

# UC Santa Barbara

## UC Santa Barbara Electronic Theses and Dissertations

### Title

Discomforting Neighbors: Emotional Communities Clash over “Comfort Women” in an American Town

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6hz1c8vj>

### Author

Wasson, Kai Reed

### Publication Date

2018

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Discomforting Neighbors:

Emotional Communities Clash over “Comfort Women” in an American Town

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in Asian Studies

by

Kai Reed Wasson

Committee in charge:

Professor Sabine Frühstück, Chair

Professor ann-elise lewallen

Professor Kate McDonald

June 2018

The thesis of Kai Reed Wasson is approved.

---

Kate McDonald

---

ann-elise lewallen

---

Sabine Frühstück, Committee Chair

June 2018

Discomforting Neighbors:  
Emotional Communities Clash over “Comfort Women” in an American Town

Copyright © 2018

by

Kai Reed Wasson

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have often heard that research projects of considerable length are impossible without the thoughtful input of a host of people. Pursuing this endeavor myself has proven to me that collaboration is absolutely necessary even for a project of this modest magnitude.

I would first like to thank my masters committee, Professors Sabine Frühstück, ann-elise lewallen, and Kate McDonald, for bearing with me and providing constructive feedback on such a difficult and sensitive subject. I owe a debt of gratitude for the learning opportunities and financial support afforded to me by UC Santa Barbara's East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies Department. This project would not have been possible without the support and cooperation given to me by those who were willing to broach an emotionally charged subject with a green graduate student. While confidentiality prevents me from acknowledging everyone, I would like to mention the now Mayor of Glendale Zareh Sinanyan, Glendale Community Relations Coordinator Dan Bell, Director of the Korean American Forum of California Phyllis Kim, President of the Global Alliance for Historical Truth Kōichi Mera, activist Emi Koyama, and CEO of the Eagle and Cherry Blossom Foundation Kazuho Baba for being willing to speak honestly with me and for including me in their ongoing conversations on matters of "comfort women" and historical consciousness. Toru Oda, whom I serendipitously met at a symposium at UCLA, was kind enough to go out of his way to introduce me to Mera-sensei even though we had only just met each other. His kindness was a major boon to my research efforts.

I would also be remiss if I were to forget those people who have supported me along the journey of the MA program. The process of conducting research would have been inconceivably more difficult if not for Cathy Chiu, our subject librarian for East Asian Studies at UCSB. Mark Nathan, my undergraduate adviser, mentor, and friend took time out of his own busy schedule to help me think through the more vexing and psychologically trying moments of a graduate degree and research project. His encouragement and guidance are invaluable to me. Among my greatest fortunes are my dear friends, Allison Hovey, Cade Bourne, Carl Gabrielson, Liz Kataoka, Wona Lee, Teng Xu, and Oliver Teernstra. I have grown immeasurably as a person and thinker having the pleasure of working alongside you. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my parents, Carole and Daniel Wasson, as well as my sister, Haidee Wasson, for their unconditional love and support for my development my entire life. I would be a far lesser person without all of you in my life.

## ABSTRACT

Discomforting Neighbors:

Emotional Communities Clash over “Comfort Women” in an American Town

by

Kai Reed Wasson

In this thesis, I consider how a controversy over a monument commemorating the suffering of victims of imperial Japan’s “comfort women” sexual slavery system erupted in Glendale, California, a small suburb of Los Angeles, in 2013. On its surface, public speakers and activists used the language of historiographical debate that questioned the types of historical evidence that can be considered legitimate and which interpretations are well-founded. Yet, underneath the surface, this debate is less about history and more about conflicting group identities. First generation Japanese immigrants, motivated in large part by fear of discrimination and pride in being Japanese, took Glendale’s monument project as a threat against which fearful members of this diasporic community could rally. In other words, the monument could be used as a vehicle to build and strengthen a community of otherwise scattered individuals who feel in some sense endangered by the rising ride of critical sentiment against Japan for crimes committed over seventy years ago. In contrast, Korean Americans and Armenian Americans used the media attention the controversy attracted as an opportunity to demonstrate their authenticity as Americans by building the monument and framing it as a

symbol of Glendale residents' cosmopolitan memory and courageous defense of women's human rights.

