibility, arguing that “similar mistakes were made at the time in articles carried by other members of the domestic and Korean media.”

In the early 1990s, scholarship on the issue had not progressed very far. We wrote our articles based on the testimony of former comfort



women and the few resources that were available. We know now that some of the articles we carried included factual errors. Although these mistakes were made at a point when we didn't have a complete picture of the issue, we regret that we published with insufficient supporting materials. Similar mistakes were made at the time in articles by other members of the domestic and Korean media. (Sugiura Nobuyuki, "Facing the Reality of the Comfort Women Issue Head On," *Asahi Shimbun*, August 5, 2014)

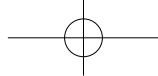
However, as already mentioned, the *Asahi Shimbun* was the only national paper to include the falsehood that comfort women had been "forcibly taken under the pretext of the Women's Volunteer Corps" in its editorials. Not only that, but it had also been the first to pick up Yoshida Seiji's testimony and was the paper that had run two major stories featuring it during its 1991 comfort women campaign. During the period from 1991 until its problematic January 1992 editorial, the *Asahi* ran the most articles on the comfort women issue of any domestic paper. The others (see following chart) were pulled along in the wake of the *Asahi's* campaign.

The chart below shows reporting on the comfort women issue from the late 1980s until the 1993 Kōno Statement by compiling the number of articles found when searching for "comfort women" utilizing the "@nifty Business' Newspaper/Magazine Article Metasearch Database."

Reporting on the Comfort Women Issue by the Japanese Mass Media

	1985-1989	1990	1991	1985-1991 Subtotal	1992	1993
Asahi	31 (74%)	23 (77%)	150 (60%)	204 (63%)	725 (42%)	424 (41%)
Yomiuri	11	2	23	36	293	200
Mainichi	0	5	66	71	567	297
NHK	0	0	13	13	145	108
Total	42	30	252	324	1730	1029

Looking at the articles in the database, the *Asahi Shimbun* published thirty-one of forty-two articles on the issue in the period from 1985 to 1989, three quarters of the total. It increased its coverage in 1990, publishing twenty-three articles, and then began its big campaign on the issue in 1991,



publishing 150 articles. It is readily apparent from the numbers that the other companies began following the *Asahi's* lead in 1992, suddenly giving wide coverage to the comfort women issue.

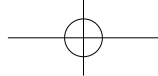
Of the 150 articles on the issue that the *Asahi* published in 1991, sixty were from its Osaka Head Office (this number includes those run in the Kansai Region edition). This accounts for forty percent of the articles published by the newspaper on the topic that year and a quarter of all articles in the entire country. Given that they published so many articles on the comfort women issue despite the fact that the *Asahi's* Osaka Head Office had neither foreign news nor political desks, it seems fair to say that this was the result of an intentional campaign. Furthermore, thirty-five of the sixty articles, more than half, were part of "The Women's Pacific War" series run by the Osaka Head Office.

The Osaka Head Office's Prejudice against Former Soldiers

It was the Osaka Head Office of the *Asahi Shimbun* that led the newspaper's comfort women campaign. In 1991 the office launched its large-scale "The Women's Pacific War" project in coordination with *Asahi* Broadcasting. During this project, it solicited messages from women about their wartime experiences and used them in a series of articles. As part of this series, the office twice provided detailed coverage of Yoshida Seiji's comfort women "slave raid" testimony ("Comfort Women Forced to Join with a Wooden Sword" on May 22 and "More Comfort Women Perpetrator Testimony - Nursing Child Torn from Mother" on October 10; both were attributed to staff writer Inoue Yūga). One of Uemura Takashi's two problematic articles involving fabricated backgrounds for former comfort women was also part of this series (on December 25).

This large-scale project was undertaken based on a highly biased conception of the military. Kitabatake Kiyoyasu, director of the Osaka Head Office's News Planning Office, was in charge of this project, so let's first introduce his mindset and establish his prejudice. Kitabatake wrote the following passage, in which he stated that former soldiers missed being able to trample over women's sexuality, in the final installment of "The Women's Pacific War" series (on December 31):

Aren't there, lurking somewhere in our society, people who secretly miss the peculiarities of wartime? Those who, when in the military - where the



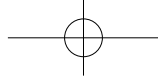
general social hierarchy did not apply - could strike others without any need for restraint. Those who, in wartime - when peacetime morality was ignored - could trample over women's sexuality. Those who, in a time of emergency - when everyday rights are ignored - could walk around with the privilege of satiating themselves. These people are out there, keeping themselves silent as they harbor their nostalgia for wartime.

Because of this kind of prejudice, Kitabatake used this series to give broad coverage to things like the testimony of Yoshida Seiji and the articles by Uemura Takashi on former comfort women which are criticized in detail in this report. It also meant that he was taken in by Yoshida's preposterous testimony - that mothers holding babies were taken away and raped, for example - and believed it was factual. In Kitabatake's view, many former soldiers were villains who had committed crimes like those of Yoshida Seiji but kept silent, secretly longing to be able to do so again.

Kitabatake's Role as an Editorial Writer

Kitabatake was made an editorial writer immediately after this project ended and thereby became able to play a role in leading not just the Osaka Head Office's coverage of the comfort woman issue in a mistaken direction but that of the newspaper as a whole. It's possible that it was Kitabatake who wrote the problematic January 12, 1992 editorial that was discussed earlier, and there is also testimony saying that, unsurprisingly, the January 11 article on the "military involvement documents" was assigned to the editor who had just transferred to Tokyo from the Osaka Head Office.

Kitabatake wrote a column on January 23, 1992 in which he greatly praised Yoshida Seiji. This was the first article in the Tokyo Head Office's edition of the paper to feature Yoshida's comfort women "slave raid" testimony and it caused many former soldiers to send letters in which they said that the column was "not believable." Kitabatake criticized these readers' warnings about the testimony, writing in a column that "there are things that we don't want to know, that we don't want to believe. But we can't pass on our history unless we fight against those thoughts."



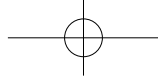
Criticism of the Propaganda and the Change of Argument

Beginning in 1992, the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” began to face fact-based criticism within Japan. But even when the *Asahi* learned that a 1993 government investigation had not found any documents showing coercive recruitment, it persevered in its propaganda, insisting, for example, that it was “unnatural to think that, despite the use of force to recruit labor from the Korean Peninsula, the comfort women alone were somehow spared this. It’s likely that many documents were incinerated after the defeat and it’s reasonable to think that they avoided making their use of ‘forcible recruitment’ explicit in documents” (March 20, 1993 editorial).

This criticism grew stronger from 1996 and developed into a contentious debate. As a result, the *Asahi* changed its argument in a feature article published on March 31, 1997. It introduced the concepts of “coercion in a strict sense” and “coercion in a broad sense” in this article, arguing that “coercive recruitment by the military” was not the real issue and that the comfort women system was clearly “coercive as a whole in its recruitment, transportation, and control.” The *Asahi* thus sought to escape responsibility for its emphatic distribution of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” both within Japan and abroad. It didn’t even retract the articles on Yoshida Seiji’s testimony, which were by then being cited in Korean government and United Nations reports as evidence of “coercive recruitment by the military.”

The Propaganda Continued to Spread in the International Community

Although the coercive recruitment of comfort women by the Japanese military theory has been largely discredited within Japan since 1997, the *Asahi* has not acknowledged the errors in its propaganda and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has avoided making a fact-based counterargument. As a result, the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has actually spread further in the international community and continued to damage the reputation of Japan and our forefathers.



Although it has admitted that some of its reporting was mistaken, the *Asahi* has asserted, including in its August 2014 special coverage of the issue, that the paper's coverage had been essentially correct. This was because the essence of the issue was that "as comfort women, their freedom was stolen and their dignity as women was trampled upon" and that the paper's errors were due to gaps in contemporary scholarship on the issue and sources that had lied to them.

The third-party panel sharply noted in its report that the *Asahi* had in 1997 "secretly changed its argument" ... to relying on the Kōno Statement and emphasizing the existence of 'coercion in a broad sense.' It criticized limiting the concept of 'coercion' to 'coercion in a strict sense' as if it were neutral on the question, not acknowledging that it itself had widely reported the existence of 'coercion in a strict sense' in the past."

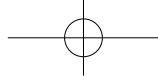
But when *Asahi Shimbun* President Watanabe Masataka was repeatedly asked by reporters at a press conference following the release of the third-party panel's report whether he agreed that the *Asahi* had "secretly changed its argument," he avoided giving a clear answer, repeating only that he "took the criticism seriously." The third-party panel's report also did not seek to hold anyone responsible for the "secret change of argument."

More "Argument Changing" in the *Asahi*'s Special Coverage

In fact, the *Asahi* ran a front page article attributed to Sugiura Nobuyuki and entitled "Facing the Reality of the Comfort Women Issue Head On" during its August 5, 2014 special coverage. As seen from the following excerpt, the paper once again put forth an argument about the true nature of the issue, attempting to subtly change its argument:

The fact that there were women during the war who were forced to become the sexual partners of Japanese soldiers cannot be erased. The heart of the issue is that, as comfort women, their freedom was stolen and their dignity as women was trampled upon.

The rapes committed by paramilitary forces during the Bosnian War in the 1990s drew the attention of the international community. The



question of how to consider wartime acts of sexual violence against women is now being taken up internationally in terms of women's human rights, and the comfort women issue is connected to this contemporary subject.

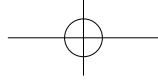
What readers want from newspapers is an accurate account of the facts, not theories about what something's true nature is. But the *Asahi* was defiant towards the critics who argued against its factual errors, saying that they didn't really understand the issue.

What cannot be overlooked is that the Sugiura article presented the comfort women issue as one connected to the "rapes committed by paramilitaries during the Bosnian War." The comfort women issue is completely different from the Bosnian rapes. Those took place during a process of ethnic cleansing. Seeing the two discussed in the same context makes one wonder just how much damage, exactly, the *Asahi* wishes to do to Japan's reputation.

In its assessment of this article by Sugiura, the third-party panel offered no criticism of its "change of argument." Instead, it assessed the article as one that had been intended to convey the "*Asahi Shimbun's* sincerity" but which had drawn criticism because of its flawed logical structure. The investigation was undeniably far too lenient on the *Asahi*.

Worsening International Opinion and the *Asahi's* Responsibility

As is explored in detail in this report, Korean and American newspapers have come to give the comfort women issue extensive coverage since the *Asahi's* "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment," coverage that is exactly in line with the propaganda that the *Asahi* emphasized in the past. Part 2 of this report discusses how, even though the *Asahi's* introduced the "coercion in a broad sense" concept in 1997, a *de facto* acknowledgement that the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" had been false, Korean and American newspapers have not broken away from the non-factual stereotype created in January 1992. The situation has become so poor that the propaganda is incorporated unchanged into the inscriptions on the comfort women statues that have been erected in various parts of America



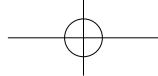
and the content of American history textbooks, causing emotional suffering for many Japanese in America. The UN Coomaraswamy Report, the US Congressional resolution, and the Constitutional Court of Korea's finding of unconstitutionality all precisely reflect the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" as well.

Yet neither the *Asahi's* special coverage nor the third-party panel's report directly addressed the issue of how much negative influence the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" has had. Since the third-party panel sharply criticized the *Asahi's* "secret change of argument," it should have also emphasized that it was therefore the *Asahi's* obligation to inform the international community that its propaganda had not been factual. It did nothing of the kind, however. Instead, the third-party panel's report protected the *Asahi*, acting as if the popular efforts to engage in fact-based arguments against the paper's propaganda had been the actual cause of the worsened situation. This in particular was one of the major flaws in the third-party panel's report.

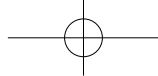
The Shortcomings of the Third-Party Panel, as Understood From an Analysis of Three Major US Papers

As discussed in detail in Part 2 of this report, the Independent Investigation Committee read through 520 comfort women-related articles from three major American newspapers (the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*, dated 1980-2014) and 541 from seven major Korean newspapers (the *Chosun Ilbo*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, *Dong-a Ilbo*, *Hankook Ilbo*, *Seoul Shinmun*, *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, and *Hankyoreh*, dated August 1, 1991-January 31, 1992) to examine the influence of the *Asahi Shimbun's* reporting on the comfort women issue. A major failing of the third-party panel's report was that they performed only numerical analysis of these articles and did not analyze their content, as we have in this report.

As a result of our analysis of the American newspapers, we've determined the following important facts went unacknowledged by the *Asahi Shimbun* and the third-party panel:



1. The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” had an unquestionably major influence on American newspapers. This can be stated because all sizeable articles on the comfort women issue in the three major papers appeared shortly after the *Asahi*’s articles. Put another way, prior to the *Asahi*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment,” the three major American papers had largely ignored the issue and not written about it.
2. Regarding the influence of the *Asahi Shimbun*’s repeated coverage of Yoshida’s testimony and its failure to retract those articles after learning that the testimony was false, Hayashi Kaori wrote in the third-party panel’s report that, based on the results of a keyword search for “Seiji Yoshida,” “it can be confirmed that Yoshida Seiji was only referenced to an extremely limited degree in each country’s major newspapers.” There are many articles that reference or are clearly dependent on his testimony, however, even if they didn’t use his name. Had the *Asahi* retracted the Yoshida testimony early on, this negative influence could have been prevented. Articles influenced by Yoshida’s testimony were still appearing until recently (*New York Times*, May 13, 1996 and May 15, 1996; *Washington Post*, May 31, 2014).
3. The August 4, 1993 Kōno Statement was reported in American papers as an official Japanese admission that it had forcibly recruited and sexually enslaved the comfort women.
4. American papers criticized the approach of Japanese politicians such as Abe Shinzō towards the North Korean abduction issue as hypocritical on the basis of their inaccurate belief that Japan had coerced and sexually enslaved the comfort women. The negative influence of the *Asahi*’s coverage of the comfort women issue thus extended to the North Korean abduction issue as well.
5. Hatano Sumio asserted in the third-party panel’s report that the placement of an advertisement in the *Washington Post* by Japanese volunteers was “the greatest factor behind the sudden increase in the number of congressmen in favor” of the US House of Representatives’ resolution on



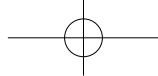
the comfort women, but there is extremely little evidence supporting this. No articles reporting any congressional opposition to the advertisement were found in our analysis of the three newspapers. Hatano and Hayashi criticize the words and actions of Abe and other Japanese conservatives as having increased criticism of Japan over the comfort women issue, but their evidence is flimsy.

6. Hayashi asserts that while the Abe government views the comfort women as a “wartime version of the prewar Japanese public prostitution system,” “much of the Western media’s reporting on the comfort woman issue views it as a universal or humanitarian ‘women’s human rights issue.’” But none of the articles in the three American papers dealing with the comfort women issue treated it as having been a “common issue for modern states in Europe, America, and Asia, not just Japan.” The majority of articles treated the comfort women system as a uniquely Japanese one.

The *Asahi*’s Responsibility Made Clear From Analysis of the Major Korean Newspapers

The following facts were also determined from our analysis of the Korean newspapers:

1. The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” also influenced Korea. There, the comfort women issue was perceived as having been raised by Japan. Korean newspapers began intensely covering the comfort women issue in January 1992. The trigger for this interest was a January 14 Korean article that, inspired by the January 11 *Asahi* article on the discovered “military involvement” documents, misreported that “even 12-year old school girls were made into comfort women.”
2. In January 1992, Korean papers put forward testimony, including that of Yoshida Seiji and Kim Hak-sun, as evidence of “coercive recruitment.”
3. The *Asahi*’s evidence for the comfort women issue is still being used in Korea. The military involvement documents and Yoshida testimony

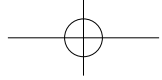


reported by the *Asahi Shimbun* were raised as evidence for coercive recruitment in an August 30, 2012 *Chosun Ilbo* editorial.

4. The “testimony” of Yoshida Seiji, which the *Asahi* extensively covered but did not retract until 2014, established a fixed image of the comfort women among Koreans and became important substantiating evidence for the coercive recruitment of the comfort women.
5. Korea’s nationally designated history textbooks began including the false statement that comfort women “were taken under the name of the Volunteer Corps” in 1997, five years after the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.” The error of viewing comfort women and the Volunteer Corps as the same thing was corrected in middle school textbooks in 2002, but there are still many non-factual descriptions in the government-screened high school textbooks.
6. The Constitutional Court of Korea’s 2011 decision that found the Korean government’s lack of diplomatic negotiations seeking compensation for the former comfort women unconstitutional was based upon their conception that “the Japanese military’s comfort women victims’ were forcibly mobilized by the Japanese Empire, suffered sexual abuse, and forced to live as comfort women” (from the text of the ruling). The image of coercive recruitment and sexual slavery created by the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” provided the premise upon which the court’s ruling of unconstitutionality rested.

Widening Damage in North America

The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has had an immense influence on major media outlets in America and Korea, and there are many who still believe that that propaganda was factual. As a result, the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has influenced the inscriptions found on the plaques accompanying the comfort women statues being erected across the United States and the wording of American history textbooks. The situation has become so negative as to even cause emotional suffering for Japanese living there. Japanese who have suffered specific harm



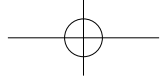
in the US have individually sued the *Asahi Shimbun* for its false reports about the comfort women.

The primarily Korean American-led movement to erect comfort women statues and monuments in America began around 2009; eight have been created as of February 2015:

1. October 23, 2010
Palisades Park Public Library, Bergen County, New Jersey: Memorial
2. June 16, 2012
Eisenhower Park, Nassau County, New York: Memorial
(two additional memorials were added to the same location in 2014)
3. December 1, 2012
Garden Grove, Orange County, California: Memorial
4. May 8, 2013
Hackensack Municipal Court, Bergen County, New Jersey: Memorial
5. July 30, 2013
Glendale Central Library, Los Angeles County, California: Statue
6. May 30, 2014
Fairfax County Government Center, Virginia: Memorial
7. August 4, 2014
Union City, New Jersey: Memorial
8. August 16, 2014
Southfield Korean American Cultural Center, Detroit, Michigan: Statue

These memorials share certain phrases: “taken (abducted) by Imperial Japanese Forces...,” “more than 200,000...,” and “sexual slavery....” All of these are fabrications ungrounded in historical fact and their presence reflect the marked influence the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has had.

While the *Asahi* has given coverage to Japanese Americans protesting the trend towards comfort women memorials and statues across America and has sympathized with Japanese Americans who have bitter memories of their wartime internment, viewing them as “similar victims of war,” they have also run articles empathizing with the creation of comfort women memorials and



statues, thus continuing to spread the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.”

The influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has also extended to American history textbooks. The high school world history textbook *Traditions & Encounters* (McGraw-Hill) includes the following startling description of the comfort women:

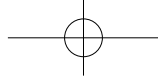
The Japanese army forcibly recruited, conscripted, and dragooned as many as two hundred thousand women age fourteen to twenty to serve in military brothels, called “comfort houses” or “consolation centers.” The army presented the women as a gift from the emperor, and the women came from Japanese colonies such as Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria and from occupied territories in the Philippines and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The majority of the women came from Korea and China.

Once forced into this imperial prostitution service, the “comfort women” catered to between twenty and thirty men each day. Stationed in war zones, the women often confronted the same risks as soldiers, and many became casualties of war. Others were killed by Japanese soldiers, especially if they tried to escape or contracted venereal diseases. At the end of the war, soldiers massacred large numbers of comfort women to cover up the operation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to have McGraw-Hill and the authors correct this description but were refused. Nineteen American historians then released a joint statement criticizing the Japanese government.

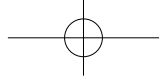
Bullying of young Japanese residing in America has become widespread, affecting children ranging from six or seven years old to high school students. There have been more than ten such cases reported in California and New Jersey alone.

Conclusions of the Independent Investigation Committee’s Report



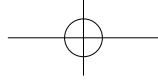
Finally, to summarize this report's conclusions:

1. The *Asahi Shimbun* began reporting on the comfort women issue in the 1980s and embarked on a major push in 1991, largely out of its Osaka Head Office. The rest of the Japanese mass media gradually joined in, following the *Asahi's* lead.
2. This reporting contained numerous factual errors, such as false testimony of comfort women slave raids, misinformation concerning the Women's Volunteer Corps, distortion of the personal histories of former comfort women, and image manipulation in articles concerning discovered documents. There were also issues of journalistic ethics, such as having a party involved in a court case report on it.
3. Lack of scholarship, the explanation put forward by the *Asahi*, was not the sole reason for these numerous factual errors. It's undeniable that the *Asahi's* extremely prejudiced view of the prewar Japanese military played a major role. This prejudice was disseminated through the article series that the Osaka Head Office ran in 1991 and the Tokyo Head Office also adopted this tone from January 1992 on.
4. As a result, the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment," containing the idea that "the Japanese military coerced Korean women into becoming comfort women using the Women's Volunteer Corps as a pretext," was completed around January 12, 1992. Korean and American newspapers were taken in by this propaganda and energetically reported the "coercive recruitment of comfort women" beginning in January 1992. A Korean newspaper misreported on January 14 that "a 12-year old school girl was made a comfort woman," establishing such propaganda in that country.
5. Criticism within Japan of the *Asahi's* reporting began in 1992 and the *Sankei* and *Yomiuri* newspapers joined this effort in 1996, turning the issue into a major controversy. It was established as a result that the *Asahi's* propaganda was not true. The *Asahi* developed a new argument in March 1997 that the true nature of the comfort women issue was not



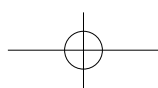
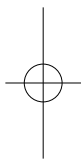
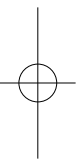
coercive recruitment but rather “coercion in a broad sense,” however, and avoided taking responsibility for spreading the paper’s original 1992 propaganda.

