

Comfort Women NOT Sex-Slaves

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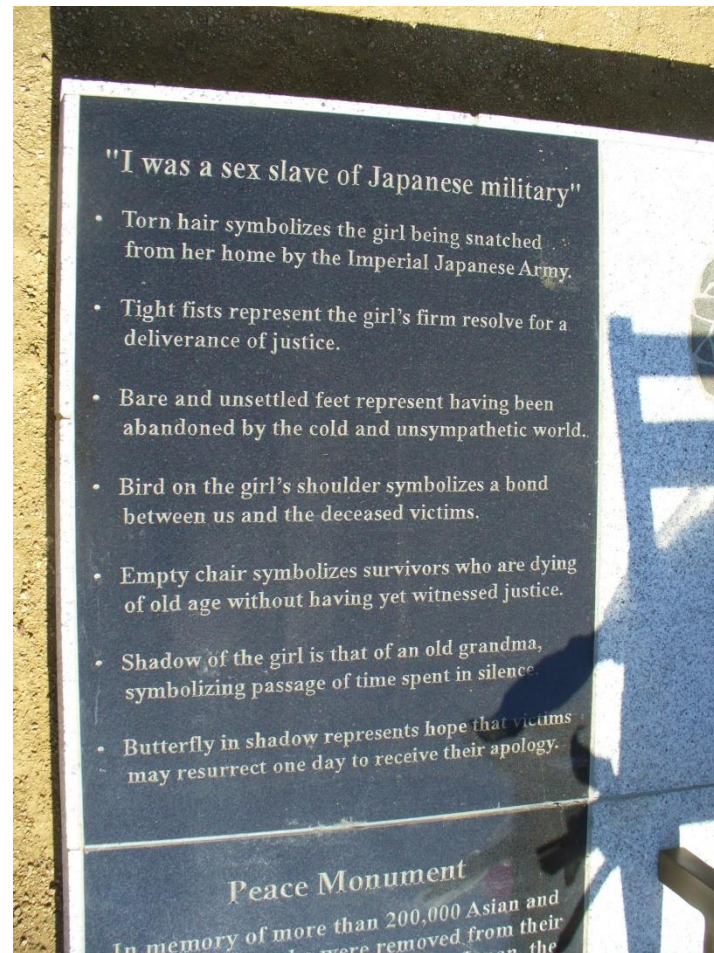
Glendale, California, July 30, 2013



Statue of a Comfort Woman Central Park, Glendale, CA



Plaque beside the Statue



Popular Perception

- Glendale Inscription in 2013
 - More than **200,000** women were coerced into **sexual slavery** by the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan between 1932 and 1945.
- California Dept. of Education Proposal in 2015
 - Comfort Women as an example of institutionalized **sexual slavery** and the largest cases of **human trafficking**
 - **Hundreds of thousands** of women were forced into these situations

Prevalence of Sex-Slave Theory

- U.N. Coomaraswamy Report (1996)
- George Hicks, The Comfort Women (1994)
- U.S. House of Rep's Resolution(2007)
 - All characterize Comfort Women as “Sex-Slaves” and were coercively recruited
 - Even some of the ex-Comfort Women tell they were taken away by Japanese military or police

Sources of Misunderstanding

- Seiji Yoshida's Book, *My War Crimes* (1983)
 - He led a team of soldiers to Cheju Island of Korea and hunt 205 Young Women and sent them as Comfort Women
 - This book was translated into Korean language and published in 1989

Sources of Misunderstanding-2

- Asahi Newspaper publicized Yoshida's story as factual
- Yoshida's book was discredited in 1989 by local newspaper reporter and in 1992 by Professor Ikuhiko Hata
- However, Asahi Newspaper continued to publicize Yoshida's story

What They Were

- U.S. Office of War Information, Japanese Prisoners of War Information Report No. 49 (1944) found they were “prostitutes”.
 - They were paid well, and had luxurious life
 - They had picnics and parties with soldiers
 - Some soldiers got married with CWs
 - They could refuse service to whoever not welcome

What They Were (2)

- They had good relationship with soldiers
- They were admired by soldiers
- They took good care of soldiers
- There were no antagonism between them

Other Sources of Information

- IWG Report of 2007
 - Interagency Working Group of US Government confirmed there was no human right violation to Japanese military during the Wartime, spending \$8 million and taking 7 years' work.
- Japan Government Research (2007)
 - Found no document supporting the coercive recruitment of Comfort Women.