I based this research on ten interviews I conducted in 2017 with people who were actively involved in either the project to install the Peace Monument in Glendale or who spoke in favor of or against that project at a special hearing the city council held on July 9, 2013 to assess the public's opinion. In addition to the interviews, I reviewed the city's records of their deliberations on whether to build the peace monument, with special attention given to video recordings in which city officials or members of the public discussed the matter. I similarly reviewed pertinent local and international newspaper articles mentioning Glendale and the actors involved with an eye toward the vocabulary such articles used to frame the controversy for local and international audiences. The information I gathered from these various sources form the corpus from which I formulate my take on how the controversy in Glendale unfolded and how we should situate it in the scholarship on Japanese nationalism and the continuously expanding "comfort women" redress movement.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter One—Persistence Despite Futility: Japanese Anti-Monument Activists in American Media .....	19
Chapter Two—Why Glendale? The Cosmopolitan Heritage of an American City .....	37
Chapter Three—The Emotion of Historical Truth and Historical Revisionism .....	48
Facts as Weapons.....	50
Organizing the Emotional Community through the Global Alliance for Historical Truth .....	62
Chapter Four—Universal Human Rights and Victimhood as an Emotional Community	71
Appeals to Universal Human Rights in Glendale.....	73
How Sexual Slavery Became a Human Rights Violation .....	81
Comfort Women Redress Trapped in the Quicksand of Nationalism .....	88
Glendale on the “Right Side of History” .....	91
Conclusion .....	96
Appendix.....	103
Bibliography .....	104



## Introduction

*“I find it very painful to recall my memories. Why haven’t I been able to lead a normal life, free from shame, like other people? When I look at old women, I compare myself to them, thinking that I cannot be like them. I feel I could tear apart, limb by limb, those who took away my innocence and made me as I am. Yet how can I appease my bitterness? Now I don’t want to disturb my memories any further. Once I am dead and gone, I wonder whether the Korean or Japanese governments will pay any attention to the miserable life of a woman like me.”*

~Kim Haksun, survivor, 1990

Since Kim Haksun’s first press conference in 1990, activism and controversy revolving around wartime sexual slavery within the Japanese empire has expanded beyond the territories where it occurred, most notably to the United States. So, too, have Japanese attempts to silence that conversation. While commemorative activities take on many forms, politically influential Asian and Asian American communities are increasingly embracing memorial-construction to raise awareness of the suffering of “comfort women,” a euphemistic term referring to women who were forced into the imperial Japanese military’s system of sexual slavery during the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> When local activists propose building a “comfort women” memorial, the proposal invariably sparks controversy. Most vehemently opposed to these memorials are certain first-generation Japanese immigrants as well as the Japanese government, both of

---

<sup>1</sup> Korean survivors in particular have taken offense to the continued use of the terms “comfort women” or “sex slaves” when referring to them, preferring *halmōni* (grandmother) instead. However, “comfort women” is the most common term in English when referring to the historical system and the discourse attached to it. For legibility’s sake, I often use the term “comfort women,” though always with quotation marks to note the complications of that phrase. When referring to the women, I use “survivor” to emphasize the struggles they have contended with their entire lives.

whom decry such memorials as misinformed, exaggerated, and malicious. Coinciding with an ever-outraged transnational public sphere is a powerful, historical revisionist backlash within Japanese society that seeks to sanitize Japan's wartime past. The vast scope of the horror and suffering as recounted by survivors combined with the Japanese government's recalcitrance has instigated a tremendous amount of social and historical research and popular discourse on the matter.<sup>2</sup> Although scholarship on rightwing Japanese views and activism is expanding, little has been written on Japanese activists who are combating the transnational spread of "comfort women" commemoration and the inevitable criticism of Japan that accompanies it. This thesis contributes to broader conversations on Japanese nationalism, politicized historical memory, and the "comfort women" controversy by taking a deeper look at these activists and considering some of the motivations driving them to oppose something that seems to be, to much of the rest of the world, obviously the right thing to do.