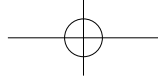
6. Due to the *Asahi*’s failure to retract or correct its factually incorrect articles until 2014 and the lack of a fact-based counterargument from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, belief in the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” is still widespread in the international community, most notably in Korea and America. In America, multiple comfort women memorials have been established and the propaganda is incorporated unchanged into history textbooks. Until recently, Yoshida Seiji’s testimony was accepted in Korea as evidence of coercive recruitment.
7. The *Asahi Shimbun* did not take responsibility for spreading the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” at home and abroad in its August 2014 special coverage. Despite the fact that its propaganda is even now spreading throughout the world, damaging Japan’s reputation, the third-party panel also engaged in arguments that sidestepped the *Asahi*’s responsibility. The *Asahi* and the third-party panel emphasized that the comfort women issue is considered an issue of women’s human rights internationally, but there is no sign of that in major American newspapers, where most articles treat the comfort women system as a “uniquely Japanese one.”
8. The third-party panel did touch on the heart of the matter when it criticized the *Asahi*’s 1997 assertions about broad coercion as the paper “secretly changing its argument,” however. We experts who criticize the *Asahi* hold the same opinion. But the *Asahi* merely “took the criticism seriously”; it did not actually accept it.
9. We, the Independent Investigation Committee, want to know what kind of processes resulted in the *Asahi*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” and 1997 “change of argument.” We want the real names of the reporters, editors, department heads, and president involved and their responsibility to be made clear. We also want the *Asahi* to bear an



appropriate obligation to eliminate the propaganda widespread within the international community.

10. We also seek to have the Japanese government make factual and polite counterarguments in a systematic and continuous manner against the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” that has been dispersed throughout the international community. We want a specialized unit within the government to be established for this purpose, as well as a council of intellectuals to aggregate the opinion of non-governmental experts.





Part 2

The International Influence of the *Asahi Shimbun's* Reporting on the Comfort Women Issue

Chapter 1

The Influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” on American Newspapers

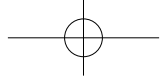
Shimada Yōichi (for the committee)

Introduction

This chapter examines how the comfort women issue was covered in American newspapers and what role the *Asahi Shimbun's* reporting played in that coverage.

The subject of this study is three newspapers: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*. While these are not the only influential American newspapers, our investigation was limited to these three due to time constraints.

We searched for applicable articles in the online database service LexisNexis using the keyword “comfort women” and examined these articles’ content. About 520 articles, equivalent to about 1,500 A4-sized pages, were found in the three papers for the time period covered by the study (1980 to December 31, 2014).



The longest report concerning the international influence of the *Asahi Shimbun*'s coverage of the comfort women included in the report of the *Asahi*'s "third-party panel" was submitted by Hayashi Kaori. Hatano Sumio, Kitaoka Shin'ichi, and Okamoto Yukio also added their individual views.

Asahi Shimbun President Watanabe Masataka stated at a press conference held on December 26 after he was presented with the report of the "third-party panel" that he had "heard a variety of comments on the influence on the international community, from those who concluded that it had exerted a certain degree of influence to those who held that any influence was extremely limited. This issue is, as would be expected, an extremely difficult one."

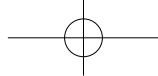
His reference here to "extremely limited" influence refers to the opinion given by Hayashi, who had concluded that "there was little influence" and that any influence that did exist was "limited."

Hayashi stated that she had performed her investigation using "primarily quantitative means," which she defined as "using numbers to describe the phenomenon of repeated references to or appearances of certain individuals and phrases in articles."

She used fifteen newspapers from Britain, America, Germany, France, and South Korea as the subject of her study. The four American papers she included were the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. These were appropriate choices.

Based on her study of "information sources by country," Hayashi states that "it could be determined that information sources from Japan were extremely common in all of these papers" and that "information sources from Japan on the comfort women issue clearly drew more attention than those from Korea... looked at by country, the primary arena for comfort women reporting was, viewed generally, Japan. Japan had a strong presence."

Her study results also showed that, of the Japanese media, "the *Asahi*



Shimbun was, on the whole, the most referenced on the issues of postwar Japan's perception of history and compensation."

In other words, her "quantitative means" showed that the "presence" of Japan was relatively large in foreign media reporting on the comfort women and that the "presence" of the *Asahi Shimbun* was relatively large within that.

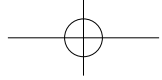
Incidentally, Hayashi's report also concluded that the *Asahi's* reporting had had "little influence" internationally. Why was this?

We believe that this conclusion derives from methodological confusion and a prioritization of ideology on her part. This will be described in detail later; we would like to first continue with our examination of the *Asahi's* influence on American newspapers, including the problems of the report of the "third-party panel." All italics in this chapter have been added by the author for emphasis.

The Influence of the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" on American Newspapers

On January 11, 1992, the *Asahi Shimbun* gave significant coverage to the news that Chūō University Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki had discovered documents at the Defense Agency Library which showed "military involvement" in the comfort stations. Although nothing in the documents showed that coercive recruitment had taken place, the *Asahi* manufactured, through headlines, explanatory glosses, and editorials, the impression that documents had been found that proved the accuracy of past accusations of coercive recruitment. In other words, it developed its pages with the intention of fostering misconceptions. This is what this report refers to as the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment." The *Asahi* "third-party panel" also pointed out the propagandistic character of the *Asahi's* coverage, noting that the paper, "aware that the prime minister would soon be visiting South Korea, clearly undertook to make the comfort women a political issue [between the two countries]."

The "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" had, without



question, a major effect on American newspapers. This can be stated because it was only after that coverage that the three major newspapers ran articles specifically on the comfort women. Said another way, the three American newspapers in this study had essentially ignored the issue; they had not reported on it prior to the *Asahi's* "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

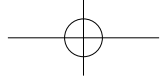
The *New York Times* ran a major story on the comfort women for the first time two days later on January 13. The article, "Japan Admits Army Forced Koreans to Work in Brothels," was written by David E. Sanger, who would frequently write articles on the subject afterwards.

The article stated that "over the weekend *Asahi Shimbun*, one of Japan's largest newspapers, reported that army documents found in the library of Japan's Defense Agency indicated that the military had played a large role in operating what were euphemistically called 'comfort stations.'" It also said that "the vast majority of the women were forcibly taken to Japanese-occupied China and Southeast Asia from Korea" and that "the question of Japan's refusal to acknowledge official involvement in the forced prostitution has been a continual irritant in Japanese relations with South Korea and, to a lesser degree, with China. Many of the women were killed or brutally beaten."

In other words, Yoshimi's "discovery" was being reported as evidence of the Japanese military's involvement in extremely violent "forced prostitution." The article explicitly adopted the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Also, Sanger mistakenly used the name "Yoshiaki Yoshida" in this article. This could perhaps be considered a Freudian slip considering the *Asahi's* similar use of Yoshimi Yoshiaki and Yoshida Seiji.

Another *New York Times* article by Sanger dated January 27 (with a Japan dateline) stated that "100,000 to 200,000 women were lured or dragged to Japanese battlefronts across Asia. Most were children and teen-agers from Korea." The article was littered with dramatic portrayals of the situation,



stating that “no one in the Foreign Ministry, though was ready for “Yoshiaki Yoshimi” and that the documents that he had given to “the *Asahi Shimbun*, one of Japan’s largest dailies, just before Mr. Miyazawa traveled to South Korea” had caused “the Government’s arguments” to collapse “almost overnight.”

The *Washington Post*’s first article specifically on the comfort women was dated January 16 and entitled “War Atrocities Overshadow Visit to Seoul.” It was, as one would expect, influenced by the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.”

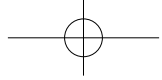
This article, which began by claiming that “the Korean people’s animosity towards Japan ... has been heightened in recent weeks by new revelations about one of Japan’s ugliest World War II atrocities: the enslavement of the ‘comfort women,’” made its origin in the *Asahi*’s coverage clear by reporting that “just last weekend, a Japanese historian made public documents in Tokyo that seem to prove that the comfort women program was conceived and run by the Japanese military government.”

The article also said that Prime Minister Miyazawa had “formally apologized to the Korean people for Japan’s enslavement of the women.” The Miyazawa government had thus acted just as the *Asahi* had wanted it to and thereby spread misconceptions overseas.

Two days later, the *Washington Post* stated in the article “‘Comfort Women’: A Barbaric Act” that “this WASN’T a case of atrocities being committed on the watch of an unsuspecting or negligent military command during a time of war,” and that the “enslavement” and “forced prostitution” of Korean women had been the result of systematic actions by the Japanese military.

In other words, the comfort women issue was being taken as something of a completely different nature from the sex crimes that occur in any country and age on the level of the individual soldier. It was regarded as a special, organized war crime committed by the Japan of the Second World War.

The same article attributes the changing comfort women situation to “the



filing of a class-action lawsuit by a few of the surviving victims,” “Prime Minister Miyazawa’s current and long-sought visit to Korea,” and “the discovery of incriminating military records by a Japanese historian last weekend.”

The *Los Angeles Times*’ first article specifically on the comfort women was an Associated Press wire report, “Hundreds in Seoul Protest Over Visit by Japanese Leader,” dated January 15, 1992, a few days after the *Asahi*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” was published.

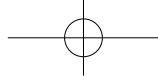
The protesters were described in the article as mostly “relatives of Koreans killed or forced to serve as prostitutes for Japanese soldiers,” and it noted that “Japan on Monday made its first formal apology to South Korea for the army’s role in rounding up the tens of thousands of ‘comfort women.’”

The article “Ex-‘Comfort Girls’ End Silence on War Horrors” that appeared three months later on April 25 quoted a Korean activist as saying that “the issue had been all but buried, until incriminating military records became public earlier this year” and stated that “shortly after the New Year’s holiday, Japanese government officials acknowledged that an undetermined number of Korean women were abducted from their homeland and forced to serve Japanese troops.”

As in the already mentioned *Washington Post* article, the phrase “incriminating military records” was used. This can be regarded as a faithful reflection of the *Asahi*’s narrative.

We can also see here how the synergy between the *Asahi*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” and the apologetic diplomacy of the Miyazawa government and the Foreign Ministry caused the distortion of history to spread further.

A July 8 article titled “One Step Further” in the *Los Angeles Times* states that “revelations by a Japanese historian who found in government and army files the documentary evidence that supports recent public claims by a number of Korean women that they had been forced to be sex slaves” had been a turning



point, showing how after six months the effects of the *Asahi*'s "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" had taken hold.

On the website of the "Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues" (this group is largely Korean-American based but also has close ties to the Chinese anti-Japanese organization "Global Alliance For Preserving the History of WWII in Asia"), a leader of the anti-Japanese campaign in the American capital of Washington, D.C., the *Asahi Shimbun* is mentioned in a timeline of important events under the date January 1992 and its "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" is given special mention: "The '*Asahi Shimbun*' publishes the Japanese archive documents obtained by Professor Yoshimi, a well-known Japanese historian and researcher, establishing the direct role of the Japanese military in maintaining a huge network of military brothels known as 'Comfort Houses.'"

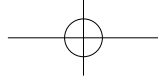
In other words, an anti-Japanese organization has acknowledged the *Asahi Shimbun*'s contribution to the American anti-Japanese movement.

Regarding the Yoshida testimony, the timeline also references an article in the *Hokkaidō Shimbun* under the date November 1991. This entry includes the name "Yoshida Seiji" and states that the wartime employment of the comfort women was done through "force and deceit": "*Yoshida Seiji*, a Japanese ex-labor mobilization director of Yamaguchi Prefecture confirms in the newspaper '*Hokkaido Shimbun*' that he took part in the wartime employment, *by force and deceit*, of Comfort Women by the Japanese military."

The *Asahi* thus might not be the "principal culprit" behind the Washington anti-Japanese organization learning of the Yoshida testimony.

However, the January 1992 "Big Bang" of the comfort women issue (to use the words of Hata Ikuhiko) was clearly perpetrated exclusively by the *Asahi*. And as we have already seen, it was only after this that the Yoshida testimony was taken up by American newspapers.

Hatano Sumio made the following point concerning the influence of the *Asahi*'s "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" in the report



of the “third-party panel”: “On January 13, the *Japan Times* was the first English-language newspaper to state that ‘some 100,000 to 200,000 women, mostly from Korea, were forced into prostitution for Japanese soldiers during World War II.’ The same paper continually reported that the comfort women had been ‘sex slaves.’”

Related to this point, the English-language edition of *Kyodo News* bears large responsibility for continuing to use, even now, the term “sex slave” for the comfort women in the reports it issues to the world. A considerable amount of the *Japan Times*’ articles related to the comfort women have been based on Kyodo reports.

The Testimony of Yoshida Seiji and its International Impact

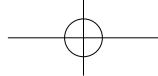
In the report of the “third-party panel,” Hayashi Kaori makes the following quantitative analysis of the *Asahi Shimbun*’s repeated coverage of the Yoshida testimony and the testimony’s continuing influence even after having been recognized as false:

Searching for the keyword “Seiji Yoshida” returned seven results, six of which were articles. As three of these concerned the *Asahi Shimbun*’s retraction of the Yoshida testimony, however, there were only three related to the formation of the image of the comfort women issue in the past... In conclusion, there were only extremely limited references to Yoshida Seiji in each country’s major newspapers.

As can easily be imagined, however, there were many articles that, even if they did not include the name “Seiji Yoshida,” were clearly either based on his testimony or referred to it.

Let’s look at the July 10, 1992 *Washington Post* article, “New Clash Over ‘Comfort Women,’” by Paul Blustein as an example. This was written several days after Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō Kōichi made a second apology on July 6.

Although Katō acknowledged government “involvement” in that it provided



facilities and regulations for comfort stations and expressed “deep remorse,” he took the position that there was no documentary proof of coercion in the recruitment of the comfort women.

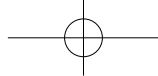
The article first introduced the opinion of unspecified “historians” as the mainstream view (this is a frequently seen pattern in American papers even today), stating that “historians believe that as many as 200,000 comfort women were mobilized and that many of them died of disease or were killed during the war” and then introduced the following testimony: “One former Imperial Army soldier has stated that he participated in dawn raids on Korean villages, dragging young women away from their screaming children and loading them into trucks.”

Although the name “Yoshida” is absent, this statement is clearly based on the Yoshida testimony. Because Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō had not acknowledged that coercive recruitment took place, the Yoshida testimony was brought up in an attempt to apply further pressure onto the Japanese government to make such an admission.

The article then continues, citing an *Asahi* editorial: “*Asahi Shimbun*, the nation’s second-largest daily newspaper, was among those attacking the government this week for adopting what it called a ‘half-hearted’ approach. ‘Is [the government] unwilling to concede to is “coercive action,” though not to its “involvement”?’ the paper wrote.”

Even the “third-party panel” was critical of this *Asahi* editorial. The following is from their report:

The *Asahi Shimbun*’s editorial on Katō’s statement (“Time to Come to Grips with Overcoming the Past,” July 8, 1992) questioned *the government’s timid approach of acknowledging “involvement” but not “coercion,”* asking “Why does the government use vague terms like ‘involvement’? Judging from the released documents, the contemporary government and military have to be considered as having had *de facto* management and control. Wouldn’t the upright approach be to acknowledge that fact directly?” It was also skeptical of whether the



government investigation into the recruitment of the comfort women's finding that "there are no documents showing coercive recruitment," was really true... The *Asahi Shimbun* thus repeatedly reported on this issue in a way that made *the issue of coercion and duress at the time of recruitment (coercion in the narrow sense)* the focus of the comfort women issue.

The author of the *Washington Post* article mentioned above made his argument in a manner that was clearly based on the *Asahi* editorial. The Yoshida testimony, which most likely couldn't have been used had it been disowned by the *Asahi*, was taken to be evidence of coercive recruitment.

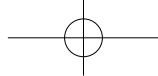
It would seem to be a natural summary of the above to say that American newspapers, repeatedly influenced by the *Asahi's* regularly "inflammatory" coverage, ran articles that took coercive recruitment to be factual and pressed the Japanese government to similarly concede that.

Of the American newspaper articles surveyed in this study, the August 8 article entitled "Japanese Veteran Presses Wartime-Brothel Issue" by David E. Sanger, which ran in the *New York Times* a month after the aforementioned *Asahi* editorial, included the most detailed coverage of the Yoshida testimony.

The article begins by introducing Yoshida Seiji as "a nightmare for the Japanese Government: a self-described former war criminal eager to confess in front of the television cameras" and quotes him as saying that he "grabbed screaming infants from the women's arms before forcing the women into trucks" and that the comfort women "may [have been] the worst abuse of human rights in Asia in this century."

It also adds an explanation that "apart from [elderly Korean women's] accounts, Mr. Yoshida's memoirs are the most potent bit of testimony yet that Japan not only ran the brothels but that it also organized kidnapping squads."

The article continues, referring to those who criticize Yoshida. It introduces the results of the Korean newspaper investigation that found no one on Jeju Island who remembered any "sweeps" to collect women as well as Hata



Ikuhiko's counterarguments. It also applies reservations to these, however, noting the social stigma of the comfort women's existence and questioning how much trust should be placed on the locals' memories.

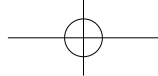
After bringing up the testimony of Roh Chung Cha, who claims to have been forced into a truck by seven Japanese soldiers at the age of sixteen, the article ends with Hata's comments: "I don't believe the story," said Mr. Hata, asserting that few soldiers were in Ms. Roh's part of Korea at that time. "And no one can say, 'I was a victim of Yoshida.'"

The article also suggests that the Yoshida testimony was significant in drawing the interest of American newspaper reporters to the comfort women issue when it notes that "stories like Mr. Yoshida's keep the issue on the front pages." When there is testimony (confessions) from the perpetrators as well as the victims, it provides third parties with a strong impression of guilt. The importance of testimony like Yoshida's is almost self-evident.

Hayashi has the following to say about this *New York Times* article: "Although Yoshida is presented as a witness to the 'forced coercion' of the comfort women, the second half of the article presents doubts about the trustworthiness of Yoshida's testimony, including counterarguments from the modern historian Hata Ikuhiko. *This sharply contrasts with the Asahi Shimbun, who during this same period was treating the Yoshida testimony as credible.*" (Report, 76)

She adds in a footnote: "The *Asahi Shimbun* was still reporting Yoshida Seiji's statements verbatim at this time. Excluding anonymous references to Yoshida and those in letters from readers, the paper would continue to report on Yoshida until August 13, 1992 without making it clear that there were doubts about his statements."

This analysis is on the mark. Although there was a visible tendency in the American newspapers to dramatize articles due to the *Asahi's* inflammatory coverage, the articles were often more balanced in terms of their content than those in the *Asahi* itself.



Although outside the scope of Hayashi's investigation, an August 5, 1993 article in the *Los Angeles Times* entitled "Japan Admits That WWII Sex Slaves Were Coerced" also used Yoshida's name and testimony: "Although the flesh traders initially used false job advertisements as lures, starting in 1943 they began slave hunts when women could no longer be tricked, according to one of the recruiters, Seiji Yoshida."

This article was written in response to the Kōno Statement issued that same day. Using the Yoshida testimony, it exacerbated the misconceptions concerning coercive recruitment produced by that statement.

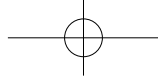
Had the *Asahi* retracted its articles related to Yoshida prior to this point, its spread would have at least been reduced.

Hicks' Book

Hayashi also performed quantitative analysis using the keyword "George Hicks." An Australian journalist, Hicks is the author of *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War*, which was published in 1995. Hayashi is correct in her view that the book "was very influential, if only just for being published in the mid-90s during a time when English-language materials were scarce. Since the book made relatively wide use of the Yoshida testimony, it is viewed as problematic within Japan." This book was also an important source for the Coomaraswamy Report, which prematurely decided that the comfort stations had been a system of "military sex slaves."

Hayashi states that "In all, four articles referenced Hicks. In the 1990s, when there were few English-language sources on the comfort women, there was a high probability that Western journalists would refer to Hicks' book [even if they did not cite it]. There is also the possibility that the image of the comfort women as having been 'coercively recruited' took hold among Western journalists for this reason. However, the number of articles that cite it is limited."

It is true that only a few articles refer to Hicks by name. Of those that do,



the most detailed was the September 10, 1995 *New York Times* review of the book written by Michael Shapiro, a professor at Columbia University.

Hayashi summarizes this review as follows: “Although it introduces the book and praises it as the first explanation of the comfort women issue in English, the review concludes by noting that it is somewhat ‘arid’ due to being based on previous works in Japanese and Korean and notes in particular that the book would have been more powerful if Hicks had performed his own research on the surviving Korean victims and gotten their testimony.”

The review is reliant on Hicks’ book for its facts, writing for example that “the early comfort women were often Japanese prostitutes lured with promises of good money and adventure in the nation’s new colonies, but their numbers proved inadequate. And so began the *army’s systematic kidnapping*, coercion and deceitful recruitment of women from the countries Japan then ruled. Eighty percent were Korean.”

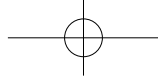
Also, while Hayashi used the translation “somewhat ‘arid,’” the original text did not include the qualifier “somewhat,” just describing it as arid. Had the reviewer been aware of the falseness of the Yoshida testimony (that is, had the *Asahi* rapidly retracted its use of it), the review would likely have been more harsh. That might have reduced the influence of Hicks’ book.

The Influence of the Kōno Statement

As could have been predicted, the August 4, 1993 Kōno Statement was reported in American newspapers as an official acknowledgement that Japan had coercively recruited the comfort women and that they had been sex slaves.

For example, it was stated in the August 4, 1993 *Washington Post* article “Japan Apologized to Sex Slaves” that “the government of Japan today conceded that the Imperial Army forced large numbers of captive Asian women to serve as sex slaves.”

An August 5, 1993 *New York Times* article, “Japan Admits Army Forced



Women into War Brothels,” similarly wrote that “today the Government said it had concluded that the bitter claims of the women were true: many were forced to act as virtual slaves, providing sex for imperial soldiers.” It is apparent that the Kōno Statement further spread these misconceptions through the world.

The article “Japan’s Uncomfortable Past” in the August 8, 1993 *New York Times* noted that “Japan was Germany’s ally, and Japanese leaders shared Hitler’s racist contempt for anyone in the path of the Axis war machine” and held up the comfort women as an example of “systematic rape,” claiming that “hundreds of thousands of Koreans were dragged into slavery.” Due to the opportunity provided by the Kōno Statement, the distortion of history had reached the point that some American reporting clearly regarded the Japanese military’s comfort stations as equivalent to the Nazi Holocaust.

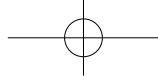
Incidentally, the *Asahi* “third-party panel” did not take a negative view of the Kōno Statement; indeed, it consistently regarded it positively. Conversely, the panel did take a dim view of those who were critical of the statement and sought its revision.

“Coercion in the Broad Sense” and “Coercion in the Narrow Sense”

Based on her quantitative analysis, Hayashi concludes that, of all Japanese politicians, “references to Prime Minister Abe Shinzō were by far the most frequent [in foreign articles on the comfort women issue]. The Western media is conspicuously focused on Prime Minister Abe.”