Exceptional Cases

- Semarang, Indonesia
 - Low level Japanese soldiers took Dutch female captives to Comfort Stations
 - As soon as the supervisors found the incident, they were returned, and those responsible were prosecuted and punished after the War.
 - A similar case in the Philippines, but not in Korea or Taiwan.

Start of S Korean Propaganda

- The Government of S. Korea realized that they had a good chance of demanding apology and compensation after the apologies made by Japanese Prime Minister in 1992 when he visited S. Korea.
 - He made apologies on the basis of false information about Seiji Yoshida and Asahi Newspaper reporting.

Japan Bashing by Koreans & Korean Americans

- Japan-S. Korea Basic Treaty of 1965 settled all claims by either country for matters prior to 1945 by Japan donating \$800 million to S. Korea.
- S. Korea wanted more, but Japan maintained a firm position that even individual claims have been settled in 1965.
- So, Koreans started Japan-bashing in U.S. and other countries.

Japan-Bashing in the U.S.

- U.S. House Resolution condemning Japan on CW in 2007.
- Korean-American organizations started building Comfort Women monuments in the U.S., the first in Palisades Park, New Jersey in 2010.
- A whole Korean girl's statue in Glendale, California in 2013.
- Now proposal to add "Comfort Women" in World History in California.

Comfort Women Memorial in Palisades Park, NJ



Only Support for Korean Claim is Testimonials from Ex-Comfort Women

- Let us see them!

Statements by Ex-Comfort Women

- Professor Ahn of Seoul National University who was closely involved in hearing testimonials, said they were not reliable.
- The first ex-Comfort Woman who showed up, Kim Hak-sun stated that she was first sold by her mother to Kisaeng School, and then sent to a Comfort Station by her father-in-law.

Statements by Ex-Comfort Women-2

- Professor **C. Sarah Soh**, San Francisco State U. published "*The Comfort Women*" in 2008. She is an anthropologist from Korea, and examined ex-Comfort Women from S. Korea:
 - They were not coercively recruited by Japanese military or police,
 - They expressed their life stories freely earlier, but
 - Later on, their testimonial narratives were altered to be consistent with coercive recruitment theory

Statement by ex-Comfort Women-3

- Superstar, Young-su Lee's case.
 - She said in the beginning that she sneaked out of home early in the morning with a friend to a recruiter where she received a red dress and a pair of leather shoes to her excitement.
 - Later testimonials are different: she told the Subcommittee of the U.S, House of Representatives in 2007 that she was taken away by a Japanese person and a girl while she was in bed at night.

Contributions by Prof. Park Yuha

- Professor **Park Yuha** of Sejong University published *The Comfort Women of an Empire* in Korean in 2013, and in 2014 in Japanese. Her main points are:
 - Korean Comfort Women were **not coercively recruited**
 - Many were sold by parents
 - They earned good income
 - Total number was much less than 200,000.

Japan-S. Korea Agreement of December 28, 2015

- This was made by Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, to strengthen Japan's defense against possible attacks from North Korea. Japan was perhaps successful in terminating S. Korean Government's Japan-bashing. But, Japan-bashing outside of the two countries will continue.

Japan's Government Statements

- On February 2016, Deputy Minister of Japan's Ministry of foreign Affairs, Shinsuke Sugiyama made statement at the U.N. Committee Meeting on Japan of Human Rights in Geneva that
 - Comfort Women were not Sex-Slaves
 - They were not recruited coercively
 - The number of them were not 200,000. but much less.

CONCLUSIONS

- The Government of Japan finally made an explicit statement on Comfort Women.
- For the reasons I have given, the Comfort Women were NOT sex-slaves.
- Even scholars from Korea are stating they were not coercively recruited.
- This information should be spread widely.