As a case study on Japanese nationalist activism, I examine the controversy in Glendale, California over a "comfort women" memorial called the Peace Monument. Unveiled on July 30, 2013 and weighing in at 1,100 pounds of bronze and concrete, the Peace Monument's design features a life-sized statue of a young teenage girl seated on a chair adjacent to another, empty chair (see image 1). While the few living survivors of this horrific chapter of human history are currently in their 90s, the statue's youthful appearance is meant to reflect the age of these women at the time of their impressment into the imperial Japanese

---

<sup>2</sup> See Lisa Yoneyama, *Cold War Ruins: Transpacific Critique of American Justice and Japanese War Crimes* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016); Maki Kimura, *Unfolding the 'Comfort Women' Debates: Modernity, Violence, Women's Voices* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Chunghee Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008); George Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995); Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Jūgun ianfu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 1995).

army's prostitution system, according to the monument's sculptors, Kim Sŏkyŏng and Kim Unsŏng.<sup>3</sup> The figure of the girl is dressed in a *hanbok*, the typical clothes Korean girls wore in colonial Korea; and yet, her shoes are missing, her bare heels raised off the ground, her hair cut unevenly, all of which indicate experiences of abandonment, loss of self-determination, and victims' severance from their families and country. Her hands are clenched into fists as they rest tensely on her lap, signifying victims' resolve to demand justice. On the ground behind the statue is a mosaic of black gravel forming the girl's shadow, but resembling the slumped body of an elderly woman, which represents the fragmented, shattered lives survivors have been suffering in silence. A butterfly in the middle of the black gravel symbolizes the hope that victims will be reincarnated into a better world, and the bird on the girl's shoulder reflects the spiritual links between survivors and the deceased. Finally, the empty chair signifies forgotten and deceased victims and simultaneously functions as an open invitation for



the monument's viewers to join victims' fight for justice.

The idea for placing this monument in Glendale's Central Park was introduced by Phyllis Kim through Glendale's Korean

*Image 1: The Peace Monument, Glendale, California*

<sup>3</sup> "Deciphering symbolism of girl statue," in *The Korea Times*, September 6, 2016, <http://www.koreatimesus.com/deciphering-symbolism-of-girl-statue/>.

sister city association. Kim is a resident of Glendale and the executive director of the Korean American Forum of California (KAFC), a human rights organization seeking to raise awareness of the history of “comfort women” and to frame it as a crime against humanity that Japan must honestly reckon with. However, once news broke that Glendale was considering building the Peace Monument, a flood of angry messages—mostly from Japanese email addresses and largely with identical content—inundated city councilmembers’ inboxes. The emails demanded that Glendale reject the proposal since the historical view presented by the monument was “false.” For example, one such letter argued that, based on a survey conducted by both the Japanese and South Korean governments, “there was no evidence proving participation [*sic*] and forcing [*sic*] nature of the Japanese government and the Japanese military other than former comfort women’s testimony.”<sup>4</sup> Other such form emails emphasize that “comfort women” is an international dispute between the South Korean and Japanese governments, and so it is inappropriate for Glendale to interfere by hosting the monument.

Japanese protests were not entirely virtual. On July 9, 2013, Glendale’s city council held a public hearing during which members of the public could express their opinions on the proposal. Mostly comprised of first-generation Japanese immigrants, opponents to the proposal attended this hearing en masse, clearly forming a numerical majority in the room that day. While each speaker had only two minutes to make a statement, as a collective they presented the gamut of revisionist arguments aimed at obscuring what is, in fact, a broad international consensus on the nature of the wartime “comfort women” system as an instance of systematized sexual slavery and one of the largest cases of human trafficking in history. With

---

<sup>4</sup> See appendix for the full letter. Taken from Yamamoto Yūmiko, “*CA Gurendēru ianfu kinenhi hantai! Messēji*,” July 7, 2012, accessed April 21, 2018, [http://nadesiko-action.org/?page\\_id=3360](http://nadesiko-action.org/?page_id=3360).

the city council's vote of 4-1 in favor of building the monument meant that anti-monument activists failed to prevent the monument's construction. To avoid similar failures in the future, they took the opportunity to form an organization that could better manage their financial and human resources. Exploring the underlying social function of this organization, called the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT) and led by a man named Kōichi Mera, is one of the primary focuses of this thesis.