She further points out that “there is a high-degree of interest in Prime Minister Abe, not just as an ‘information source’ but as a topic as well. There is a pattern: whenever a figure seen as being close to Abe suggests that the Kōno Statement should be revised or makes ‘coercion in the narrow sense’ a point of contention in the comfort women debate, Abe is referred to as well; this then causes foreign media reporting to give it greater attention.” She continues:

To summarize recent Western newspaper articles, there is a cycle in



which the more Japanese public figures, most notably Prime Minister Abe, assert the absence in historical records of any evidence of “coercion in the narrow sense” on the Korean Peninsula, the more that stance is viewed overseas as an attempt to “downplay” or “whitewash” the comfort women issue and evade [Japan’s] crimes. This causes increased coverage. Especially in the West, the focus on “coercive recruitment” in remarks seems to be regarded as symbolic of a lack of awareness of its war responsibility on the part of the Japanese government. (Hayashi Kaori, “The State of International Reporting on the ‘Comfort Women Issue’ as Based on Data,” 22)

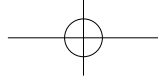
The terms “coercion in the broad sense” and “coercion in the narrow sense” (which originated with the *Asahi Shimbun*) are certainly difficult to understand. Misconceptions will continue to spread as long as the word “coercion” is used and criticisms that it is merely a stopgap measure or an attempt to “deceive” will be unavoidable.

It should be explicitly stated that the comfort stations were brothels that the military allowed and accommodated and that there is no factual basis to assertions of the coercive recruitment and sexual enslavement of women.

Incidents such as that which befell the Dutch women on Semarang were exceptional deviant acts similar to the misconduct of the guards at the American military’s Abu Ghraib prison. These were abhorrent incidents but they were not systematic acts of the military and they were halted when the leadership learned of them. Especially for Americans, explaining that Semarang was like Abu Ghraib should make it easier to create common ground on the issue.

Yet Kitaoka Shin’ichi said the following in the report of the *Asahi* “third-party panel”:

In its August 5 [2014] report, the *Asahi Shimbun* stated that although there is no evidence of coercive recruitment, *the heart of the matter is still that the comfort women were coerced and suffered cruel fates. I agree with that.*



But wasn't it the *Asahi Shimbun* who strongly criticized Prime Minister Abe when, during his first government, he took the position that there was no coercive recruitment? What is the difference between the *Asahi's* position now, the position officially voiced by Abe as prime minister, and the one inherited from the Kōno Statement?

The *Asahi Shimbun* frequently engages in this kind of evasion and substitution. (Report, 94)

Although what he meant can be understood, it invites misconceptions to say that “although there is no evidence of coercive recruitment, *the comfort women were still coerced.*” As with “coercion in the broad sense,” it's difficult to regard this approach as one suitable to making the facts and Japan's position clear.

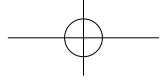
Kitaoka also wrote the following with Okamoto Yukio:

The perception that the Japanese military had directly, collectively, violently, and systematically abducted many women, assaulted them, and forced them to become comfort women was also considerably entrenched *among the foreign experts we interviewed for this.*

...in a sense, the *Asahi Shimbun* and other members of the Japanese media endorsed the extreme remarks made over the comfort women issue in Korea. The *Asahi Shimbun* took a leading position in this. That provided ammunition to the extreme criticism over the comfort women issue in Korea and further radicalized it.

It's not difficult to understand how, from the perspective of a third country, seeing powerful members of the Japanese media agree with the Korean media's criticisms of Japan would make one think that Japan was in error. In that sense, the *Asahi Shimbun* aided in the formation of the current exaggerated image of the comfort women issue. (Report, 52)

This analysis is correct. The problematic nature of “the foreign experts



we interviewed for this” is something that will be discussed in detail later, however.

Negative Influence on the North Korean Abduction Issue

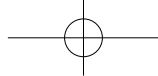
In a March 24, 2007 *Washington Post* editorial entitled “Shinzo Abe’s Double Talk,” the comfort women and abduction issues were discussed as if they were of a kind.

This article included the statements that “Mr. Abe has a right to complain about Pyongyang’s stonewalling. What’s odd – and offensive – is his parallel campaign to roll back Japan’s acceptance of responsibility for the abduction, rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of women during World War II,” “In fact the historical record on this issue is no less convincing than the evidence that North Korea kidnapped Japanese citizens,” and “If Mr. Abe seeks international support in learning the fate of Japan’s kidnapped citizens, he should straightforwardly accept responsibility for Japan’s own crimes – and apologize to the victims he has slandered.” These are high-handed sentences based upon a mistaken conception of the facts. And similar remarks can be found scattered throughout American newspapers.

It was written in an April 27, 2007 *Washington Post* article that “Abe alarmed many in the international community in March with comments that denied a direct role by the Japanese military in forcing women to work in brothels throughout Asia,” and that “It also complicated Japan’s efforts to portray itself as a victim in the long-running controversy over North Korea’s seizure of Japanese citizens.”

The March 27, 2007 *New York Times* article “Japan Leader Who Denied State Role in Wartime Sex Slavery Still Apologizes” includes a statement that “[Prime Minister Abe’s] denial of state coercion has drawn charges of hypocrisy, because Mr. Abe won his popularity by championing the cause of 17 Japanese allegedly abducted by North Korea.”

These American newspaper articles make clear that the spread of misconceptions about the coercive recruitment and sexual enslavement of the



comfort women came to have a negative influence on the abduction issue as well. The *Asahi* bears grave responsibility for this.

Abe did not make any statements on the abduction issue that distorted the facts. This is of course true of the comfort women issue as well. Accordingly, this isn't a case of "gaffes" by Abe. The underlying structural causes thus need to be examined.

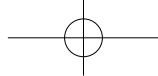
The same can be said of the passage of the July 2007 United States House of Representatives comfort women resolution critical of Japan.

The US House of Representatives Comfort Women Resolution Critical of Japan

In a section of the "third-party panel" report entitled "The Undermined Kōno Statement," Hatano Sumio writes the following about the US House of Representatives resolution on the comfort women:

Representative Michael Honda and others presented the "comfort women resolution" to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in January 2007. It passed the committee by a vote of thirty-nine in favor, two opposed in late June following its February public reading and was adopted unanimously in a full session of the House on July 30, 2007. This resolution strongly criticized the Japanese military's "coercion" of Asian women "into sexual slavery" as comfort women and made requests of the Japanese government such as that it issue a formal apology and revise its teaching of history. It labeled the comfort women system as "one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century." That it was not a joint resolution as originally intended was due to arguments from some Republican congressmen and *the success of a letter of protest from Japanese Ambassador Katō Ryōzō*.

As has been pointed out by a number of American experts in interviews with this panel, however, the greatest factor behind the sudden increase in the number of representatives in favor of the resolution from April on was *the advertisement "The Facts"* which forty-four Diet members and



experts led by the Committee for Historical Facts ran in the *Washington Post* on June 14, 2007. This was done to oppose “The Truth about ‘Comfort Women,’” an advertisement that Korean-American citizens had run on April 26 (also in the *Washington Post*).

The arguments in “The Facts” included that no documents have been found showing the Japanese military coerced women into becoming comfort women and that the comfort women had not been sex slaves among others. As can be seen from Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman [Tom] Lantos’ criticism of the advertisement as “slandering those who survived the comfort women system,” it had *the opposite of the intended effect on American society*. (Ibid., 67-68)

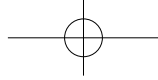
This is a very interesting passage for a number of reasons.

First, Hatano claims that the advertisement submitted by Japanese volunteers to the *Washington Post* was “the greatest factor behind the sudden increase in the number of representatives in favor of the resolution.” But his only evidence for this assertion is that it was “pointed out by a number of American experts in interviews with this panel.” And, as will be explained, the value of these “expert interviews” is extremely low.

After asserting that it was “the greatest factor,” Hatano should have at least given specific examples in footnotes or an appendix of which “experts” said this. Without such information, the assertion is unverifiable. Incidentally, there were no reports of a Congressional backlash against the advertisement in the three papers the author investigated for this study.

The same is also true of “the success of a letter of protest from Japanese Ambassador Katō Ryōzō”; this can’t be verified without knowing whose opinion this was and what their evidence was.

Ambassador Katō’s letter was an utterly “defensive counterargument” that stated that Japanese prime ministers had repeatedly apologized and made statements of contrition on the issue; it did nothing to refute the grave factual errors in the proposed resolution such as that “the ‘comfort women’ system



of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan, considered unprecedented in its cruelty and magnitude, included gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation, and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death, or eventual suicide in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century.” The ambassador’s letter actually helped cement the impression that Japan had no factual rebuttal and may have even weakened resistance to the resolution.

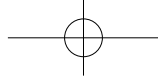
Hatano judges the advertisement had “the opposite of the intended effect *on American society*,” but does this mean that American society, unlike Japanese and other societies, operates under a strict sense of justice? Or does it mean the opposite, that America is particularly hypocritical on human rights issues? Either interpretation would seem to be overly simplistic.

As a comparative reference, let’s examine the course of the resolution criticizing “the Turkish genocide of Armenians” that was submitted to the House at roughly the same time.

The October 10, 2007 *Washington Post* editorial “Worse Than Irrelevant – A Congressional resolution about massacres in Turkey 90 years ago endangers present-day U.S. security” strongly criticized the resolution in the following terms: although the massacre of more than a million people is certainly a serious human rights topic, the Democratic congressmen pushing forward the resolution were doing so for “petty and parochial interests,” namely to curry favor with those in their districts with Armenian ancestry. And because of the serious security risk that an angry Turkey would refuse to provide facilities to American military aircraft, “its passage would be dangerous and grossly irresponsible.”

Transcending party lines, eight former secretaries of state, including Henry Kissinger, James Baker, George Shultz, and Madeline Albright, issued a joint statement in opposition; the resolution ultimately did not pass.

If, at this time, Turkish volunteers had submitted an advertisement titled “The Facts,” would it have had “the opposite of the intended effect on American society” and suddenly caused the resolution to pass? That seems pretty



implausible.

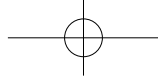
The government and people of Turkey raised their voices in strong opposition to the resolution. That caused major American media outlets to run editorials to the effect that security should be emphasized over issues of historical human rights and was the main factor in isolating those representatives who supported the resolution.

In comparison, Japan was defeated in its overall diplomatic strategy; for that reason, a comprehensive examination of that strategy needs to be performed. The Foreign Ministry should not be excused by regarding the ambassador's letter as a "success." Rather it should be the first placed under the microscope.

Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Tom Lantos is said to have received pressure from Chinese anti-Japanese organizations in his district (San Mateo County and Southern San Francisco, California) at the time to support the resolution. Representative Mike Honda also had a very close relationship with the Chinese lobby both within and outside of his district (Silicon Valley, California). The journalist Komori Yoshihisa had written a detailed book on both lobby groups (Komori, *Chu-Kan "Hannichi Robii" no Jitsuzō* [The True Nature of the Chinese-Korean "Anti-Japan Lobby"], Tokyo: PHP, 2013). Situations in the districts of the involved representatives were behind both the anti-Turkish and anti-Japanese resolutions. Had Japan been as diplomatically strong as Turkey, perhaps Representative Honda and the others could have been the ones criticized as "petty and parochial" and "grossly responsible" in major American media outlets.

If a single advertisement could actually produce such a "sudden reversal," it just shows how weak Japanese diplomacy was. Such a development would have been unbelievable if relationships of trust and close communication routes had been forged with influential members of Congress. Either way, it is the Foreign Ministry who needs to reflect the most on what happened.

In the future, when the Japanese left continues to publicize ideas such as that "the comfort women were sex slaves," conservatives should press the



government to rebut them with the facts. The relevant diplomatic authorities need to establish an international information strategy. The idea that “if only the volunteers had not submitted that advertisement...” is an obviously transparent attempt to cover for the foreign ministry’s incompetence.

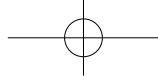
Okamoto Yukio, a former Foreign Ministry official and a member of the “third-party panel,” stated the following in the *Sankei Shimbun* (“Seiron (The Correct Argument),” July 23, 2007) at the time of the House resolution:

There is currently a resolution under consideration in the US House of Representatives that requests an apology from Japan. The situation over the resolution had calmed down and its passage became doubtful after Prime Minister Abe adopted an apologetic stance when visiting America in April. Once Japanese volunteers submitted a full-page advertisement to the *Washington Post* disputing the resolution’s factual basis, however, its chance of adoption was boosted; it passed through the Foreign Affairs Committee with a lopsided vote of thirty-nine to two and its passage by the House seems certain.

Why did this happen when the opinions put forward in the advertisement seem to have been accurate? Because the debate over the resolution *had already ceased to be over the facts*. The focus was on what subjective view of past events the Japanese attempted to put forth. A Japanese counterargument to the resolution was only natural, but one has to bear in mind that the core of the issue was what subjective view of history it was based on and how that was received.

I am not entirely sure what he is trying to say, especially in the last few lines; probably that rather than arguing the historical facts, the Japanese should have adopted a position that was earnestly apologetic.

The statement that “the debate had already ceased to be over the facts” is nothing more than an expression of Foreign Ministry defeatism. In fact, despite the idleness of the Foreign Ministry and many politicians, the number of Americans who feel that the Japanese arguments are more in line with common sense is increasing, albeit gradually.



Okamoto served as head of the First Division of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau until January 1991. After his retirement, he continued to serve in a number of positions such as aide to the prime minister, special advisor to the cabinet, and a foreign policy advisor to the prime minister. What on earth was he doing as he helped shape Japan's foreign policy during the period when "the debate was still over the facts"?

Kitaoka Shin'ichi served as deputy ambassador to the United Nations from April 2004 to August 2006 and was on the front line of international public relations activities. And Hatano Sumio was not unconnected to the foreign ministry either, having served for many years at its Diplomatic Archives.

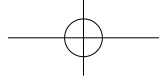
The comfort women issue was first stirred up by the *Asahi* and then exacerbated by useless counterarguments from the conservatives; it should have been quietly left to the Foreign Ministry. That seems to be the majority conclusion of the "third-party panel." This, however, even if temperate, lacks persuasiveness and shows a remarkable lack of research.

In the future, in the course of investigating the *Asahi*, it will be necessary to examine the role of the Foreign Ministry. We hope that the three will sincerely pursue the active involvement of their ministry rather than take the conservative stance of using the advertisement, "The Facts," as a scapegoat.

Criticism of the Kōno Statement by Prime Minister Abe and the "Conservative" Faction

Hatano refers to Abe's "responsibility" for the House resolution, stating that "Prime Minister Abe's statements during his first government cannot be overlooked as a factor that facilitated the resolution":

Abe told the press on March 1 [2007] that "there must have been a change in the definition of 'coercion'" and stated at a House of Councilors Budget Committee meeting on March 5 that "there was no coercion in the sense of government officials forcing their way into homes and kidnapping people."



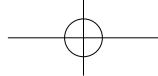
...Prime Minister Abe's series of remarks were criticized in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. The *Washington Post* noted correctly in March that he was trying to "roll back Japan's acceptance of responsibility for the abduction, rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of women."

Although Abe's statements did not deny "coercion in the broad sense," an *Asahi Shimbun* editorial ("Comfort Women' Statement: Don't Invite Unnecessary Misconceptions," March 6, 2007) that addressed them said that "the recruitment, transport, and management of the so-called comfort women clearly presents a situation that should be recognized as having been coercive as a whole. The Kōno Statement was made in that recognition. To intentionally remain fixated on detailed definitions and distinctions is not the upright approach appropriate to the prime minister as the representative of Japan."

By writing that the *Washington Post* "noted correctly," Hatano was either endorsing the American newspaper's mistaken criticism or just got carried away. Either way, his opinion is questionable.

Certainly, there were a number of statements in American newspapers saying that Prime Minister Abe's remarks helped propel the House resolution. For example, a May 12, 2007 *New York Times* article by Norimitsu Ōnishi said that "the resolution drew little attention until Prime Minister Shinzo Abe...denied that the Japanese military had coerced women into sex slavery, causing furor in the rest of Asia and the United States."

In "Denial Reopens Wounds of Japan's Ex-Sex Slaves," a March 8, 2007 article in the same paper, Representative Mike Honda states that he finds it "it hard to believe that [Abe] is correct given *the evidence uncovered by Japanese historians* and the testimony of the comfort women." It also says that "Japanese historians, *using the diaries and testimony of military officials as well as official documents from the United States and other countries*, have been able to show that the military was directly or indirectly involved in *coercing, deceiving, luring and sometimes kidnapping* young women



throughout Japan's Asian colonies and occupied territories.”

Here we can see the influence of the Yoshida testimony and the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.” A sneering pettiness can be felt in the March 6, 2007 editorial of the *Asahi* that criticized Abe for not taking an “upright approach” as he attempted to put out the flames that the paper had set.

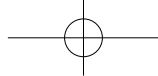
Had the *Asahi* “uprightly” retracted the Yoshida testimony at this time, perhaps the passage of the House resolution would have been different. It is the *Asahi*'s omissions and acts that need to be investigated for their damage to the national interest, not Abe's remarks.

Despite what was said in the above *New York Times* article, there are no “American official records” showing the coercive recruitment or abuse of the comfort women according to the American government's own investigation (this is from the Michael Yon Report which will be touched on later). Instead, there are documents showing that the living conditions of the comfort women were far from that of “sex slaves” (namely, the 1944 US military interviews of comfort women in Burma).

The assertion that Abe's remarks helped the House resolution is also seen in later articles. For example, a *Washington Post* article by Blaine Harden published on November 12, 2008, about a year after the resolution passed noted that “[Abe's] statement pushed the U.S. House of Representatives to pass a resolution calling on Japan to apologize for its treatment of sex slaves.”

But Hatano criticizes not just Abe's remarks but also the written statement drafted by the government as a cause for the House resolution's popularity.

The Abe government adopted a statement via a cabinet decision on March 16 that said that “there were no statements in the documents examined by the government [prior to the Kōno Statement] that directly show any ‘coercive recruitment’ by military and civil officials.” It also affirmed that the House resolution seeking an apology from the Japanese government “does not show a correct understanding of the



facts, especially the Japanese government's handling of the issue.” This approach by the Abe government was interpreted as a denial of the “coercive recruitment” of the comfort women and as showing a lack of a sense of remorse. It caused a sudden surge in the number of representatives in favor of the House resolution. (Ibid., 68-69)

The idea seen here that the government's written statements should be drafted *in accordance with the degree of foreign misunderstanding* is a quintessential example of defeatism.

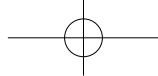
A perception of the issue similar to Hatano's can also be seen in Hayashi Kaori's report:

Although Prime Minister Abe has now, in 2014, confirmed his intention of maintaining the Kōno Statement, figures seen as being close to him and people working as officials in the government have either *suggested that the statement should be revised or made statements that either note the lack of “coercion in the narrow sense” in the comfort women issue or seem to reject the issue entirely.* A pattern can be seen in which each time this happens the Western media reports it and the amount of coverage given to the issue increases.

“Increasing the amount of coverage” isn't an inherently bad thing. In fact, it can increase the number of opportunities for providing accurate information.

For example, an August 16, 2002 *Washington Post* article introduced a *Yomiuri Shimbun* editorial from the previous day which stated that “complaints by comfort women that they were forced into sexual service to Japanese soldiers” were “fabricated history” and noted that “such opinions were becoming more mainstream.”

Perhaps if the situation in 2007 was such that the paper could have written “Prime Minister Abe's opinion is that of the Japanese mainstream,” then American congressmen's reaction to the comfort women resolution would have been different.



To take an example from a relatively more recent article, it was written in the December 10, 2012 *Washington Post* that “the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan’s largest newspaper, wrote in an August editorial that there is ‘no evidence’ that Japan had forcibly recruited sex slaves.” The article’s use of “sex slaves” is problematic, but in any case, it is an example of the type of information being conveyed overseas.

Although another *Washington Post* article from March 6, 2014 titled “In considering revision of sex-slaves apology, Japan draws acrimony” includes misinformation, saying that the comfort women were “coerced from their homes” and “forced to have sex with Japanese soldiers. Most of the women were between 14 and 18,” it also says of the Kōno Statement that “the apology has drawn increasing scorn from a powerful segment of Japanese, who call it a regrettable political concession made without evidence of the Imperial Army’s complicity. That sentiment, once held by an extreme right-leaning minority, has edged into Japan’s mainstream.”

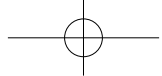
If this perception of the issue spreads overseas, it will become difficult to make arguments that risk antagonizing the “mainstream,” at least among those who consider themselves “knowledgeable about Japan.”

The “Ghost of Yoshida Seiji”

Hatano’s critical stance towards Prime Minister Abe and the conservatives continues in a section titled “The ‘Ghost’ of Yoshida Seiji” in which he takes a stronger tone, stating that “these groups share a mistaken perception”:

Although Yoshida frequently appeared in the Japanese media for a brief period of time, he naturally was not used as evidence in support of the Katō and Kōno Statements...

The problem is that *strongly influential groups both inside and outside of the government share a mistaken perception*. That is, they’ve created a scenario in which the valuable Yoshida testimony (in which he confessed to the coercive recruitment of comfort women) is seen as having been an important piece of evidence for the Kōno Statement



and the reason that it recognizes “coercive recruitment”... These groups use the rejection of the Yoshida testimony, the important evidence of “coercive recruitment,” as a way to push for the revision of the Kōno Statement that gave official Japanese government recognition to “coercive recruitment.” *The Kōno Statement, which strikes a delicate balance on Japanese and Korean assertions regarding coercion and has gradually come to be well-regarded internationally, is in danger of losing acceptance. That is what the “ghost” of Yoshida Seiji’s testimony as a perpetrator of “coercive recruitment” has wrought.* (Ibid., 71)

Hatano writes that “Yoshida frequently appeared in the Japanese media” for only “a brief period,” but it’s only natural to see that his testimony’s influence has had a longer impact.

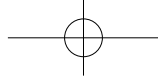
In fact, even within the “third-party panel” report, Hayashi writes that “looking at Korean articles, even if they aren’t common, tales based on the Yoshida testimony of ‘coercive recruitment’ by the Japanese military have appeared *very recently* (2012).”

The long legacy of the Yoshida testimony can be seen throughout American newspapers as well.

It is stated in two articles in the *New York Times* concerning the Asian Women’s Fund (printed May 13 and May 15, 1996) that the comfort women were “mostly teen-age girls kidnapped from villages” by the Japanese military. It cannot be said that it is unrelated to the Yoshida testimony.