The sort of grassroots Japanese nationalist activism of which GAHT is one instantiation did not, of course, appear in a vacuum. GAHT is an outgrowth of a neonationalist trend in Japan whose beginnings most scholars agree are rooted in the 1990s. A multitude of global forces converged in in that decade that raised relatively dormant questions in domestic and international discourse about Japan's responsibility for past war crimes. Sociologist Hiro Saito and anthropologists Lisa Yoneyama and Nathaniel Smith attribute much significance to Emperor Hirohito's illness and death in 1989 as one major factor that helps to explain Japan's neonationalism.<sup>5</sup> His death inspired broadcasting stations to air special media coverage on "Shōwa" (1926-1989) history. While mainstream media focused on the positive aspects of Hirohito's reign, NGOs across Japan began organizing symposiums and seminars to consider critically his responsibility for the Asia-Pacific War, including for the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>6</sup> In 1993, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a conservative party that had long held the reins of the government, was briefly ousted from power. The non-LDP politicians who came into power were more forthcoming in responding to Chinese and South

---

<sup>5</sup> Hiro Saito, *The History Problem: The Politics of War Commemoration in East Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017); Yoneyama, *Cold War Ruins*; Nathaniel Smith, "Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility," (PhD diss., Yale University, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Saito, *The History Problem*, 74.

Korean NGOs, who were becoming increasingly vocal in their demands that Japan address its responsibility for previously unaddressed crimes. However, deep polarization within the Japanese government regarding WWII-related responsibility and the persistent influence of well-connected nationalist lobbying organizations undermined the government's initial apologetic attitudes and reconciliatory gestures. The infighting fed into a revolution in nationalist activism.

Characterizing Japanese neonationalism is the emergence of grassroots rightwing activists who emphasize their ordinariness by wearing regular clothes and working together with women.<sup>7</sup> Their ordinariness in turn enables them to claim to represent the rest of Japanese society. Identifying and presenting themselves as “normal” differs from previous generations of rightwing activism in Japan, in which men clad in paramilitary garb were the only explicit participants.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, these earlier activists, whom Smith categorized as part of the “New Right” movement of the 1970s, consciously operated from a marginalized position, a dynamic he termed the “politics of futility.” He defined it as a nativist political disposition that conjures the stoic, often failed sacrifices of national martyrs and allows activists to place themselves among the pantheon of heroes. The aggressive style that underlies their activism, which often includes the projection of a threat of violence (punctuated with real acts of violence), also ensures their political and social isolation. Activists’ isolation, however, empowers them to maintain group cohesion, individual resolve, their sense of masculinity, and their identification with the Japanese ethnic nation (as opposed to the juridical state). In contrast, the neonationalist activists in GAHT claim to represent the whole of the Japanese nation and, rather than

---

<sup>7</sup> Oguma Eiji and Ueno Yoko, *Iyashi no nashonarizumu (Comforting Nationalism)* (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Smith, “Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility.”

projecting violence, maintain that they themselves are the “real” victims in the “comfort women” controversy.