To see a more recent example, the May 31, 2014 *Washington Post* article, “Memorial to WWII Comfort Women Dedicated in Fairfax County amid Protests,” stated that they were “abducted from their homes and sent to ‘comfort stations.’” The “ghost of Yoshida” can be seen here as well. Or, perhaps rather than “ghost,” the “zombie of Yoshida Seiji” would be a more accurate expression as it never seems to die.

Methodological Confusion in the Report of the “Third-Party Panel”



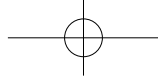
We'd now like to examine the methodological confusion apparent in the report of the "third-party panel." After performing the aforementioned quantitative analysis using the keywords "Seiji Yoshida" and "Hicks," Hayashi summarizes her findings as follows:

Examining Western reporting on the comfort women, the image of the "coercive recruitment" of comfort women by the Japanese military appears repeatedly even when the name "Yoshida Seiji" is not mentioned and Hicks' work is not referred to. This likely also reflects the influence of testimony from victims from outside of the Korean Peninsula, such as from the so-called "Semarang Comfort Station Incident" in Indonesia... Combined with quotes from the former comfort women living throughout the world, *the image of the Japanese military as coercive has become overwhelmingly dominant over the past twenty years*. Accordingly, it is essentially impossible to now definitively pursue the argument over what effect the media had, that is, whether the image of the "comfort women" within the Western media is due to the *Asahi Shimbun's* reporting or due to other information sources. (Hayashi, 33)

Hayashi also wrote the following about her quantitative analysis of Korean newspapers: "Looking at Korean articles, even if they aren't common, tales based on the Yoshida testimony of 'coercive recruitment' by the Japanese military have appeared very recently (2012). If the *Asahi Shimbun*, the most referenced [Japanese newspaper] in Korea, had more clearly retracted the Yoshida testimony in 1997, would that have influenced the currents of the debate in Korea today? It's impossible to now know." (Ibid., 48)

It's certainly true that "the Japanese military's image as coercive has become overwhelmingly dominant."

For that reason, the temperate conclusions concerning the *Asahi Shimbun's* degree of influence, namely that "it is essentially impossible to now definitively pursue the argument over what effect the media had" and that "it's impossible to now know," while dissatisfying, can be said to be honest given the limits of quantitative analysis.



The Lack of Source Criticism Regarding the “Opinions of Foreign Experts”

Hayashi’s argument then takes an odd turn, however:

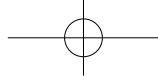
Still, since the question of the influence on the image the world holds of Japan includes long-term, multi-layered, and subtle aspects unrelated to the comfort women issue, I cannot deny the possibility that there are facets that cannot be seen from this kind of general data. For that reason, I also catalogued *the opinions of foreign experts interviewed by the Asahi Shimbun’s reporting network at the direction of the third-party panel.*

Although this was limited to English-language experts, *they were generally of the opinion that the falsified tales of coercive recruitment by Yoshida Seiji did not have a negative influence on Japan’s image.*

On the other hand, virtually every expert held the opinion that the comfort women issue certainly has a negative influence on Japan’s image.

They were also almost entirely in agreement that, unlike what is asserted in Japan, it was neither the perception that there had been “coercive recruitment of comfort women” in the past nor the fact that there had been a comfort women system that caused harm to Japan’s image. Rather they felt it was *the focus of Japanese conservative politicians and right-wing activists on the nature of “coercion,” their statements casting uncertainty on the Kōno Statement, and their attempts to render the statement ineffective that have done so.* (Ibid., 25)

Even if using the opinions of experts to supplement quantitative analysis due to its limits is conceded as understandable, the problem is that this was done in a manner completely lacking the necessary amount of source criticism.



The English-language “foreign experts” interviewed by the “third-party panel” are as follows:

Kathy Masaoka, Co-Chairperson, “Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress”

Gerald Curtis, Columbia University

Joseph Nye, Harvard University

Gi-Wook Shin, Director, Stanford University Asia-Pacific Research Center

Daniel Sneider, Associate Director, Stanford University Asia-Pacific Research Center

Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Australia National University

Dennis Halpin, Visiting Researcher, John Hopkins University

Barry Fischer, Attorney (US)

Phyllis Kim, Spokeswoman, Korean American Forum of California

Mike Mochizuki, George Washington University

Michael Green, Senior Vice President, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Mindy Kotler, Asia Policy Point

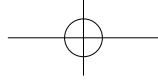
Yun Mi-hyang, Secretary-General, Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

Larry Nicksch, Senior Analyst, CSIS

As far as I am aware, most are figures who take positions on the comfort women issue close to that of the *Asahi Shimbun* or Korea; the list even includes leaders of anti-Japanese groups. Not only that, but since they were interviewed by “the *Asahi Shimbun*’s reporting network” (likely referring to its reporters), there’s a double-bias at work.

Dennis Halpin (a former member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee staff who speaks Korean) makes balanced arguments on the North Korean issue, but often bewilders his friends (of which I am one) by being biased towards the Korean side in historical issues.

And since Larry Nicksch (a former researcher for the Congressional Research

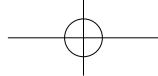


Service) has to rely entirely on English-language sources, he cannot be said to have detailed knowledge of the comfort women debate.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with consulting the opinion of people like this. But at the same time, they should have taken a balanced approach by including figures who understand the Japanese arguments within the scope of the interviews, such as James Auer (former Special Assistant for Japan, Department of Defense) or Michael Yon (journalist), who uncovered an important American government report. The American government report that Yon discovered (*The Final Report of the Nazi War Crimes & Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group*, April 2007) concluded that it could not find any documents tying Japanese military comfort stations to systematic war crimes.

Another issue with the report of the “third-party panel” is that the panel did not make the complete records of its interviews public; only the below fragments chosen by Hayashi were included in a “list of excerpts.” It’s unclear who said which quote. To repeat, these “experts” also included the leaders of Korean anti-Japanese groups. All of the excerpts will be quoted below for the record (translated from Japanese):

- First, Japan needs to stop engaging in self-defense. It should maintain the Kōno Statement and pay compensation to the former comfort women still alive in Korea. The world is never going to say “Japan didn’t do anything wrong. It doesn’t need to apologize.” Even if the international criticism is unfair, politicians need to consider what’s in the national interest; if they want to improve Japan’s image, they should stop commenting on this issue.
- Japanese revision of the Kōno Statement and the attacks on the *Asahi Shimbun* actually cause the country’s image to suffer. An American group of experts was very disappointed with and critical of Japan’s conservatives and the government.
- Attempts to change the Kōno Statement are extremely foolish. I think the Japanese government makes a major misstep whenever it attempts to take up the issue. The best [Japanese approach to the comfort women issue] would be to remove it as a priority and reduce its profile.



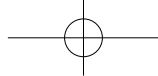
- I think what damages Japan's image on this issue is that the Japanese government, as seen by an outside observer, doesn't seem to want to address it in an honest and sincere manner. I think that's the real problem damaging Japan's image right now.
- The attempts in 2006, 2007 to retract or revise the Kōno Statement made Japan's image in America take a turn for the worse.
- I don't think [the articles that reported on the Yoshida testimony] changed Japan's image. Instead, I think the current debate over the comfort women issue is affecting its image. I think the Abe government's fixation on whether there was direct involvement by the military or coercive recruitment and on the use of the expression 'sex slave' is truly stupid. It's also stupid for them to do things like disavowing the Kōno Statement in a cabinet decision while also saying they aren't going to revise it. The attempts to have diplomats make Abe's ideas a reality haven't restored Japan's honor; they've made its image worse. (Ibid., 34-35)

Hayashi makes the following conclusions based on these "excerpts" by unnamed individuals:

Those interviewed are mainly active in English-language countries and are *known as experts knowledgeable on Japan*; all are specialists with influence on US-Japan-Korea relations. According to their statements, many saw the comfort women issue as having a negative effect but thought Yoshida Seiji's stories of coercive recruitment had little influence on Japan's image in the case of America.

In other words, when they say that "the comfort women issue damages Japan's image," *they aren't referring to the influence of "coercive recruitment" as put forward by Yoshida Seiji and others; they're saying that the actions of Japanese conservative politicians and experts, such as expressing doubts about the Kōno Statement and fixating on the exact meaning of "coercion," harms Japan's image.* (Ibid., 34)

It is thus not the *Asahi Shimbun*, who spread misconceptions about the "coercive recruitment" of comfort women, but rather "Japanese conservative



politicians and experts [trying to correct the mistaken reporting and subsequent misunderstanding]” who are the main culprits in “harming Japan’s image.”

Before addressing the accuracy of this assertion, I’d like to make one supplementary note.

Larry Nicksch, one of the “foreign experts,” is also mentioned in a Korean newspaper article quoted by Hayashi (*Dong-A Ilbo*, October 25, 2006):

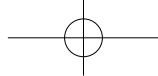
“The Comfort Women Resolution is Based on a Distortion of History” - The Impact of the *Yomiuri*’s “Disdain for the US House of Representatives”

US Representatives Disappointed – *Larry Nicksch, a researcher at the Congressional Research Service* who compiled a report on the comfort women for American members of Congress, replied that he couldn’t understand the contents of the *Yomiuri* editorial on the 23rd.

In a phone interview, he noted that “*Yoshida Seiji, a member of the Japanese military police, wrote memoirs (My War Crimes, 1983) in which he stated that he participated in the recruitment of comfort women.* The records found by Dr. Yoshimi Yoshiaki at the Japan Defense Agency Library in 1992 also show orders for the “establishment of comfort women facilities in occupied territories.”

According to this article, Nicksch still gave significance to the Yoshida testimony, even in 2006. This is clearly inconsistent with the opinions in the above “excerpts.” How does Hayashi explain this contradiction in her report? Also, did the “third-party panel” direct “the *Asahi* reporting network” to ask about Nicksch’s current and past perceptions?

Nicksch seems to have been influenced by the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.” Did the “*Asahi* reporting network” ask whether he correctly understood the meaning of the “documents found by Yoshimi”?



Putting the above together, it's clear that the "overseas expert" interviews by the *Asahi's* "third-party panel" were extremely careless and biased in terms of their choice of subjects and questions, their arrangement of the results, and their means of disclosure.

Still, Hatano accurately reproached the *Asahi's* critical attitude towards the "tendency to examine the issue solely from the narrow question of whether or not there was coercive recruitment": "I have no choice but to note that the *Asahi* changed its argument from its early reporting, which was slanted towards 'coercion in the narrow sense' based on the Yoshida testimony, to using the Kōno Statement once the dangerous nature of that testimony became clear." (Report, 63)

This unfair back-up stance can also be said to apply to many of the "foreign experts" chosen by the *Asahi* "third-party panel."

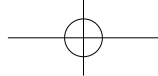
It's a pattern of first arguing that the comfort women were coercively recruited in order to criticize Japan and then, upon being confronted with the rebuttal that there is no evidence of any such coercive recruitment, shifting the criticism to say that it wasn't an important point and that fixating on such fine details makes others doubt your contrition.

Doesn't the *Asahi* bear great responsibility for formulating an unfair argument and then spreading it?

The Fiction of a "Different Viewpoint" from the West

Hayashi asserts that while the Abe government views the comfort women as "a battlefield version of prewar Japan's licensed prostitution system, much of Western reporting considers the comfort women issue to be a universal, humanitarian 'issue of women's human rights.'"

According to her, the mainstream group of the "West" apparently sees the comfort women as "an issue of societal power relationships that marginalize, entrench, and reproduce women and children who have no choice but to make a living through prostitution and selling themselves. In other words,



they view this as an issue of the underlying structure reliant on battlefields and colonies that stripped these women of their rights and rationalized human trafficking; ‘sex slaves’ is a term that sheds light on this social structure” (as an aside, with a feel for language like this, it is strange that Hayashi is capable of teaching “media theory”).

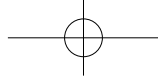
Hayashi then says that “the gap between the view of the Japanese government and the tone taken overseas is most directly shown by the question of whether or not ‘sex slaves’ should be used in explaining the term ‘comfort women.’”

And “since there is a fundamental difference in the view and rationale of the comfort women issue in the West, I predict that there will continue to be difficulties in convincing the foreign media to accept, as repeatedly advocated by the Japanese government and conservatives, narrowing the focus of judgment on whether there was ‘coercive recruitment’ to the level of individual, specific comfort women and moving the question of state responsibility outside the scope of the debate.”

In other words, since the Abe government and “figures seen as close to Prime Minister Abe” have a less advanced awareness of the human rights of women and fixate on the presence of coercive recruitment, they will incur opposition and scorn from the more advanced “West” (as another aside, there are countries in the “West” that have legalized prostitution. How does Hayashi rationalize this fact?)

So, is Hayashi’s explanation, that Japanese conservatives are repeatedly criticized because they don’t understand the “view” and “rationale” of the “underlying structure” that produces “prostitution” that the “West” considers a problem and instead make “coercive recruitment” the subject of debate, correct?

She makes special note of a comment by a senior member of the Foreign Ministry, “Mine Yoshiki, who worked as a minister at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva” in connection to this point. Since she did not comment on the long quote, Hayashi seems to agree with it:



I think that the people actively trying to push that kind of movement [for the protection of women's rights (Hayashi's note)] forward would most likely say it was sexual slavery. More importantly, if they heard more about it, they would also say that what the American military did was sexual slavery. I think they would say that what the Korean military did in Vietnam was horrific sexual slavery. However, I think it's dangerous and unwise to make whether or not the term "sexual slavery" is appropriate a focus of this fight. (Hayashi, 30)

So why then are the comfort women of the former Japanese military the only ones singled out as "sex slaves"? Why do the media and politicians in America and Korea not seek public apologies and compensation from their own governments? Why do they only seek them from Japan?

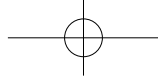
Without providing answers to that question, Hayashi says the following about the relationship between Japan and "sex slaves": "The term 'sexual slavery' gradually permeated the spreading global movement against sexual violence and human trafficking that was made a topic of discussion by the feminist movement in the 1990s. My presumption is that the Japanese comfort women issue was naturally taken up in this context." (Ibid., 31)

We see the same problem here. Why was only the "Japanese comfort women issue" "taken up" in the "context" of the international "feminist movement"? Why were the actions of the American and Korean militaries not "taken up"?

The answer, clearly, is that only the former Japanese military has had the fiction of coercive recruitment and abnormal abuse (sexual slavery) attached to it.

Now, to be fair, Hayashi herself has made the "American comfort women" in Korea an issue:

Fundamentally the same kind of problems can be pointed out with the comfort women of the American military as with those of the Japanese. In other words, the Korean government promoted the creation of



comfort stations for the American military near military bases in order to obtain foreign currency. The “American comfort women” system could not have been created without the cooperation of the Korean government. Also ... the Korean government promoted sex tourism as a national policy to receive foreign currency (the so-called “kisaeng tourism”).

While the comfort women issue is an issue related to Japan’s colonial control of the Korean Peninsula, it is also emerging as a distortion caused by postwar Korea’s modernization and rapid economic growth.

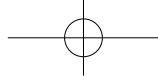
The comfort women issue was thus produced by the combination of the violence of Japan’s imperialist rule and military, the Korean powers that assisted it, the civilian businessmen who profited, and the patriarchal culture of the East Asian region (including Japan and Korea) and its inferior treatment of women that gave tacit acceptance to the cruel conditions for women. Narrowing the focus of the comfort women issue to Yoshida Seiji doesn’t shine enough light on the total picture of the issue; rather, it delays a full understanding of it. (Ibid., 49)

This is very ideological and includes clumsy phrasing, but it can be praised for not unfairly criticizing Japan alone. However, to follow her reasoning, would not doing away with the misconceptions about “coercive recruitment” similarly fail to “shine enough light on the total picture of the issue” and thus “delay a full understanding of it”?

And are the women’s human rights of the wives, daughters, and mothers of the fathers, husbands, and sons injured by false allegations of abduction and rape not included in Hayashi’s concept of “women’s human rights”? I think that her understanding of the “cruel conditions for women” is too limited.

Hayashi writes the following in her conclusion:

Attempts can be seen in Western reporting to reconsider the individual experiences of former comfort women from a humanitarian, universal perspective. In other words, they take the view that the experiences



of women who suffer from sexual violence in wartime, including the comfort women, are a structural byproduct of the recklessness of the power of the modern state.

These articles have a worldview that is critical of the imperialist and military dictatorships that, marginalizing the rights of women, the colonized, and the controlled, guided the development of states with an inherently discriminatory structure. The structure of discrimination did not just exist in Japan alone; it was a problem of many modern states in Europe, America, and Asia. And the issue of human trafficking of women and children for the purpose of sexual exploitation exists even today, not just in Japan but throughout the world. There are articles in Western newspapers that try to take up the comfort women issue with this perspective. (Ibid., 50)

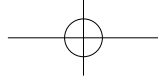
First off, the phrase “suffer from sexual violence in wartime, including the comfort women” amplifies misconceptions. I have other doubts about her choice of words as well, but the above is completely unrelated to the state of Western reporting on the comfort women; it’s just a statement of Hayashi’s ideological views.

Despite her assertion to the contrary, of the articles in the three American papers that dealt with the comfort women issue, there was not a single one that did so as a problem that did “not just exist in Japan alone [but in] many modern states in Europe, America, and Asia.”

There were an endless number of articles that did the opposite, however.

For example, an October 27, 1995 *New York Times* article entitled “Fearing G.I. Occupiers, Japan Urged Women Into Brothels,” states that there was “of course, an enormous difference” between the “prostitutes” that the occupying American military used in Japan and the “comfort women” who were “mostly Korean teen-agers who were dragged away from their homes and forced into front-line brothels.”

Meanwhile, the “Japanese women mostly volunteered, albeit out of



economic desperation, and they *were paid several times the going rate in ordinary brothels.*” The cases of the Japanese and American militaries are clearly treated as different; there is no attempt to “reconsider” things from a “universal perspective.” The influence of the Yoshida testimony can also be seen in the article from, for example, the mention of women being “dragged away from their homes.”

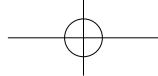
For an extremely recent example, the February 12, 2014 *Washington Post* editorial “Japan’s Denialism” stated that the use of comfort women was “*a uniquely Japanese system* that enslaved thousands of women, mostly Korean, transported them to military bases and forced them to engage in sex to be routinely raped by Japanese servicemen.”

A January 7, 2009 *New York Times* article on the issue of the American military’s comfort women in postwar Korea is written in a manner clearly different than those on the Japanese military; while a Korean prostitute is quoted as saying that “Our government was one big pimp for the U.S. military,” the article notes that while “they accuse successive Korean governments of hypocrisy in calling for reparations from Japan while refusing to take a hard look at South Korea’s own history,” they make “*no claims that they were coerced into prostitution by South Korean or American officials* during those years.”

The already touched upon September 10, 1995 *New York Times* review of Hicks’ book also clearly notes the unique nature of Japan’s actions, stating that “the Japanese were not the first army to force women into prostitution, but they created a system that was a model of brutal efficiency.”

This has also already been referenced, but the January 18, 1992 *Washington Post* article “‘Comfort Women’: A Barbaric Act” also treats the comfort women as a special systematic crime of the Japanese military by mentioning that it “wasn’t a case of atrocities being committed on the watch of an unsuspecting or negligent military command during a time of war.”

As seen above, Hayashi’s assertions that “the structure of discrimination did not just exist in Japan alone; it was a problem of many modern states



in Europe, America, and Asia” and that “international society attempts to place the comfort women issue as a humanitarian ‘issue of women’s human rights’” has no material basis to them. It is instead a fact that there are an overwhelming number of articles that are critical of the comfort women as a uniquely Japanese system.

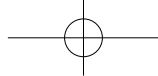
The only article with contents that come close to matching Hayashi’s ideology is the December 11, 1995 *Los Angeles Times* opinion piece, “Perspective on Human Rights: Prostitution Is Rape That’s Paid for,” by Janice Raymond of the University of Massachusetts (Women Studies, Medical Ethics).

Raymond criticized a statement by the Commander of US Pacific Command Richard Macke in which he said regarding the gang rape of a 12 year-old girl by American servicemen in Okinawa the previous September that “it was absolutely stupid ... for the price they paid to rent the car, they could have had a girl,” noting that his “remark springs from a tradition of military tolerance and promotion of prostitution for the ‘rest and recreation’ of the troops.”

But even for Raymond, while the American military promoted “prostitution,” the actions of the Japanese military are deemed “rape” and “conscripted” for “sexual slavery.” Although she continues, asserting that “the question raised in these examples is the distance between rape and prostitution. In war or peace, that distance is not great” and that “we cannot allow the exchange of money to transform ‘bought and sold rape’ into consensual sex,” she clearly perceives the Japanese military’s comfort women as having been raped.

There are even a number of statements in American newspapers that view the Japanese comfort stations as having been equivalent to the systematic rapes that occurred during the 1990s ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.

For example, a December 14, 1995 *Los Angeles Times* article deems the Japanese comfort stations to have been an “organized system of rape” and the women as “most often summarily abducted.” It views the situation as having been the same as “the horror and tragedy that is Bosnia” in which “thousands of women are being subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war.”



The “West” doesn’t study the issue with the lofty “critical worldview” that Hayashi asserts, studying the facts for a significance beyond just Japan; it has a mistaken perception of the facts, nothing more.

Hayashi also writes that “the Japanese comfort women issue can be said to be less an issue of how to settle the historical facts themselves (that is, the fact that women in wartime were coerced into prostitution) than it is about the current stance of postwar Japan: how it approaches the issue and takes responsibility for it.”

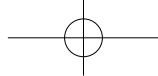
The perception that it is a “historical fact” that “women in wartime were coerced into prostitution” is strange in the first place, but making “how Japan takes responsibility” and Japan’s “current stance” into issues based on that fiction makes Hayashi’s position appear increasingly the same as that of the *Asahi*.

The Fiction of “Different Approaches”

As we’ve seen, Hayashi concluded that “the *Asahi Shimbun*’s reporting on the Yoshida testimony and the comfort women had little influence in international society.”

This opinion of Hayashi was not derived from her quantitative analysis (her conclusion from her analysis was that “it’s impossible to now know”); it comes from her stance of prioritizing ideological positions free of evidentiary basis and her uncritical and arbitrary use of “the opinion of foreign experts.”

Hayashi stressed the importance of quantitative analysis in the introduction to her report, noting that “especially when dealing with a fiercely debated topic that divides domestic and international relations like the reporting on the comfort women, if arguments are made based on subjective experiences, emotions, and opinions – factors determined by the positions and circumstances of the participants – our estimation of the debate changes in accordance with whether or not we approve of and empathize with them. It becomes largely impossible to create any kind of common understanding or offer opinions concerning what the nature of journalism should be from here on. The members of the panel were also very concerned that they



would further confuse the comfort women issue by engaging in this kind of examination of reporting.”

But Hayashi herself truly demonstrated the basis for those “concerns.”

The following exchange occurred at the December 22, 2014 “third-party panel” press conference:

Kitaoka: There are countries that criticize the problems in Japan. If the Japanese domestic media writes more critical articles, other countries will think that those countries are correct.

Hayashi: My opinion is that it should be read as *a work of media theory*. There are differences of opinion and *methodology*.

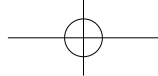
Okamoto: We can’t make firm judgments about the international effects. As Prof. Hayashi said, *there were differing approaches. She has produced minutely detailed results derived from an extremely massive undertaking*. Prof. Kitaoka and I have written more based on what we feel. Whenever we go to the West, we are asked questions about the comfort women issue.

Contrary to Okamoto’s seemingly skillful summary, Hayashi’s opinion did not produce “minutely detailed results” from her quantitative “approach.”

Only the data analysis of the first half can be called “media theory”; the second half, with its excessive ideology and points utterly unrelated to the documentary facts, was a true failure of media theory.

A March 7, 2007 *Washington Post* article (by the Associated Press), written as the comfort women resolution was laying before Congress, quoted “Yukio Hatoyama, the leader of the largest opposition party” as saying that “Japan must have the courage to face up to the truth” and that “Abe is showing his true colors ... and leading Japan in a dangerous direction” in reference to Abe’s statement that “there was no coercive recruitment.”

In the future, we will also need to examine the responsibility of politicians who get carried away with indiscrete political disputes involving Japan’s honor.



Chapter 2

The Influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” on Korean Newspapers

Araki Nobuko (for the committee)

Introduction

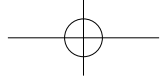
This chapter is an examination into what kind of influence the *Asahi Shimbun*'s reporting on the comfort women from August 1, 1991 to January 31, 1992 had on Korea.

This study covers seven newspapers: the *Chosun Ilbo*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, *Dong-a Ilbo*, *Hankook Ilbo*, *Seoul Shinmun*, *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, and *The Hankyoreh*. The search functions on the websites of the *Chosun Ilbo* and *JoongAng Ilbo* were used for those newspapers, and the “integrated news article search” on the Korea Press Foundation's website was used for the other five. All analysis was done of articles in their original Korean.

Performing an OR search for the keywords “comfort women” and “volunteer corps” produced 541 hits. Broken down by month, there were 43 in August, 12 in September, 24 in October, 42 in November, 73 in December, and 347 in January. All italics are mine.

The Comfort Women Issue Originated in Japan

A number of issues, including that of the comfort women, are treated in Korea as having been brought forward “by Japan.” For example, a January 16, 1992 *JoongAng Ilbo* editorial notes that “we are all the more embarrassed by the fact that it has been through the efforts of Japanese individuals that materials concerning not only the volunteer corps but also the Japanese Empire's forced labor victims have been investigated and uncovered” (“If You Attempt to Free Yourself from the Nightmares of the Past...”).



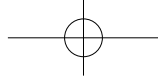
Not only was the issue treated as originating with the Japanese, but there were also those who adopted a doubtful tone concerning what was behind the reporting. That is, were conscientious Japanese being put forward to draw attention to the comfort women issue as an apology to cover up the issues of the trade deficit and technological transfers with Japan? (Kim Dae-jung, “When We Change How We Deal with Japan,” *Chosun Ilbo*, January 19, 1992)

The following January 20 *Dong-a Ilbo* editorial is the most blunt of these articles at describing the situation:

Nearly fifty years after the founding of our nation, our government has never even taken up the volunteer corps issue. As with the victims of the atomic bomb and forced labor, the government has been reliant on civic groups like the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and the Association for the Pacific War Victims to bring the volunteer corps issue forward. The basic stance of the government until this point has been that it is bound by the 1965 Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea; it thus hasn't taken up the cause of compensation for victims of forced labor like the volunteer corps members. Our nation's government has been passive, only paying attention to the volunteer corps issue now that domestic opinion boiled over after it was taken up in Japan. (“Settling the Past is What Opens the Future: Homework Remaining from the Korea-Japan Summit”)

I want to draw attention to the statement that “nearly fifty years after the founding of our nation, our government has never even taken up the volunteer corps issue.” Even during the negotiations over the normalization of Japan-Korea relations, it wasn't considered an issue.

The passage mentions civic groups; these have often appeared in Japan as well, seeking along with others like the Socialist Party and women's groups to make Japan take responsibility for the war and pay compensation. There have also been reports of joint activities between women's groups in Japan



and the two Koreas.

The comfort women weren't considered a major issue until the 1980s and began to be raised by civic groups in the early 1990s.

The Evidence of the Comfort Women Issue

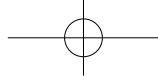
So, what do the Korean media consider evidence of coercive recruitment and military involvement?

The Yoshida testimony is mentioned as contradicting the Japanese government's "position that it was not involved in the recruitment of comfort women and that there is nothing showing that it was." For example, the following article references Yoshida by name:

Evidence has been discovered that makes clear that the Patriotic Labor Society, the group in charge of mobilizing comfort women for the Japanese military (the Women's Volunteer Corps) during the Pacific War, was an organization under the *de facto* control of the Japanese government... The book *The Korean Comfort Women and the Japanese* (Shinjinbutsu Ōrai), written in 1977 by Yoshida Seiji (78), who participated in the coercive recruitment of Korean women, includes claims that provide evidence that the Patriotic Labor Society, which mobilized the comfort women, was under the control of the Japanese government. ("Materials Discovered Showing 'Japanese Government Involvement in the Volunteer Corps' – Book by the Japanese Yoshida Seiji Makes Clear – Cabinet Ministers were Advisors for Patriotic Labor Society in Charge of Recruitment – Involved in Kidnappings," *Chosun Ilbo*, December 8, 1991)

This article's headline includes the word "discovered," but Yoshida's book, written in 1977, was already known; it was not a "discovery." Korean newspapers frequently employ writing of this type.

The Yoshida testimony itself was reported in the *Seoul Shinmun* on December 7, 1991 under a headline of "Yoshida, Man in Charge of Conscription: The



Taking of the Volunteer Corps was Done under Orders from the Military.” There are too many other articles and editorials based on the Yoshida testimony to list them all; “Shameless, Despicable ‘Reckless Words’” (*Seoul Shinmun*, December 8) and “Do You Still Deny the Volunteer Corps?” (*Chosun Ilbo*, December 8) are two more examples just from the same date as the above article.

The Yoshida testimony is repeatedly referenced in Korean newspapers as evidence of “coercive recruitment” and is seen as having “authority.” The coming out of Kim Hak-sun in August 1991 can be seen as the arrival of a living witness embodying the Yoshida testimony.

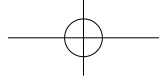
The “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” in Korea

To use the words of Hata Ikuhiko, the “Big Bang” of the comfort women issue occurred in Japan in January 1992. In Korea, this Big Bang was brought about by the *Asahi Shimbun*’s January 11 reporting on “military involvement” and the news reported in Korean newspapers on January 14 that “even twelve-year-old elementary school students were made into comfort women.” This was the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.”

As will be explained below, both of these stories were related to the *Asahi Shimbun*’s reporting.

The morning edition of the January 11 issue of the *Asahi Shimbun* included an article headlined “Materials Showing Military Involvement in Comfort Stations: Japanese Military Communications, Logbooks in the Defense Agency Library.” This article was reported on in several Korean newspapers.

Although it seems to not have become much of a topic of discussion in Japan, an article also ran in the evening edition titled “Materials Showing Military’s Involvement in Comfort Stations Found in Hokkaidō As Well: the War Ministry ‘Lured Prostitutes’” This too was reported on in Korea as “proof.”



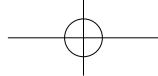
The materials found in the Defense Agency Library were treated in Korea as definitive proof of military involvement and criticism of Japan became more intense. A January 12 *Hankook Ilbo* column entitled “Japan Feigns Ignorance” included the following:

When I first looked at the article related to the comfort women [women’s volunteer corps] that ran on the front page of a Japanese newspaper on the morning of the 11th, I couldn’t understand it for a moment. This was because I wasn’t sure that the discovery of public documents proving that Japanese military authorities had established comfort stations for Japanese units stationed in China in 1938 and had been directly involved in the recruitment and management of comfort women was important enough for the front page.

But as I read the article, I soon found I agreed with it. I came to realize that while we were aware of the fact that *the Japanese government had mobilized the civilian and military polices and [village office] clerks to capture Korean women “as if hunting them,”* [1] the Japanese weren’t.

Furthermore, this article placed pressure on the Japanese government, who has only repeated the words “it was the actions of private operators; the government was uninvolved” as if playing back a tape recorder, asking “have you been just pretending to not know?”

...Well-informed sources in the Japanese government have stated that the official documents just discovered “are not direct evidence that the military directly conscripted comfort women.” If a document sent by the War Ministry in which it directs its units to “regulate the recruitment of comfort women and take the lead in selecting recruiters; do so carefully” is not direct evidence, what more do you need? The memoir of an individual involved in the hunting of volunteer corps members that repents his past actions [2] has also been discovered and classified papers showing that military comfort stations were established to prevent wasting military strength have long been known about. The party who filed a suit seeking compensation last year [3] has also been travelling Japan giving fresh testimony.”



In the text, the passages marked 1 and 2 likely refer to Yoshida Seiji and 3 is likely Kim Hak-sun. The repeated mention of the documents discovered at the Defense Agency also shows that they had become a “staple” piece of evidence.

The third-party panel’s report had the following to say about the *Asahi Shimbun*’s January 11 article “Materials Showing Military Involvement in Comfort Stations: Japanese Military Communications, Logbooks in the Defense Agency Library”:

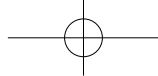
This article has been criticized not just because of its timing but for, in combination with past articles in the *Asahi Shimbun* on the Yoshida testimony and its statements that the battlefield comfort women were “kidnapped,” planting the image in Korean and Japanese popular opinion that the military was involved in the coercive recruitment of the comfort women. However, the article contains no erroneous facts and it does not itself present coercive recruitment as a fact. It is inappropriate to judge the *Asahi Shimbun* as if it had reported in this article that the military was involved in the coercive recruitment of comfort women. (Report, 18-19)

By looking at the January 12 *Hankook Ilbo* column above, we can understand that the “military involvement” article strengthened the image in Korea that military officials had been involved and was regarded in the country as being strong “evidence.”

“Twelve-Year-Old Volunteer Corps Members”

The following appeared in the *JoongAng Ilbo* on January 14 under the headline “Contemporary Japanese Female Teacher: Even Elementary School Students Were Taken”:

Student records showing that even twelve-year-old elementary school students were mobilized by the Japanese Empire as part of the volunteer corps were found on the 14th, causing shock. This fact



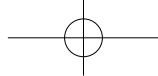
was confirmed in July of last year when Ikeda Masae (68), a Japanese former homeroom teacher for sixth graders at Pangsang Elementary School, visited Yonghi Elementary School in Irwon-dong, Seoul (which holds the student records for Pangsang graduates) looking for the whereabouts of six students and found the records that she herself had created.

Details of these elementary school students joining the volunteer corps, such as the date, location, and circumstances of their mobilization and the way they were persuaded, are written in detail in the life record column of these school records held by Yonghi Elementary School (Principal Ahn Jun-bok)... According to the student records, of the about seventy female sixth graders at the school, five were dispatched as members of the Fujikoshi Volunteer Corps in Toyama on July 2, 1944 and another on February 25, 1945; one of these girls was thirteen, the other five were all twelve.

Other papers also widely reported the “twelve-year-old volunteer corps members.” For example, “Elementary School Students Sent to Volunteer Corps: Their Japanese Teacher Searches for Them, Feeling Remorse” (January 15, *Chosun Ilbo*), “Interview with Japanese Teacher Ikeda: They Were Presented in Accordance with the Governor-General’s Orders” (January 15, *Dong-a Ilbo*), and “Volunteer Corps Systematically Conscripted All Over the Country” (January 16, *Seoul Shinmun*). These stories caused a large commotion and led, for example, to student records at other schools being investigated.

The following is from a January 15 *Dong-a Ilbo* editorial:

Recently we’ve come to faintly understand the pain and sadness of the dreadfully violated “volunteer corps members” who were taken away as comfort women for the Japanese military. It’s difficult to suppress the rage that comes boiling up from the reporting that even twelve-year-old schoolgirls were mobilized and trampled on as sexual playthings on battlefields, however...



The Japanese teacher Ikeda (68, a woman), who was working at the school at the time and sent these girls to the volunteer corps, says that she indeed sent them to the “labor volunteer corps.” And as Ikeda says, the Japanese Empire likely persuaded the young children and their parents by telling them that as “imperial subjects” they had to go to the labor volunteer corps and serve their country.

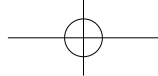
That was a bald-faced lie, however. Multiple people have testified to the fact that, after being mobilized under the name of the labor volunteer corps, the girls were then sent to military comfort stations. Because of her sense of guilt, Ikeda says that she lived alone, unable to look at the sky towards Korea, but she likely did not really know the true nature of the labor volunteer corps...

We don’t know how many young girls were separated from their parents in this way and taken away to the volunteer corps without knowing what awaited them. *There were even cases of crying women being struck and mothers taken away, their nursing babies torn from their breasts.* There are believed to have been from 80 to 200 thousand military comfort women taken this way. (“The Twelve Year-Old Volunteer Corps Members,” *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 15, 1992)

The italicized portion of the text duplicates the imagery from Yoshida Seiji’s testimony that appeared in the *Asahi Shimbun* on October 10, 1991 in which he “again testified as a perpetrator of the comfort women and said he tore nursing children from their mothers” (“The Women’s Pacific War”).

Incidentally, the *Asahi Shimbun* explains concerning the confusion between the comfort women and the volunteer corps that “the terms are misused because research into the comfort women issue had not progressed very far at the time and the terms comfort women and volunteer corps were intermixed in the resources that reporters used as their references” (*Asahi Shimbun*, August 5, 2014), but that doesn’t remove all doubt.

As the misunderstanding that “elementary students were made into comfort women” was flourishing in Korea, “The Widening ‘Volunteer Corps’



Sensation: Considered Comfort Women in Korean Newspaper Reporting” by correspondent Kuroda Katsuhiko ran in the January 16, 1992 *Sankei Shimbun*: “The influential Korean mass media in particular has engaged in a several day-long, widely publicized campaign equating this schoolgirl “volunteer corps” with the military comfort women and incited ethnic sentiment... Through the course of this mass media coverage, much of the Korean people have come to believe that ‘wartime Japan even took elementary students from Korea to be military comfort women.’”

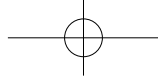
Seoul correspondent Shimokawa Masaharu also wrote the following in the evening edition of the *Mainichi Shimbun* on the 22nd:

“I think that because of how the article is written, there’s a risk that readers will confuse the labor volunteer corps with the military comfort women.” I received a phone call from a Korean acquaintance saying this after reading the evening editions of the Korean newspapers at the branch office on the 14th...

There was a long letter printed on the *Chosun Ilbo*’s letter page. Saying that the Women’s Volunteer Corps was not the same as the military comfort women, it asserted that ‘if you’re trying to get an apology and compensation, you should do so using accurate materials.’ The letter was likely written by someone who had lived through the colonial period. (“‘Asia NOW’: The Volunteer Corps and the Comfort Women”)

People were pointing out the difference even at the time.

There were also other articles in Korea that fostered the misunderstanding that the volunteer corps and the comfort women were the same. An article entitled “My Mother... That’s Not Possible” (January 17, *Hankyoreh*), was written from the viewpoint of the daughter of one of the students that Ikeda was searching for. Was it written after actually interviewing the daughter or was it an imaginary conversation? Supposedly, upon hearing that her mother had been in the volunteer corps, the daughter pictured Yoon Yeo-ok, the heroine of the television series “Eyes of Dawn.”



“Eyes of Dawn” was a historical series broadcast on MBC from October 1991 until the following year; it had three main characters and was set in the tumultuous time on the Korean Peninsula of 1943 to 1953. Its heroine, Yeo-ok, was a comfort woman. It was a popular series with an “average viewership of 44.3%” that “made the existence of the comfort women widely known and caused them to become the object of popular interest.” (Kuroda Katsuhiro, *The True Nature of Korea’s Anti-Japanese Sentiment*, 52)

Returning to the article, it included the following passage: “[my mother’s] meeting with Ikeda, her female Japanese teacher, had a distinct shade of regret and sparked her anger. Her long-ago teacher gave a short apology: ‘I wanted to meet you. I was worried. I’m sorry.’ But my mother’s deep resentment would not be washed away by a single apology.”

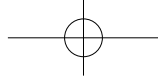
The student had only worked at a factory, but the article was written so as to foster the misconception that she had been made into a comfort woman.

Estranged from the facts, the story of the “twelve-year-old volunteer corps members” spread widely. The *Chosun Ilbo*’s famous column “The Lee Kyu-Tae Corner” included a claim that “worst of all, tens of thousands were sacrificed as sex comfort women; even twelve-year-old children at elementary schools were taken away.” (“The Japanese Claiming of Bodies” January 17)

Next the relationship between the twelve-year-old volunteer corps members and the *Asahi* will be explained.

According to the January 14 *JoongAng Ilbo* article mentioned previously, the former teacher’s visit to Korea and examination of the student records happened in July 1991.

The reason that this former teacher went to search for her students in Korea was because “an anti-war gathering was held in Osaka on September 21, 1990. After I talked about how I was worried about the students who had gone into the labor volunteer corps at my urging, Toyama Television, which was covering the gathering, looked for me.” (“Enticed with Being Able to Eat



until Full: Interview with Japanese Teacher Ikeda,” *JoongAng Ilbo*, January 15, 1992)

In the same year that the teacher went to Seoul, a letter she had written appeared in the Osaka edition of the *Asahi Shimbun* on September 16 under the title of “I Sent My Students to the Women’s Volunteer Corps... (The Women’s Pacific War).” In this she wrote the following about her trip to Seoul: “When I visited the home of Prof. Yun [Yun Jong-ok, a former professor at Ewha Womans University], who has given everything to this movement, and heard that ‘those who were a little older were sent to be military comfort women after being recruited for the volunteer corps,’ I was shocked. I didn’t know ... of either the suffering of the comfort women ... or my students’ forty-six years of anguish...”

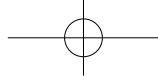
Yun Jong-ok is a central figure in the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan that has grappled with the comfort women issue. Although she explicitly says that “those who were a little older were sent to be military comfort women after being recruited for the volunteer corps,” she doesn’t give any evidence for that here.

An article in the January 16, 1992 Osaka edition of the *Asahi Shimbun* that appeared under the headline “Korean Public Increasing Critical: ‘Even Elementary Students were Comfort Women’” wrote that “the Korean mass media’s criticism of Japan had become more severe” and “the public’s anti-Japanese sentiment is rapidly worsening.”

Although it noted that “the Korean mass media conspicuously equates the volunteer corps with the military comfort women and much of the Korean public are interpreting this as meaning that ‘the Japanese made even elementary school students become comfort women,’” it did not mention that it itself had helped spread the misconception, having run an article on this topic the year before in which it had written that the two were the same.

The Effect of the Propaganda

The timing of the “twelve-year-old volunteer corps members” reporting was



as bad as possible for Japan. Prime Minister Miyazawa's visit to Korea began only two days later, on the 16th. While Miyazawa was in Seoul, the *Hankook Ilbo* carried an article featuring Yoshida Seiji's testimony:

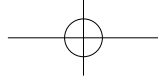
- “The recruitment of military comfort women was done by using force to capture them, just like in a slave raid”
- “[C]omfort stations were managed by the Japanese government ... they were gang raped by several dozen soldiers a day and confined in places that were uninhabitable”
- “[The Patriotic Labor Society] was a state organ like a government corporation ... its national president was former Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, a member of the House of Peers...”
- “Because the military comfort women were a matter of the upmost secrecy from the beginning, it is believed that there were no documents directly dealing with them.” (“Testimony from ‘Forced Labor Demon’ Yoshida Seiji,” *Hankook Ilbo*, January 17, 1992)

It spoke of Japan's “barbarism” and “unscrupulousness” as if to apply the finishing blow.

Korean newspapers described the circumstances of Miyazawa's visit to Korea as follows: “the debate over the volunteer corps started to heat up a few days before Prime Minister Miyazawa came to Seoul and completely dominated the media” (editorial in *The Hankyoreh*, January 17, 1992). “Imposing police were spread out along the snowy streets when Prime Minister Miyazawa came; all the newspapers were in an uproar with their articles on the ‘elementary schoolgirl volunteer corps.’” (Column in *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 18, 1992)

During his visit the Blue House rudely announced at a press conference that twenty-two minutes of the second, seventy-five minute meeting between the leaders had been spent on the comfort women issue and that Miyazawa had apologized eight times.

Korea, which had sought to correct its trade deficit with Japan and achieve a technology transfer, did not obtain any clear results from the issue. From



the Japanese perspective, the trade deficit resulted from Korea's economic structure and the transfer of technology was a non-governmental matter. As for the comfort women issue, even given the differing expectations between the two sides, it has to be regarded as damaging that, despite Japanese apologies, it couldn't regain control over the issue. Korea had so little to show from the summit that a January 18 *JoongAng Ilbo* editorial asked "what was the point of the Korean-Japanese summit?"

Essentially, there were issues during this period that, viewed from a larger perspective, were more important like the end of the Cold War, the simultaneous entry of North and South Korea to the United Nations the year before, the North Korean nuclear issue, and making progress in Japanese negotiations with North Korea.

This series of events in January 1992 had a lasting effect on Japan-Korea relations. The greatest damage was the increase in the divide between the people of the two countries due to a misunderstanding of the facts of the comfort women issue. Because the issue involved sex, the contempt and hatred between the two was all the stronger.

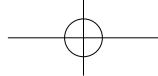
The arrival of a situation that undermined the 1965 treaty that marked the starting point for postwar Japan-Korea relations and gave Korea a new anti-Japan card to play also caused problems in the future. Japan-Korea relations were greatly harmed through this incident.

The "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" can truly be judged as having been successful.

Indications of Spreading Internationally

Even more seriously, the influence of the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" was not just on Japan and Korea; it began to spread around the world. Following Miyazawa's visit to Korea, Korean newspapers increased their references to the Western media.

The January 20 issue of the *Dong-a Ilbo* article "American Media Interest in



the Barbarism of the Volunteer Corps – *Washington Post* Editorial – Japanese Government Intervention Confirmed – Take Responsibility” made the following reference:

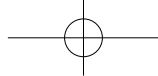
In an editorial on the 18th entitled “‘Comfort Women’: A Barbaric Act,” the *Washington Post* points out that “this wasn’t a case of atrocities being committed on the watch of an unsuspecting or negligent military command during a time of war ... it was the Japanese Imperial Army itself that encouraged and supported that purpose” and criticizes the Japanese government: “No more comprehensible is the fact that it has taken the Japanese government nearly 50 years to own up to the cruelty and culpability of its colonial administration in Asia. Until this week, Tokyo had maintained that the Japanese armed forces’ notorious degradation of women all over the Pacific theater was the work of private merchants.”

The article “American Media – Volunteer Corps Barbarism – Strongly Attacks ‘Incomprehensible Degradation of Women’” in the January 29 issue of the *Dong-a Ilbo*, included the following after referencing the *Washington Post* articles of the 16th and 18th and the *New York Times* article published on the 27th:

We’re interested in the American response to the volunteer corps issue primarily because international opinion is important for pinning down the attitude of the Japanese government. While it’s strange for the governments of other countries to become involved in the volunteer corps issue, arousing international sympathy over the issue can put pressure on Japan. We’re trying to change the situation by adding this kind of complication and making it more than just a dispute between Korea and Japan.

It’s almost like they were predicting that the comfort women issue would extend to America. The above three American newspaper articles are also touched on in Chapter 1.

The January 22 *JoongAng Ilbo* showed that the issue could potentially reach



the United Nations as well in an article “Move to Put Volunteer Corps Issue before the United Nations – Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan Press Conference.”

The January 21 issue of the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* referenced a German newspaper in its article “Japan’s Volunteer Corps – Evading for 46 years – Brazen Attempt to Avoid Compensation”: “The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* pointed out that Japan’s belated acknowledgement of the truth on the volunteer corps issue after making absurd assertions and repeatedly feigning ignorance over the past 46 years was a historical event, the first victory for justice. It also criticized the country for continuing to avoid paying compensation despite this acknowledgement, saying that it showed a brazen lack of discernment towards its painful history.”

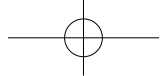
In a front page column on January 22 entitled “Speaking Freely,” the *Dong-a Ilbo* wrote the following referencing the *Times of London*: “The barbarism of the volunteer corps has become the subject of criticism from around the world ... such atrocious, barbaric situations that we hesitate to speak of them are being reported one after another, causing the cruelty of the Japanese Empire to be denounced by the conscience of humanity. The same paper stated that a Japanese soldier shoved a broken bottle into a comfort woman who refused to have sex with him because she was too tired.”

The influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” had spread to the West.

The Influence is Not Temporary

The things that were taken as evidence for the comfort women issue in Korea in 1991 and 1992 are still in effect. The following is from “Prime Minister Noda, Try Claiming ‘There Were No Comfort Women’ at the UN,” a *Chosun Ilbo* editorial from August 30, 2012:

Prof. Yoshimi Yoshiaki of Japan’s Chūō University made “*On the recruitment of women working at military comfort stations*” (created by the Ministry of War in 1938) public in 1992. This document stated



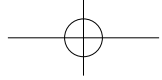
that the Japanese military used kidnapping and similar methods when recruiting comfort women. And there is testimony from Japanese supporting this. Yoshida Seiji, who served as the head of the Yamaguchi Prefecture Patriotic Labor Society for three years beginning in 1942, has testified that he “mobilized Korean women as comfort women” and “left Shimonoseki and arrived in Jeju Island on May 17, 1943 and engaged in *women hunting*.” Yoshida says that “everything related to the comfort women was classified as a military secret.”

We can see that the influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” continues. Especially significant is that the Yoshida testimony is still being brought out as “evidence” even after having been determined to be false.

I’d now like to touch upon Korean history textbooks. According to the research of Lee Young-hoon, the textbooks first mentioned the “volunteer corps” in 1952. The volunteer corps and comfort women had not yet been confused with each other at this point; they were distinguished until the early 1960s. To borrow Lee’s words, “the Korean people’s collective memory that the volunteer corps and comfort women were the same had not yet been formed.”

References combining the volunteer corps and the comfort women appeared in 1968, but this did not long persist and there were no further references to either until 1978. After textbooks became subject to government approval in 1979, they read: “[the Japanese Empire] implemented the student volunteer soldier and conscription systems. Our students and young men were taken to the front lines and even extremely young girls were forcibly taken to production facilities and the front.” In the next approved textbook, in use from 1983 to 1996, this became “even our country’s women became victims of the war of aggression.”

The landmark year was 1997, the year that the passage became: “The Japanese Empire ... implemented the student volunteer soldier and conscription systems. Much of Korea’s manhood was sacrificed on the battlefield due to this. Women were also taken away at this time in the name

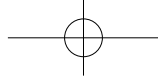


of the volunteer corps and forced into inhuman conditions as the Japanese military's comfort women." (Lee Young-hoon, "The Portrayal and Myths of the Japanese Empire's Plundering in National History Textbooks," in *The Metahistory of the Debate over East Asian History*)

Although this change in Korean textbooks cannot, of course, be easily attributed to the influence of the *Asahi Shimbun*, at the very least it can be pointed out that the "coercive recruitment of comfort women" and the idea that "the volunteer corps and the comfort women were the same" only appeared in Korean textbooks after the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Incidentally, there is a section on the former comfort women with the title "The Japanese Military's Comfort Women: Forced to Live as ... *Sex Slaves*" in the column "Historical Records Room" of *Middle School History* (Vol. II, 79), (Dusan Donga, first edition 2012, second edition 2013), the textbook believed to be in current use in Korean schools. The illustration, entitled "The day I was taken away," is that of a woman. The scene is of an innocent young girl with a Korean hairstyle wearing a *chima jeogori* being dragged by the arm from a flower garden. Only the arm of the one dragging her away can be seen. The same illustration appears in *High School Korean History* (Samhwa Publishing, 1st Edition 2011, 4th Edition 2014, 276). Images of coercive recruitment and sexual slavery continue to be widely used.

On August 30, 2011, the Constitutional Court of Korea ruled that the Korean government's failure to seek compensation from the Japanese government for the former comfort women was unconstitutional. Based on this ruling, the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has continuously sought diplomatic negotiations to this day with the Japanese government over compensation to the former comfort women. The Japanese have rejected these requests. This led President Lee Myung-bak to press Prime Minister Noda hard for a resolution; he even went so far as to place pressure on him by landing on [the disputed islands of] Takeshima. Saying that Japan should present a plan for resolving the comfort women issue, President Park Geun-hye refused to hold Japan-Korean leadership summits and criticized Japan to the leaders of several nations. In the Constitutional Court's summary of



the case in the opening of the ruling that provided a cause for the worsening of Japan-Korea relations, it wrote that “the plaintiffs are ‘Japanese military comfort women victims’ who were coercively mobilized by the Japanese Empire, subjected to sexual abuse, and forced to live as comfort women.” It rendered its opinion taking this perception as a given. The image of the coercive recruitment and sexual enslavement of the comfort women produced by the *Asahi*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” can be considered to have been a prerequisite for the ruling.

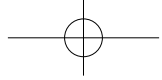
Considering the above facts, the section of the third-party panel’s report in which Okamoto Yukio and Kitaoka Shin’ichi wrote that “the Yoshida testimony cannot be said to have played a large role in the establishment of the perception that ... the Japanese military directly, collectively, violently, and systematically abducted many women, assaulted them, and forced them to become comfort women. And the evidence that the *Asahi Shimbun* exerted major influence in the creation of this perception is not decisive” (Report, 52), which is far divorced from the actual conditions in Korea.

Some of what they write is correct, such as their point that “in a sense, the *Asahi Shimbun* and other members of the Japanese media endorsed extreme remarks over the comfort women issue in Korea” (Ibid.). A more accurate way of putting it, however, would be to say that the *Asahi* was re-endorsing the extreme remarks in Korea that it itself had begun or, put more moderately, that it had induced.

The influence of the uproar from 1991 to 1992 was not temporary. This is because the Yoshida testimony continued to be repeated in articles and editorials in Korean newspapers as evidence of the coercive recruitment of the comfort women until at least 2012. These newspapers have still not retracted those pieces.

Conclusion

There is a tacit understanding in Korea that “the Japanese Empire committed barbarous acts.” Only a minority of those who are knowledgeable about the period when Korea was part of Japan and are aware that that isn’t true are



willing to publicly reject that understanding. And those Koreans who aren't familiar with it believe that barbarism took place. Naturally, the latter group will only increase as time passes. There is a tendency to prioritize perceptions and emotions over facts when arguing about Japan.

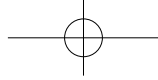
Korea has traditionally held the view that Japan is a country of barbarians with low sexual morals. And the story of coercive recruitment might be compatible with their historical experience of having women taken away like tribute by other ethnic groups on the Asian mainland.

It's not hard to imagine that tossing tales of "comfort women raids" into such a society would lead to them being taken as factual and cause an uproar. We've already seen how Yoshida Seiji's "testimony" implanted a certain image of the comfort women among the Koreans and became important evidence of the coercive recruitment of the comfort women.

On the other hand, there are those within Japan who think "Japan was thoroughly in the wrong and did cruel things to the virtuous people of the Korean Peninsula" and are welcomed by Korea as "conscientious Japanese." The historical perceptions of the "conscientious Japanese" and the Koreans have an affinity. It is because the respective roles of victim and perpetrator match each other perfectly that the comfort women issue has easily permeated Korea and has continued to reproduce even after its foundation has been refuted. The presence of the *Asahi Shimbun* as the media outlet transmitting the position of the "conscientious Japanese" has been a major factor in this.

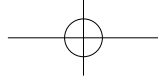
Beginning in the 1990s, after Japan had achieved economic success, the government and public became conceited and careless; they lost their sense of self-defense. The country's excessive sense of atonement caused its clumsy response to the comfort women issue and the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment."

Even taking into account these circumstances, it's difficult to think, as suggested in the third-party panel's report, that "the influence of *Asahi Shimbun*'s reporting on the comfort women issue was just one part of the



comfort women issue.” (Ibid., 82)

As has been described in detail above, the *Asahi Shimbun*’s reporting clearly had an influence on Korea and can appropriately be considered the comfort women issue’s “starting point.”



Chapter 3

The Influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” on the United Nations

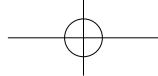
Katsuoka Kanji (for the committee)

Decisive Gaps in the Third-Party Panel’s Report

Although the *Asahi Shimbun* third-party panel listed “the influence of the *Asahi Shimbun*’s comfort women reporting on international relations, especially those between Japan and Korea” as one of its “areas of investigation” (Report, 1), it largely ignored the influence on the United Nations and did not touch upon it.

As mentioned in the Overview, each member of the panel (Okamoto, Kitaoka, Hatano, and Hayashi) only gave their individual view on “the influence on the international community” in the third-party panel report; no unified view was presented for the panel. Yet wasn’t examining “the influence on the international community” of the *Asahi*’s comfort women reporting one of the most important tasks referred to the third-party panel by the *Asahi Shimbun*? Evading that task by only including the various views of each member (which are completely different from each other concerning the degree of influence) in the third-party panel’s report was an extremely irresponsible approach for the panel to take.

There is widespread consensus that the United Nations’ Coomaraswamy Report (1996) is an important factor to consider in determining whether the *Asahi Shimbun*’s comfort women coverage had a negative influence on the international community. For example, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide pointed out at a September 5, 2014 press conference that “there is no question that part of the [Coomaraswamy] Report was influenced by *Asahi Shimbun* articles that have since been retracted.” That the third-party panel either ignored or neglected to consider whether the comfort women

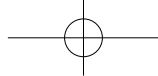


reporting influenced the United Nations despite this has to be considered a major flaw in its report.

Hatano and Hayashi do touch on the Coomaraswamy Report, however. Hatano analyzes the tone the *Asahi* took in its coverage of the report and finds that the paper's reporting was "completely in support" of it and "argued as if compensation by the state was the only option" (Ibid., 66). However, he didn't engage in any investigation into whether the *Asahi's* past comfort women reporting had influenced the report. The Coomaraswamy Report was the origin of the term "sexual slavery" which has now spread throughout the world along with the perception that the Japanese military systematically coercively recruited the comfort women in "slave raids." This has been widely acknowledged as true by the international community. The report had a direct influence on the later US House of Representatives resolution (2007) and the comfort women memorials constructed throughout America from 2010 on. Hayashi concluded through her quantitative analysis of American newspapers that the "line of argument" that "[the Coomaraswamy Report] was involved [in causing the spread of the term 'sexual slavery'] and that the *Asahi* articles on the Yoshida testimony influenced the report... could not be confirmed." She was thus negative concerning the influence of both. (Report Appendix 2, Hayashi Kaori "The State of International Reporting on "the Comfort Women Issue" as Based on Data," 31). Although, as Hayashi says, "the term 'sexual slavery' gradually permeated the spreading global movement against sexual violence and human trafficking that was made a topic of discussion by the feminist movement in the 1990s," we believe that the *Asahi's* articles on the Yoshida testimony also exerted a strong influence on the Coomaraswamy Report.

Considering the importance of the situation, this Independent Investigation Committee would thus like to attempt an analysis from an original position, focusing on the relationship between the *Asahi Shimbun's* comfort women reporting and the Coomaraswamy Report.

The Relationship between the *Asahi's* First Reports on the "Coerced Recruitment" of Comfort Women and *My War Crimes*



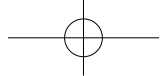
Yoshida Seiji's testimony on the "coercive recruitment" of comfort women and "comfort women raids" was first introduced to the public in an article in the September 2, 1982 Osaka edition of the *Asahi Shimbun*.

This article, which had the sensationalistic title and subheadings "I Also Took Away Korean Women – A Former Mobilization Leader Speaks – Through Violence and Force – Breaking His Silence with Trepidation after 37 Years," discussed the contents of Yoshida's talk in Osaka the previous day (September 1) and had the following to say on what "hunting" the comfort women was like:

The former mobilization leader who directed the coercive recruitment of Korean women testified to the cruel conditions of the "comfort women hunting"... As Yoshida stood at the podium at a gathering in the Naniwa Liberation Hall in Osaka, he began by saying "I'm only going to talk about what I experienced." "Korean comfort women were sent to battlefields as the 'Imperial Army Comfort Women's Volunteer Corps.' We called it 'hunting' at the time rather than 'conscripting.'" He then reproduced the conditions of one week on Jeju Island in the early summer of 1943 when two hundred young Korean women were "hunted." He was accompanied by ten fully-armed Japanese soldiers in preparation for resistance from Korean men. When they found a settlement, the soldiers would first surround it. Then nine of Yoshida's subordinates would rush in simultaneously. The young women's arms were twisted and they were dragged into alleys. They were then shoved into a roofed truck. As the kidnapping was going on, the soldiers would enter the truck and gang rape the women ... this indiscriminate "hunting" would go on for several days.

Nagaoka Noboru, a former assistant chief of the *Asahi Shimbun's* foreign news desk, had the following to say about this article:

The *Asahi Shimbun* rolled out its extensive coverage of the comfort women with its article on Yoshida Seiji's testimony. The other papers followed its lead, creating a strong trend. That led to Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi's official apology to the Korean president (1992) and



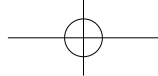
Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno Yōhei's statement of "apologies and remorse" (1993), and was ultimately taken up by the United Nations committee dealing with human rights. Since the first step on this path was the "false testimony," just retracting the articles isn't enough to resolve the situation. (Nagaoka Noboru, "Comfort Women Reporting: Articles Retracted after 32 Years," *Kojirakawa Tsūshin* No. 18, August 31, 2014)

The *Asahi Shimbun's* misreporting had given [the testimony] the paper's endorsement; Yoshida Seiji would later be very active on lecture tours and selling books. (Nagaoka Noboru, "Comfort Women Reporting: Who is the Most Responsible?" *Kojirakawa Tsūshin* No. 19, September 6, 2014)

The "book" mentioned here that Yoshida used the *Asahi's* "endorsement" to sell was his second work, *My War Crimes: The Coercive Recruitment of Koreans* (San-ichi Publishing, 1983). Yoshida's first book, *The Korean Comfort Women and the Japanese* (Shinjinbutsu Ōrai, 1977), had contained nothing on "hunts" that resembled "slave raids," but he now gave a completely different story, stating that he was involved with "comfort women hunting" on Jeju Island:

Conscripting people on the Korean Peninsula was handled differently than when dealing with Japanese. It was done as if "hunting slaves"... I undertook the "slave hunting" of Koreans with a "patriotic heart" based on the Japanese ideals of "following the way of the loyal subject" and "giving selfless service to one's country." (Introduction, 3)

I immediately ordered the village's women be seized... The squad members and soldiers broke off into pairs, surrounding the screaming and crying women from both sides, and dragged them into the alley one after another, grabbing them by the arm. We captured eight young girls... The squad members followed behind the soldiers, dragging the eight girls as they cried "Aigoo!"... The squad members subdued the girls and dragged them to the truck, twisting their arms. Once they were shoved into the back of the truck, the conscription squad immediately



departed. After we'd driven east down main road along the coast for five or six kilometers, I told Sergeant Tani to drive the truck into a patch of woods next to a rocky mountain. "The soldiers will be expecting compensation for guarding the conscription of the comfort women. We'll take a short thirty-minute break here and let them have fun." The soldiers were pleased when Tani gave the order for the break. When the squad members got out of the truck carrying the girls, the soldiers all climbed into the back. The squad members laughed as the girls' began screaming. These girls had only just been conscripted but were already being made comfort women by the soldiers. (Chapter 3, "Comfort Women Hunting' on Jeju Island," 107-110)

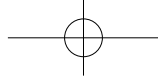
Yoshida's story is largely the same as that given in the *Asahi's* first article on him but has clearly become more detailed. The *Asahi's* misreporting had given him its "endorsement" and Yoshida's story had greatly expanded its "slave raids" and "comfort women hunting."

Examining the Coomaraswamy Report's Sources

Looking at the Coomaraswamy Report, there is a section that directly cites Yoshida's *My War Crimes* as a source:

29. ...Moreover, the wartime experiences of one raider, Yoshida Seiji, are recorded in his book, in which he confesses to having been part of slave raids in which, among other Koreans, as many as 1,000 women were obtained for "comfort women" duties under the National Labour Service Association as part of the National General Mobilization Law. 10/
(10/ Yoshida Seiji, *My War Crimes: The Forced Draft of Koreans*, Tokyo, 1983)

What's significant here is that Coomaraswamy cites Yoshida's *My War Crimes* and refers to "slave raids." This is because it means that the *Asahi's* "false reporting" on the "comfort women raids" manufactured by Yoshida Seiji (that it has now completely retracted) made its way into the Coomaraswamy Report via the book *My War Crimes* authored by that same person.



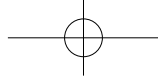
Since the Coomaraswamy Report also introduces the view of Hata Ikuhiko who voiced “disagreement” with Yoshida Seiji’s book, the relevant portion of the report will also be shown for the sake of fairness:

40. ...Dr. Hata explained that he had visited Cheju-do, Republic of Korea, in 1991/92 seeking evidence and had come to the conclusion that the major perpetrators of the “comfort women crime” were in fact Korean district chiefs, brothel owners and even parents of the girls themselves who, he alleged, were aware of the purpose of the recruitment of their daughters. To substantiate his arguments, Dr. Hata presented the Special Rapporteur with two prototype systems of recruitment of Korean women for comfort houses in the years 1937 to 1945. Both models provide that Korean parents, Korean village chiefs and Korean brokers, that is to say private individuals, were knowing collaborators and instrumental in the recruitment of women to serve as sex slaves for the Japanese military. Dr. Hata also believed that most “comfort women” were under contract with the Japanese army and received up to 110 times more income per month (1,000-2,000 yen) than the average soldier (15-20 yen).

Coomaraswamy writes here as if there had been a contractual relationship between the military and the comfort women, but what Hata had asserted to Coomaraswamy was that “the comfort women’s contractual employment relationships were with private individuals (comfort stations managers), not the Japanese military.”

In his book, Hata fiercely criticizes the way the Coomaraswamy Report “twisted the point of my argument ... to present it as saying the exact opposite” and says that “it’s truly upsetting that [the report] ignored the American military report and adopted a distorted interpretation, acting as if there had been a contractual relationship [between the comfort women and the military].” (Hata Ikuhiko, *The Comfort Women and Battlefield Sex*, Shinchōsha, 1999, 268-270)

This issue is also related to the debate over whether the comfort women were

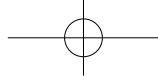


merely a type of prostitute or something that had taken on a more organized nature via the military. Hata demanded a correction from Coomaraswamy herself and the United Nations but was ignored. I believe that the likely reason that Coomaraswamy was so persistent in adhering to the contractual relationship between the comfort women and the military that she would ignore Hata's protests was that she was concerned that, if she rejected such a relationship, it would destroy the argument that there had been systematic "coercive recruitment" and "slave raids" by the military. Such an insincere and obstinate approach is far removed from the fair attitude demanded by a United Nations report.

The second chapter of the Coomaraswamy Report (entitled "Historical Background") is entirely based on Yoshida's aforementioned book and George Hicks' *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War* (1995). Hata criticizes this book by Hicks as "beyond redemption, filled with elementary mistakes and distortions" (Ibid., 266). This book by Hicks is completely reliant upon Yoshida Seiji's book when discussing "slave raids," however. I'll quote the relevant section of Hicks' book: "If other methods failed, there was always the slave raid. One such raider was Yoshida Seiji, who in 1983 published his wartime experiences, *My War Crimes: The Forced Draft of Koreans...* In cases of urgent demand, however, Yoshida describes how he himself led 'slave-raid' expeditions which recruited thousands of male labourers and about 1000 women for comfort duties." (Hicks, 55)

Although the source for this is not given in Hicks' book, the Coomaraswamy Report, as mentioned earlier, wrote based on Yoshida's *My War Crimes* that "one raider, Yoshida Seiji ... confesses to having been part of slave raids in which, among other Koreans, as many as 1,000 women were obtained for 'comfort women' duties." It can be surmised that this was likely written in the report based on Hicks' account rather than from directly consulting Yoshida's book. This means that of the eleven references in Chapter 2 of the report, ten were from Hicks' book. This is explicitly written out on the reference page, with notes 1 through 9 and 11 being Hicks, and 10 being Yoshida's book.

The Coomaraswamy Report's endnotes are listed below for reference:



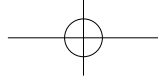
Notes

- 1/ G. Hicks, "Comfort women, sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Force," Heinemann Asia, Singapore, 1995, pp. xiii, 24, 42 and 75.
- 2/ Ibid., p. 23.
- 3/ Ibid., p. xvi.
- 4/ Ibid., p. 115.
- 5/ Ibid., p. 19.
- 6/ Ibid., p. 29.
- 7/ Ibid., pp. 20, 21, 22 and generally.
- 8/ Ibid., pp. 23-26 (and elsewhere in the testimonies of the "comfort women" themselves).
- 9/ Ibid., p. 25.
- 10/ Yoshida Seiji, *My War Crimes: the Forced Draft of Koreans*, Tokyo, 1983.
- 11/ Ibid., pp. 24-25.

Coomaraswamy likely read Hicks' book and relied upon it completely as she wrote her section on the "historical background" of the comfort women in Chapter 2. Given that Hicks introduces Yoshida's book when discussing "slave raids" (as shown above), she then increased the number of sources by using a second-hand quotation. There seems to be no other understandable reason for why the note for Yoshida's book is the only one to not include a page number.

Neither Hicks nor Coomaraswamy could read Japanese, so they would have been unable to read Yoshida's book directly. In the acknowledgments to Hicks' book, he credits the Korean-Japanese Yumi Lee with finding "about 80 per cent of the material (much of it exceedingly obscure) used in writing this book" (Ibid., 7); the information in Yoshida's book was likely part of that. Coomaraswamy was utterly reliant on Hicks' book and wrote the story of the "slave raids" using its shaky information. Since Hicks' book (published in 1995) was the only general book written on the comfort women in English in 1996, she had no other choice.

We can ascertain the following from the above examination. Hicks and



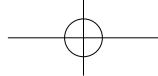
Yoshida's books were the only references for the "historical background" of the systematic "coercive recruitment" of comfort women by the military included in the Coomaraswamy Report. However, Hicks' book also used Yoshida's book as its source for "slave raids"; Yoshida's discussion of "slave raids" and "comfort women raids" in *My War Crimes* thus ultimately influenced the Coomaraswamy Report through Hicks' book. Not only that, but it was the false information on the comfort women "raiding" first reported by the *Asahi* and then repeated in the "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" that served as the origin of Yoshida's book.

Listing the above relationship chronologically clearly establishes the influence: the *Asahi's* first report (1982) → Yoshida's book (1983) → the *Asahi's* "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" (1995) → Hicks' book (1995) → the Coomaraswamy Report (1996). Since the *Asahi's* first report was "a false report," all of the others, Yoshida and Hicks' books and the Coomaraswamy Report, were also "false." Accordingly it is our belief that the *Asahi Shimbun* has the serious international duty to request that the United Nations retract the Coomaraswamy Report as the Yoshida testimony that it was based on a "false report."

The *Asahi* Should Open its Eyes to its Major International Responsibility for Spreading Misinformation

At the December 26, 2014 press conference in which he accepted the third-party panel's report, *Asahi Shimbun* President Watanabe Masataka merely stated regarding the influence on the international community that he had "heard a variety of comments on the influence on the international community, from those who concluded that it had exerted a certain degree of influence to those who held that any influence was extremely limited. This issue is, as would be expected, an extremely difficult one." He wouldn't even acknowledge that his company's reporting on the comfort women had had a definite influence on the international community.

This has to be regarded as extremely irresponsible. The Yoshida testimony, which served as the sole source in the Coomaraswamy Report for the "coerced recruitment" and "slave raids" of the comfort women, began with the

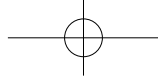


misreporting of the *Asahi*. It is doubtful whether Yoshida's book would ever have been written had the *Asahi* not given his testimony its "endorsement" through its misreporting. Even if it had, the *Asahi* itself had also begun to have doubts about the credibility of the Yoshida testimony from 1993 on due to the on-location investigations of Hata and others; had it retracted its "misreporting" at that time, Hicks' later book (1995) and the Coomaraswamy Report (1996) likely wouldn't exist.

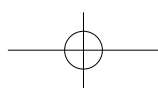
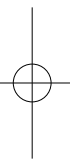
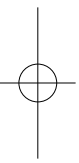
This doesn't just concern the Coomaraswamy Report. For example, had the *Asahi* retracted the Yoshida testimony as "misreporting" and announced that fact to the international community at the time of its first examination into its past comfort women reporting in 1997, neither the McDougall Report (1998) which, influenced by the Coomaraswamy Report, held that "the Japanese Government and the Japanese Imperial Army forced over 200,000 women into sexual slavery in rape centres throughout Asia" nor the American House of Representatives resolution (2007) that recommended that the Japanese government acknowledge that the Japanese military forced a "system of sexual slavery" and "should educate current and future generations about this horrible crime" would likely exist. And the nearly-identical comfort women memorials now being constructed across American "in memory of the more than 200,000 women and girls who were abducted by the armed forces of the government of Imperial Japan" (from the comfort women memorial in Palisades Park, New Jersey) would likely not exist.

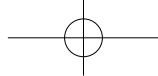
The *Asahi* didn't retract the Yoshida testimony from the time of its first reports (1982) to 2014. Even though it had any number of opportunities to do so and apologize during that period, it didn't. The *Asahi* turned its back on its responsibility and continued to intentionally allow its misreporting to stand. The current situation was created by the *Asahi*. The *Asahi*'s approach of attempting to conceal its misreporting by evading responsibility and "changing its argument" resulted in misreporting of the Japanese military's systematic "coercive recruitment," "slave raids," and "sexual slavery" increasingly expanding overseas.

Put this way, the *Asahi Shimbun*'s responsibility is extremely large. We feel that the *Asahi*, having completely retracted the Yoshida testimony as



“misreporting,” has the social duty and responsibility to not only work to have the United Nations completely retract the Coomaraswamy Report but should also correct the international community’s misconceptions about the comfort women and submit an apology advertisement to all the major media outlets in Korea and the United States.





Chapter 4

The Real Damage of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” in North America

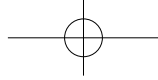
Takahashi Shirō (for the committee)

As stated in the Overview, the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” has been influential on the comfort women memorials being erected across the United States and on American history text books. The situation has worsened to the extent that many Japanese living in America are experiencing psychological suffering; it has caused deep rifts among local residents, producing real harm including hatred and bullying in their daily lives and hardships in their religious activities. Japanese who have suffered real damage in America have filed a lawsuit against the *Asahi Shimbun* for its misreporting on the “comfort women.”

The Comfort Women Memorials and Statues Being Constructed Across the United States

I’d like to first report on the comfort women memorials and statues that have spread across America. Comfort women memorials in America first began to be pushed for in about 2009, largely by Korean-American residents. According to a Korean-America organization, their goal for placing a memorial was “to appeal to America and the World about the importance of peace, so that inhuman actions like the comfort women never happen again.” Korean organizations, having joined with the Chinese anti-Japanese organization “Global Alliance for Preserving the History of WW II in Asia” and others like Japanese-American US Representative Mike Honda, have achieved this by strongly lobbying local legislators for the memorials.

These Korean organizations have included groups like “the Korean American Association of Greater New York,” “the Korean American Public Affairs Committee,” and “the Korean American Civic Empowerment.” There have



been cases where memorials not adequately reflecting the desires of local residents have been forced through and where leadership struggles between political organizations and other disputes have arisen.

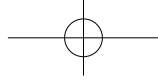
Kim Dong-suk, executive director of the Korean American Voters' Council, stated the following concerning the long-term goal of the erection of comfort women memorials: "exposing the truths concealed by Japan to American society is, in the long-term, tied to the resolution of the East Sea [renaming] and Dokdo [Takeshima] issues." It's essential to note that he made clear that the erection of comfort women memorial and statues was for the purpose of resolving territorial disputes. This point is extremely important.

The Korean assertions are based solely upon the vague testimony of elderly individuals claiming to be former comfort women in the "Kōno Statement" (this statement incorporated requests made by the Korean government in advance consultation with the Japanese government, including which former comfort women would be selected to give testimony). They are inconsistent with the frequent kidnapping of women by Korean private operators at the time and the US Office of War Information Psychological Warfare Team's "Japanese Prisoner of War Interrogation Report No. 49" from 1944 that held that the Korean comfort women were prostitutes employed at high-wages (information that was based on the interrogation of twenty Korean comfort women and two Japanese civilians captured in Myitkyin, Burma).

Incidentally, that same report clearly states that "a 'comfort girl' is nothing more than a prostitute or 'professional camp follower' attached to the Japanese Army."

Also, as the *Sankei Shimbun* (January 1, 2014) has pointed out, the placement of comfort women memorials and statues by Korean-Americans is part of the movement to lower the status of Japan and the Japanese people in the world. The Japanese comfort women are omitted from all but the text of the Glendale memorial.

The key phrases commonly found in the texts of the comfort women memorial are "taken (abducted) by the Japanese imperial military," "more



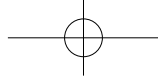
than 200,000 comfort women,” and “sexual slavery.” All of these are “distortions” that go against the historical facts and reflect the deep influence of the “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment.”

The first comfort women memorial erected in America was at the Palisades Park Public Library, Bergen County, New Jersey on October 23, 2010. Palisades Park is a Koreatown where Korean-Americans make up 52% of residents. A Korean-American, Jason Kim, serves as deputy mayor, and another sits on the city council.

Consul General of Japan in New York Hiroki Shigeyuki sought to have the memorial removed in May 2012, but this request was refused by the city. A citizen’s movement led by Japanese-Americans petitioning the White House for the removal of the comfort women memorial began gathering signatures on May 10. The Liberal Democratic Party’s (LDP) Special Mission on Territories visited the city on May 15 and protested, but the mayor and deputy mayor refused to remove the memorial, saying that “the numbers may be inflated but it’s a fact that there were abductions.” Deputy Mayor Kim stated that “it is the Japanese whose claims are baseless” and the councilman said that a movement to establish similar memorials in twenty-two communities with large numbers of Korean residents would be going forward.

Diet Member Furuya Keiji of the LDP committee stated that “even though they are baseless, [the claims about the comfort women] could gradually become accepted as established fact” and that there were reports from local Japanese-Americans that students at a Japanese school had experienced discriminatory bullying (being called the descendants of criminals). On May 17 the committee requested that the Japanese government seek the removal of the memorial and the opening of related documents to the public.

The second comfort women memorial was placed on June 16, 2012 at Eisenhower Park in Nassau County, New York. This park commemorates Dwight D. Eisenhower. The comfort women memorial was placed in the park’s memorial garden for veterans as the result of an effort led by David Lee of the Korean American Public Affairs Committee. David Lee is the manager of a computer software company; in 2008 he was serving as the



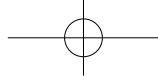
Nassau County Deputy Commissioner of the IT Department, a New York state trade negotiator, and head of the Korea Society of Long Island. There is a carving based on a photograph of comfort women in the upper part of the memorial and the Korean anti-Japan activist and singer Kim Jang-hoon and Professor Seo Gyeong-deok of Sungshin Women's University helped pay for its construction. An additional two memorials were added to the same location in 2014.

The third memorial was placed in Garden Grove, Orange County, California on December 1, 2012. The cost of the memorial was paid for through donations from Koreans living in southern California and support from the government.

The fourth comfort women memorial was placed on May 8, 2013 at the Hackensack Municipal Court Building, Bergen County, New Jersey in an area where many Koreans live. Eleven Korean-American high school students and the Korean American Voters' Council pushed for the erection of a comfort women memorial, likening the sufferings of the Korean women who had been the Japanese military's comfort women to that of the Irish, Armenians, Jews, and African-Americans. As a result of their persuasion of non-Korean residents and a signature drive, Bergen County gave its permission for its erection at the entrance to a public facility such as a library.

Memorials to African slaves, victims of the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, and the Irish famine are lined up next to the comfort women memorial. This was clearly done with the malicious intent of equating the comfort women with the victims of slavery, genocide, and the Holocaust.

A copy of the Korean comfort woman statue placed in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, South Korea was placed in Glendale, Los Angeles County, California on July 30, 2013. This was the first comfort women statue (and the fifth memorial) in America. While the statue in Seoul was illegally placed on the street in front of the Japanese embassy, the one here was placed with permission from the city in the city-owned park adjacent to the Glendale Central Library. Unlike the statue in Korea, the costs were borne by Korean-American civic groups and there is an explanation of the statue and a long



memorial passage written on the statue's base to its left.

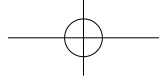
Chang Lee of the Korea-Glendale Sister City Association, which had promoted the statue and paid \$30,000 for its construction, said that “the comfort women memorial is not a question of Japan and South Korea. It was a crime against humanity so we have the obligation of ensuring that such a mistake is never made again” and noted that the Japanese government still hasn't acknowledged that it forced Korean women to work as prostitutes and that, even with the passage of the US House resolution in 2007, it still hasn't formally apologized.

According to a July 10, 2013 *Los Angeles Times* article by Jack Dolan and Jung-yoon Choi, Glendale approved the memorial's placement “as a quiet gesture of goodwill for the city's Korean community.” The article describes the memorial as a statue of a small girl next to an empty chair dedicated to the 80,000 to 200,000 comfort women (mostly Korean) who were taken to Japanese military comfort stations during the war and forced to serve fifty Japanese soldiers a day.

There were protests and criticisms from Japanese-American residents at a public hearing on July 10, but Councilman Frank Quintero said that “a 14-year-old girl doesn't voluntarily leave her village in Korea to go serve the Japanese army” and the council formally approved the statue by a vote of 4-1.

A signature drive aimed at the White House requesting the statue's removal was begun in December 2013 and collected more than 100,000 signatures, mostly from America and Japan. The White House responded that “local governments, not the federal government, have jurisdiction over issues such as street names or the placement of memorials in local parks. We refer you to local officials in the state of California for more information.”

A group of local Japanese representatives led by Assemblywoman Matsuura Yoshiko of Suginami Ward visited Glendale in January 2014 and submitted a letter of protest to the mayor which said that “it is not true that the Japanese military coerced and abducted women into being comfort women,” “great



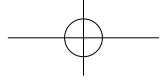
confusion has been created by untrue propaganda,” and that “carving the untrue words ‘sexual slavery’ into a memorial and leaving it as a statue of the comfort women will be the cause of future problems.”

The sixth comfort women memorial was placed in Fairfax County Government Center, Virginia in May 30, 2014. The memorial differs from the others in that it has the text “US Congress unanimously resolved HR 121 on July 30, 2007 that the government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its imperial armed forces’ coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as ‘comfort women,’ during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II - Rep. Honda, Michael (CA15) (introduced Jan. 31, 2007)” written on its reverse.

Korean traditional dances were performed at its unveiling and the eighty-five-year-old Kang Il-Chul from the House of Sharing, a joint facility for those claiming to be former Korean comfort women, was in attendance. Kang cried in front of the memorial and said that “the Japanese government should apologize.”

On August 4, 2014, the seventh comfort women memorial was placed in Union City, New Jersey. At the unveiling, the public’s gaze was drawn to twelve shocking sculptures of bleeding young girls symbolizing the victimized comfort women. These included a bleeding girl in her underwear with her eyes closed, a totally nude girl with chains wrapped around her hips, a girl covered with bloody wounds, and a gagged girl with both hands and feet bound. These had been placed by the Union City government to emphasize the educational significance of the memorial to the greatest extent possible. Mayor Brian Stack emphasized that they “needed to accurately teach the history of the suffering that over 290,000 women experienced.”

A comfort woman statue was placed on August 16, 2014 at the Southfield Korean American Cultural Center in northwest Detroit, Michigan. The second comfort women statue in America, it was identical to the ones previously placed in front of the Japanese embassy in Korea and in Glendale,



California. Elsewhere, a billboard showing shouting comfort women and the text “the Japanese government must sincerely apologize to the women and compensate them for their mental and physical suffering at once” has been placed on a highway in Houston, Texas and a comfort women advertisement entitled “Do you hear?” is shown fifty times a day on the largest digital billboard in New York City’s Times Square. Also, two years ago, resolutions related to the comfort women were passed by both houses of the New York and New Jersey state legislatures and by the Illinois house.

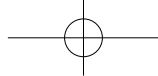
A proposal was also approved by the city council to place a comfort women statue in a museum in Fullerton, Orange County, California in August 2014.

These comfort women memorials and statues have produced animosity and conflict between Japanese and Korean Americans which has caused difficulties in the lives and mental health of many citizens. A suit has been filed against the *Asahi Shimbun*’s misreporting on the “comfort women” to “restore the honor and trust of the Japanese,” charging the newspaper with having tort liability for the injuries that Japanese-American residents have suffered to their honor, trust, and elsewhere.

A future concern is that the permanent exhibit of comfort women photographs and materials at the Holocaust museum on Long Island, New York could expand to other Holocaust museums in America and the world. Dave Lee of the Korean American Public Affairs Committee, who promoted the display, said “I talked with the Holocaust museum, and they agreed that the comfort women issue was ‘Asia’s Holocaust.’” The distortion of “the comfort women as Asia’s Holocaust” could spread through the world.

According to the Foreign Ministry, the Japanese government has, through its diplomatic missions in the United States, transmitted the following thoughts of the Japanese government on the comfort women issue:

1. The placement of comfort women memorials and statues in America is extremely unfortunate as it is incompatible with the views and positions of Japan.
2. Japan hopes that ethnic minorities will co-exist in peace and cooperation



in local communities in America and elsewhere and not introduce differences of opinion from their countries of origin. The comfort women issue should not be made a political and diplomatic issue.

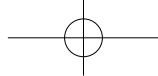
While the *Asahi Shimbun* has covered the Japanese-Americans who protest this trend towards placing comfort women memorials and statues in America, it has also run articles sympathetic to the memorials (such as on August 8, 2013) and has become infatuated with those Japanese-Americans with bitter memories of their internment during the war as “fellow victims of the war.” The *Asahi Shimbun*’s “January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment” continues to spread.

The Influence on History Textbooks

Next I’d like to report on the influence on American history textbooks.

The American world history textbook *Traditions and Encounters* (McGraw-Hill), which has caused controversy in Japan, America, China, and Korea, is approved for use in Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida (it should also be noted that many states don’t have textbook approval systems). In California, where each school district or school chooses its textbooks independently, it is used in some of the 1600 public high schools (with about 1.9 million students) in the state and 190 schools in the Los Angeles school district (with about 200,000 students) for their Advanced Placement courses in history. The textbook includes the following passage on the comfort women:

Women’s experiences in war were not always ennobling or empowering. The Japanese army forcibly recruited, conscripted, and dragooned as many as two hundred thousand women age fourteen to twenty to serve in military brothels, called “comfort houses” or “consolation centers.” The army presented the women as a gift from the emperor, and the women came from Japanese colonies such as Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria and from occupied territories in the Philippines and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The majority of the women came from Korea and China.



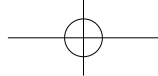
Once forced into this imperial prostitution service, the “comfort women” catered to between twenty and thirty men each day. Stationed in war zones, the women often confronted the same risks as soldiers, and many became casualties of war. Others were killed by Japanese soldiers, especially if they tried to escape or contracted venereal diseases. At the end of the war, soldiers massacred large numbers of comfort women to cover up the operation.

Also, under the heading “The Rape of Nanjing,” the book states that: “Over the course of two months, Japanese soldiers raped seven thousand women, murdered hundreds of thousands of unarmed soldiers and civilians, and burned one-third of the homes in Nanjing. Four hundred thousand Chinese lost their lives as Japanese soldiers used them for bayonet practice and machine-gunned them into open pits.” The inhabitants of Nanjing were victims of “Japanese troops inflamed by war passion and a sense of racial superiority” and “the Rape of Nanjing” symbolizes that.

Furthermore, while the label “Sea of Japan” was used in the 2008 4th edition, this was changed in the 2010 5th edition to read “Sea of Japan (East Sea),” adding the Korean name. Fundamental inaccuracies in descriptions were noticeable in other editions, such as the number of comfort women being given as “three hundred thousand” and a claim that “eighty percent of the comfort women were Koreans.”

In response, the Foreign Ministry stated that “there are passages on the comfort women issue, the renaming of the Sea of Japan, and the Nanjing Incident that contain major factual errors, are irreconcilable with our country’s positions, and that represent only a single position regarding matters which are still debated and have no commonly accepted interpretation.” Through its New York consulate, it explained its positions and prior efforts to McGraw-Hill on November 7, 2014 and asked for a correction of the descriptions. Formal discussions were held with the publisher in mid-December.

The January 15 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* reported that McGraw-



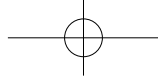
Hill had announced in a statement that “representatives of the Japanese government had asked the company to revise text on ‘comfort women’” and that “Scholars are aligned behind the historical fact of ‘comfort women,’ and we unequivocally stand behind the writing, research and presentation of our authors.” One of the textbook’s authors, Herbert Ziegler of the University of Hawaii Manoa, who had written the passage on the comfort women also said that “the publisher and I have been contacted separately by representatives of the Japanese government, essentially requesting some sort of revision of the offending narrative. Neither the publisher nor I entertain any such notion.”

The adoption of a unanimous statement criticizing “historical revisionist” statements made by Prime Minister Abe the previous November at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association (AHA) held in New York on January 2 influenced this hard-line reaction by McGraw-Hill and Professor Ziegler’s to the Japanese government’s requests for changes.

At a January 29, 2015 meeting of the House of Representatives Budget Committee, Abe said about the description of the comfort women in a world history textbook for American public high schools (*Traditions and Encounters* by the major American educational publisher “McGraw-Hill”) that he was “truly shocked. This kind of textbook is in use because we have failed to correct the things in the international community that we should have” and emphasized that Japan would actively work to spread the correct information in the future.

The *New York Times* dated that day reported on his statement that he had said “this kind of textbook is being used in the United States, as we did not protest the things we should have, or we failed to correct the things we should have.”

The February 7 issue of the Korean newspaper the *Hankyoreh* also reported that in a “backlash against Prime Minister Abe’s attempt to pressure an American history textbook into making changes,” nineteen American historians had issued a joint statement entitled “Standing with Historians of Japan” on February 5 in which they said the following: “we express our dismay at recent attempts by the Japanese government to suppress statements in history textbooks both in Japan and elsewhere about the euphemistically

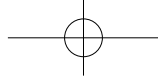


named ‘comfort women’ who suffered under a brutal system of sexual exploitation in the service of the Japanese imperial army during World War II,” “We ... oppose the efforts of states or special interests to pressure publishers or historians to alter the results of their research for political purposes,” and “We support the publisher and agree with author Herbert Ziegler that no government should have the right to censor history.”

This joint statement was issued after four groups of Japanese historians criticized Abe’s distortion of the comfort women issue in December 2014 and resolved to communicate the truth as based on historical research both at home and abroad.

On February 8, the US State Department stated in a comment to Korea’s *Yonhap News* that “as a matter of principle we stand in strong support of academic freedom as a foundation of democratic society” and that it continues to “emphasize the importance of approaching historical legacy issues in a manner that promotes healing and reconciliation for all parties.” *Yonhap* attached significance to this comment, noting that it was “the first time the American government has expressed a view on the Abe government’s attempts to change the content of one of their country’s history textbooks” and explaining that “this is consistent with the pressure America is placing on the Abe government to make a statement including reflection and contrition towards the past as we approach the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.”

In an editorial titled “American Historians Condemn Japan’s Distortion of History” published the same day, the *JoongAng Ilbo* also attributed special significance to the statement, pointing out that “Japan’s conscientious intellectuals have taken collective action to condemn the historical distortions of the Japanese right and the violent attitude they are connected to. The addition of intellectuals from a third country beyond Japan and its victims Korea and China is a new development, however. The immediate motive is an American textbook, but the true nature of the issue is Japan’s distortions of history. More and more of the world’s intellectuals are coming to understand Japan’s historical distortions not as a dispute between Korea and Japan but as an issue of human civilization similar to human rights.”



The February 8 *Chosun Ilbo* reported that Alexis Dudden of the University of Connecticut, a central figure behind the joint statement, said the following in an interview:

“The Japanese government’s request that the textbook be changed was a direct threat to academic freedom.”

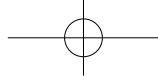
“There was a strong sense of solidarity and empathy, that we should warn people against Japan’s mistaken act. History isn’t something where we can choose only those things that are convenient and remember only what is needed.”

“What sets the Japanese government apart is that the comfort women issue isn’t a source of controversy; it’s a ‘fact’ that the entire world has already acknowledged. Yet it continually tries to change this for political purposes or to erase it from history. McGraw-Hill is a publisher with an extremely good reputation. They were way off base.”

“Most of the facts about the comfort women have been proven through the efforts of the Japanese scholar Yoshimi Yoshiaki of Chūō University. There have been references in Japan’s schools for the past several decades. But now that the Abe government has come to power, he and his supporters are suddenly trying to change that fact. They only want to value the memories beneficial to them. That’s the problem.”

“On the seventieth anniversary of the end of the war, I want Prime Minister Abe to carry on the 1995 Murayama Statement that apologized for the country’s past wars of aggression and colonial control, but if he’s going to continue suppressing academic and journalistic freedom and freedom of expression, we have to immediately take action against that.”

The following misreporting in the January 21 *Chosun Ilbo* provides the context for the February 5 joint statement by American historians:



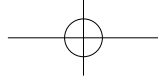
Opposition rose from specialists within American in response to attempts by Takahashi Shirō, a professor at Meisei University affiliated with the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, to distort descriptions in American history textbooks. In an e-mail interview with this paper on the 20th, Dennis Halpin, a researcher at John Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, said that "The requests to remove photographs and the like are reminiscent of the backlash by jihadists spouting Islamic fundamentalism against the caricatures in the magazine in Paris. It poses problems with freedom of speech." Professor Alexis Dudden of the University of Connecticut criticized that "Japan's act of historical distortion against an American textbook was a direct threat to academic freedom."...it has been confirmed through this process that the far-right organization the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform held an on-site investigation and reported to the Japanese government.

This makes it clear that the joint statement was issued "in opposition to certain interest groups attempting to pressure publishers and historians to change the results of their research for political purposes."

Halpin's comparison of the request with an Islamic terrorist attack is not relevant to our subject, but the article's clear statement that "it has been confirmed through this process that the far-right organization the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform held an on-site investigation and reported to the Japanese government" cannot be ignored. Who confirmed this and on what basis?

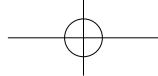
Korea's SBS Television reported the following on January 18, before the *Chosun Ilbo* article was published:

The systematic attempts of a Japanese far-right organization and the Japanese government to distort the descriptions of the Japanese military comfort women in an American textbook have been confirmed... it was made clear recently in an English-language opinion piece carried by the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals that Takahashi Shirō of Meisei University, who belongs to the Japanese Society for History



Textbook Reform which has led the distortion of Japanese textbooks, visited America and performed a study on how to navigate American opinion on the comfort women issue. Takahashi explained that, while visiting America, he directly inspected the eight comfort women memorials and statues in America and interviewed three high school students and their parents on the history textbook issue. Takahashi made clear that he reported the results of his investigation to the Japanese consulate in New York and then consulted with them about future policy. As Takahashi introduced his investigation's results he said that of American public high school textbooks, McGraw-Hill's world history textbook portrayed the Japanese military comfort women "as a gift from the emperor" and requested that a photograph of the Nanjing massacre be removed and this description corrected. This exactly matches the Japanese consulate in New York's request last month to McGraw-Hill and the textbook's author Herbert Zeigler of the University of Hawaii that the description of the comfort women be corrected.

The basis of the *Chosun Ilbo*'s claim, as confirmed through this information, was thus the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals' January 13 "Speaking Out" piece (Takahashi Shirō, "Japan Must Enhance Public Relations to Win Information War"). That article notes that the McGraw-Hill textbook that calls comfort women "gifts from the emperor" also uses a photograph from Harold Timperley's *A Foreigner's Eyewitness Account of the Atrocities Committed by the Japanese*. It appears with the label "Japanese soldiers execute Chinese prisoners," but it was determined that this photograph was "not a photograph of Japanese executions in Nanjing" by Higashinakano Shūdō, Kobayashi Susumu, and Fukunaga Shinjirō in their book *Verifying the 'Evidence Photos' of the Nanjing Incident* (Sōshisha). The many onlookers in the photograph show that it was taken at a public execution ground, but there is absolutely no mention of any such ground in either contemporary Japanese military records or the journals of Westerners in Nanjing. But the biggest issue with the photograph is the contradiction provided by the onlookers' clothes: their clothes show it to be close to summer, but Nanjing fell on December 13, in winter. Two months later, Nanjing had returned to a calm existence and most of the Japanese army had left to fight elsewhere. For that



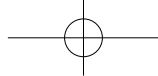
reason, it is unlikely that there were executions in Nanjing close to summer. It is also clear from the angle of the shadows on the soldiers' shoes that the photograph wasn't taken in winter.

According to the April 6, 2003 *Sankei Shimbun*, written as the American media engaged in a fierce information war over the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq, the front page of the March 31 issue of the *Los Angeles Times* featured a photograph that was later found to be a computer composite. The photographer was fired in accordance with the paper's policies and the next day an apology and explanation appeared on the front page. It's only natural that we seek even more be done when it comes to textbooks as they can have a long-term effect on children.

In the above piece I advised that "the use of such a fake photo for a school textbook is a grave problem. The Japanese government must ask the publisher to correct the photo as well as the description of comfort women."

The American Historical Association has resisted, citing the "threat to academic freedom." But "academic freedom" is not a right to be shielded from criticism and the authority of academia cannot be invoked to silence such. The Japanese government has not applied diplomatic pressure through the American government and has no authority to censor McGraw-Hill's textbooks. It's important for the concept of "academic freedom" to not be misunderstood.

The Japanese-language editions of the online Korean media pieces quoted above contain two misconceptions. First, Takahashi left the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform in 2004 and the criticism that "certain interest groups attempting to pressure publishers and historians to change the results of their research for political purposes" is thus inapplicable. Also, Takahashi's visit to the New York consulate was after the Japanese government had requested the textbook change. The assertion that during the correction process "the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform held an on-site investigation ... and reported to the Japanese government" is baseless. By twisting the timeline of Takahashi's raising of the issues with the textbook and the Japanese's government's request for corrections and by



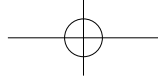
not recognizing that Takahashi left the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform prior to his appointment to the Saitama Prefectural Board of Education, it has manipulated events so that it could make the outrageously false report that “the systematic attempts of a Japanese far-right organization and the Japanese government to distort the descriptions of the Japanese military comfort women in an American textbook have been confirmed.” This report resulted in the aforementioned joint statement.

Incidentally, according to a Japanese high school student in America, a joint lesson on the comfort women issue and the “Nanjing Massacre” was held at their school. They were shown a video (which had been long-used by that teacher) in which a ninety-year-old white-haired former Japanese soldier spoke for thirty minutes or more, saying things like “before killing the locals, the women would always be raped by five or six soldiers first. It was war so we didn’t feel any sense of guilt doing things like that.” He said it was “a great shock.” In the video they were shown photographs which included those of raped women.

The students in the class said things like “Oh my God! How cruel! Japanese soldiers were barbarians!” Hearing their classmates’ reactions, the student was unable to meet their faces; they just looked down until the class was over. They said that when they heard cruel remarks being made about their homeland, they felt like they were being attacked for being Japanese and that it was painful.

The teacher emphasized that “Korean women in particular were forced by Japanese soldiers to be ‘sex slaves.’ Japan was especially cruel to Korean women. That’s why Japan is hated in Asia. The rape of the Korean comfort women was more cruel than the Nanjing Massacre.” One of the student’s Korean classmates jeered that “I was told by my parents not to speak to Japanese people.” The student said they were unable to meet their classmates’ eyes until they had moved on to the next chapter.

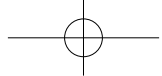
Speaking about being asked for their reaction by their Korean friends when the comfort women memorial and statue was placed in Glendale, the student said, “I couldn’t find the materials in English that I needed to argue against



what was written on the memorial so had no choice but to stay quiet.” There are also reports of Japanese students who were taken to visit the memorial and statue on field trips.

When one of the high school student’s mothers said (about the textbook passage that “the comfort women were gifts from the emperor”), “That sentence is especially cruel. That couldn’t be true, right?” The student replied, “They read that out loud in class. Can you imagine how humiliating that was?” They then continued:

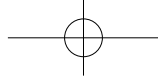
Just saying you’re dissatisfied with how things are doesn’t accomplish anything. If you have a complaint, you have to take action to correct things. If they agree to change the history textbook, maybe when the elementary school kids I know now make it to high school, they won’t have to have such an unpleasant experience. I think it’ll take time, but I want Japan to keep trying. I’ve heard that it’s the job of politicians to protect the country’s territory and people. Well, this textbook issue is part of protecting the Japanese people, right? We may have been born and raised in America, but we’re Japanese. First, they have to do more to get their message out in English. Because if only the people in Japan are upset, nothing will change. When they’re finally here and communicating in English, they’ll be late but that’ll still be better than not doing anything. But why did it take so long for Japan to know what was in this textbook, anyway? Korea and China complain about what’s in Japanese textbooks every year, so why hasn’t Japan been examining other country’s textbooks? In a debate I saw between Japanese, Korean, and Chinese college students, it was said that the Tiananmen Square Incident isn’t included in Chinese textbooks. They pointed out that the Vietnam War isn’t in Korean textbooks and that when government policies failed and caused a famine, it was written in the textbooks that a drought was responsible. These college students knew this because they had left home and studied in other countries, but students in their home countries have no idea that “facts inconvenient for the country aren’t put in textbooks.” Since only the anti-Japanese education side is working hard, everyone just comes to hate Japan... I think it’s strange that our generation, which hasn’t experienced war, still has to be made



to feel terrible about what happened during the war.

According to the student's mother, several times a group of Koreans has come up to Japanese students and shouted "Dokdo is Korean!" before running away; they were speechless. They didn't know how to respond and were just left feeling bad. Many high school students don't talk with their parents about what goes on in class. I checked their Japanese-language supplementary school, thinking that at least this issue wouldn't be present there, but the school used Tokyo Shoseki's textbook as its history textbook, which is viewed as problematic in Japan. At least at their Japanese school, the children of Japanese in America should be provided with a textbook that allows them to have pride in their homeland of Japan. I fervently hope that Japanese high school students in America will be made aware of the damage they're suffering from the distortion of history and that Japan will make efforts to restore the nation's honor. I hope this plea reaches Prime Minister Abe and Minister of Education Shimomura. (See Takahashi Shirō, "The Discrimination against Japanese Students in America Due to the 'Comfort Women' has Come This Far," *Seiron*, March 2015)

The basis for the passage on the comfort women in McGraw-Hill's world history textbook was likely the aforementioned U.S. House of Representatives resolution. The lobbying of the Global Alliance for Preserving the History of WWII in Asia (who fully supported Representative Mike Honda, the main sponsor of the House resolution) and the actions of Korean groups under the lead of the Voluntary Agency Network of Korea (which has vigorously pursued lobbying efforts to change references to the "Sea of Japan" and add "East Sea") have grown more intense as we approach the seventieth anniversary of the end of the war. They seek to entangle America in their Sino-Korean propaganda. Paying no heed to Japan's rational assertions and the Japanese government's request for corrections, the American media is increasingly adopting a tone in line with Sino-Korean anti-Japanese propaganda. We can't lose sight of the fact that the *Asahi Shimbun's* "January 1992 Propaganda of Coercive Recruitment" lies at the root of that. Had the *Asahi Shimbun* more quickly inform the world that its propaganda had been inaccurate, this kind of spread of comfort women memorials, biased passages in American textbooks, and anti-Japanese



resolutions in America and elsewhere could likely have been checked.

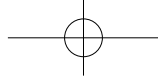
Specific Examples of Bullying

The spreading of the bullying of Japanese children living overseas is also apparent, facing those from 6 or 7 years old to high school students. More than ten cases have been reported in California and New Jersey alone. It is clear that the situation cannot just be dismissed as a mere “urban legend.” Unable to give their names out of fear that the damage would extend to currently enrolled children, we can only imagine what those involved feel.

I’ll introduce some specific examples:

1. A student experienced persistent bullying from Chinese-American students at school while they were studying about the Second World War in history class. Swears were scrawled on their binder and they were ganged up and insulted for being Japanese.
2. A student was verbally abused two or three times with hate speech (“I hate Japs!” etc.), and were punched after the fourth time. This wasn’t a fight, it was a one-sided punch. They were then told “Next time I’ll kill you...” The principle called the parents and talked to them, but the student responsible was only suspended for a few days. There wasn’t even an apology.
3. A Korean boy spat on the face of a Japanese student. The child was surprised and ran away, but the Korean boy laughed and followed, continuing to spit on the child. Thinking it was horrible abuse, the student talked with a school teacher (who was of Chinese or Korean descent) but was refused help because the teacher claimed to be “unable to address things that happen away from school.” There was also a case of a student being locked out of the school’s pool to stop the student from entering.

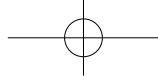
As overseas Japanese have become plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the *Asahi Shimbun* for its misreporting on the comfort women, we’ll likely hear more testimony in court about specific damage done to the “honor and trust of Japanese.”



The Influence on the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' Comfort Women Exhibit

The influence of the *Asahi Shimbun*'s misreporting on the comfort women extends to Canada as well. According to Toshie Marinov, a Japanese translator living in Canada, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights opened in Winnipeg last September (2014). Two years ago, a Philippine woman who claimed to have been a comfort woman and her counselor were invited by the museum and gave interviews and lectures across Canada. In a lecture, this counselor referenced items that the *Asahi Shimbun* had reported on January 11, 1992 and emphasized the importance of the newspaper's reporting. Since it has become clear that the *Asahi*'s comfort women reporting was false, Marinov has become involved in a protest action against a display in the museum on the coercive recruitment of Philippine women by the Japanese military, sent a letter to the Canadian prime minister, and has continued her protests (see Conversation between Toshie Marinov and Takahashi Shirō, "How Do We Fight the 'National Peril' of International Misunderstanding?" *Chichi*, March 2015).

The Canadian human rights organization Toronto ALPHA, which promoted the comfort women exhibit and the long-term project of the construction of the history museum, has reached a memorandum of understanding with the Toronto Catholic District School Board, allowing the teaching of the Japanese military comfort women in Asia during the Second World War as unfortunate and unscrupulous acts in high school curriculums. Toronto ALPHA sends Canadian teachers on a study tour every year to places like the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall and the House of Sharing and they are planning to include high school students in the study tour beginning in 2015.



Accompanying Material

The Contents of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' Comfort Women Exhibit

Imperial Japan

Before and during the Second World War, the Japanese military coerced an estimated 50,000 to 200,000 women and girls into sexual slavery. Some were as young as 11. The military referred to these captives as “comfort women,” a term that masked their real purpose and persecution. Comfort women were transported from their homes to distant war fronts to provide sexual services to Japanese troops. The women were cut off from their culture and language, and regularly raped and beaten.

The Nanking Massacre

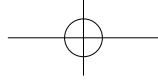
Persistent acts of rape by soldiers during Japan’s brutal 1937 invasion of Nanking revealed that sporadic prostitution stations were not enough. In response, the military formed a large and more formal comfort station system. This system, populated by women from conquered countries, became vital to the Japanese war effort.

Violation

The Japanese military coerced and kidnapped thousands of women and girls into sexual slave. These girls and women were transported far from their homes, isolated, beaten and forced to provide sexual services to Japanese troops. The military claimed that these services enhanced troop morale and discipline.

Textbook Denial

For many years, nationalists distorted Japan’s wartime history and denied that women had been forced into sexual slavery. In this 2005 image, Yoshifumi Tawara, head of an anti-censorship organization, points out the failure of school history books to mention the comfort women system.

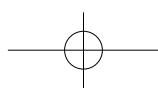
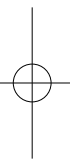
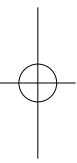


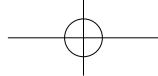
The First Photo

After discovering this photo in 1962, journalist Senda Kako became the first person to research and write about the comfort women system. He knew that the women were Korean by the traditional way that the suitcase was being carried. But he wondered who they were and where they were going.

International Denial

In response to allegations about Japan's comfort women system, in 2007 a group of Japanese leaders paid for an ad in the *Washington Post*. The ad made five historical claims that were meant to prove to the world that Japan never forced women into sexual slavery.





Accompanying Material

Inscriptions on All Comfort Women Memorials in the United States

1. Palisades Park, New Jersey

Of the more than 200,000
women and girls who were
abducted by the armed forces of
the government of Imperial Japan, 1930's-1945
Known as "Comfort Women,"
They endured human rights
Violations that no peoples should
leave unrecognized.
Let us never forget the horrors
of crimes against humanity.

Dedicated on October 23, 2010

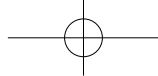
2. Eisenhower Park, New York

"THE COMFORT WOMEN"
In remembrance of the more than 200,000 women and girls
Who were abducted for the use of sexual slavery by the
Armed Forces of the Government of Imperial Japan 1930's-1945
Known to the world as "Comfort women." They suffered heinous
crimes against humanity that must not go unrecognized. The grave
violations of human dignity they endured will not be forgotten.

Dedicated on June 20, 2012

3. Garden Grove, California

"Forced Sex Slaves"
In remembrance of more than 200,000 women and girls
who were abducted for the use of sexual slavery by the
armed forces of the government of Imperial Japan between
1930's -1945 is known to the world as "Forced Sex Slaves."
They suffered heinous crimes against humanity



that must not go unrecognized. The violations of human dignity they endured will not be forgotten.

Dedicated on December 1, 2012

4. Hackensack, New Jersey

In memory of
hundreds of thousands of women and girls from
Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, the Netherlands,
and Indonesia who were forced into sexual slavery by
the Armed Forces of Imperial Japan
before and during World War II.

Dedicated on March 8, 2013

5. Glendale, California

“I was a sex slave of the Japanese military”

Torn hair symbolizes the girl being snatched from her home by the Imperial Japanese Army.

Tight fists represent the girl’s firm resolve for a deliverance of justice.
Bare and unsettled feet represent having been abandoned by the cold and unsympathetic world.

Bird on the girl’s shoulder symbolizes a bond between us and the deceased victims.

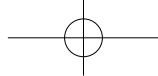
Empty chair symbolizes survivors who are dying of old age without having yet witnessed justice.

Shadow of the girl is that of an old grandma, symbolizing passage of time spent in silence.

Butterfly in shadow represents hope that victims may resurrect one day to receive their apology.

Peace Monument

In memory of more than 200,000 Asian and Dutch women who were removed from their homes in Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia,



East Timor and Indonesia, to be coerced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan between 1932 and 1945.

And in celebration of proclamation of “Comfort Women Day” by the City of Glendale on July 30, 2012, and of passing of House Resolution 121 by the United States Congress on July 30, 2007, urging the Japanese Government to accept historical responsibility for these crimes.

It is our sincere hope that these unconscionable violations of human rights shall never recur.

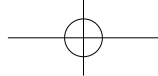
July 30, 2013

6. Fairfax, Virginia

In honor of the women and girls whose basic rights and dignities were taken from them as victims of human trafficking during WW II. Over 200,000 women and girls from Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Netherlands and East Timor were enforced into sexual slavery and euphemistically called “Comfort Women” by Imperial Japanese forces during WW II. We honor their pain and suffering and mourn the loss of their fundamental human rights.

May these “Comfort Women” find eternal peace and justice for the crimes committed against them. May the memories of these women and girls serve as a reminder of the importance of protecting the rights of women and an affirmation of basic human rights.

 US Congress unanimously resolved HR 121 on July 30, 2007
 That the government of Japan should formally acknowledge,
 apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and un-



equivocal manner for its Imperial Armed forces' coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as "Comfort women," during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific islands from the 1930's through the duration of Word War II.

REP. HONDA, MICHAEL (CA15) (INTRODUCED JAN. 31, 2007)

7. Union City, New Jersey

In memory of hundreds of thousands of women and girls from Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, the Netherlands, and Indonesia, who were forced into sexual slavery by the Armed Forces of Imperial Japan before and during World War II.

Dedicated on August 4, 2014

8. Southfield, Michigan

This young Korean woman with a sparrow on her shoulder, casting a shadow of an older person, and staring at the land of Japan, symbolizes the hitherto unresolved issue of "Comfort Women," a hideous crime of sexual slavery committed by the Japanese military during World War II.

It also stands;

For the Dignity of Human Beings,
the Human Rights of the Women of the World,

and

For the Future of Mankind.

2014.8.16