Typically credited as the intellectual founder of Japanese neonationalism is professor of education at Tokyo University, Fujioka Nobukatsu. He believed that the Allies had corrupted Japan’s history education system during the postwar occupation by forcing it to demonize everything Japan had done since the Meiji Restoration in 1868. In one of his many publications he wrote that:

...the central problem consciousness [of this volume] is to convey that now when fifty years of postwar have elapsed, Japanese people do not have to be shackled to a view of their own nation’s history that has its origins in the national interests of foreign countries.<sup>9</sup>

To combat what he derided as “masochistic” history and instead promote national pride, he founded in July 1995 the Liberal School of History (*Jiyūshugi shikan kenkyūkai*).<sup>10</sup> To realize this organization’s historical views and vision of a proud Japan, he joined with other academics, novelists, and politicians to form the Japan Society for History Textbook Reform (*Atarashii kyōkasho wo tsukurukai*, hereafter “Tsukurukai”). Tsukurukai’s goal was, and continues to be, to produce middle school history textbooks that encourage children to have pride in Japan by erasing references to “comfort women,” the Nanjing Massacre, and other wartime atrocities Japan committed. Through a coordinated media campaign stoking rightwing anger against “masochistic” textbook publishers and the educational committees that decide

---

<sup>9</sup> Fujioka Nobukatsu, *Kingendaishi kyōiku no kaikaku: Zendama, akudama shikan wo koete* (Reforming Modern History Education: Overcoming Good Guy, Bad Guy History) (Tokyo: Meiji Tosho, 1996), 2, cited from Rikki Kersten, “Neo-nationalism and the ‘Liberal School of History,’” *Japan Forum* 11:2 (1999): 191-203, 198.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

which book their districts would utilize, by 2004 Tsukurukai had succeeded in eliminating all mention of “comfort women” in government-approved textbooks.<sup>11</sup>

Another major figure and also former member of Tsukurukai is popular manga artist Kobayashi Yoshinori. While he was a member, in 1998 Kobayashi published his best-known work, *Sensōron* (“On War”). It features Kobayashi himself as the narrator and protagonist as he embarks on an introspective journey to realize the “truth,” that mainstream Japanese history is “distorted,” initially by the U.S. during the occupation, who were then joined by Japanese “lefties,” Chinese, and Koreans, all of whom seek to undermine the Japanese nation. Throughout this journey, Kobayashi retells the story of Japan’s participation in WWII through the lens of an unabashedly nationalistic framework. He addresses a range of the most contentious issues, including “comfort women,” the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal, both atomic bombs, and the Nanjing Massacre, among others. In his treatment of each issue, he draws upon seemingly rigorous research to alter mainstream views, thereby inculcating the reader in revisionist Japanese history. In her interviews with contemporary generations of rightwing activists, anthropologist Tomomi Yamaguchi noted that many people cited Kobayashi’s manga as “one of the texts that most influenced them.”<sup>12</sup>

Yamaguchi terms neonationalist grassroots activists in Japan the Action Conservative Movement (ACM).<sup>13</sup> This category encompasses those grassroots activist organizations that formed around the same time as the proliferation of the internet in the 2000s, most notably the Group That Seeks Recovery of Sovereignty (*Shuken kaifuku wo mesazu kai*) and the Citizens’

---

<sup>11</sup> Reiko Koide, “Critical New Stage in Japan’s Textbook Controversy,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12:13 (2014): <http://apjif.org/2014/12/13/Koide-Reiko/4101/article.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Tomomi Yamaguchi, “Xenophobia in Action: Ultrationalism, Hate Speech, and the Internet in Japan,” *Radical History Review* 117 (Fall 2013): 98-118.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*



Group Refusing to Tolerate Special Rights for Koreans in Japan (*Zainichi tokken wo yurusanai shimin no kai*, hereafter Zaitokukai), established in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Such groups target and attempt to marginalize people of Korean and Chinese ancestry and other minority groups whom they consider to be threatening Japan.<sup>14</sup> While they conduct demonstrations in public, they do not target passersby. Rather, they reach their true audience online, where videos of their demonstrations are shared thousands to hundreds of thousands of times. In addition to the ACM, in 1997 more establishment conservative organizations like the Association of Shinto Shrines (*Jinja honchō*) and the Japan War-Bereaved Families Association (*Nippon izokukai*), including many other new religious organizations like Happy Science (*Kōfuku no kagaku*), combined to form a powerful lobbying group called the Japan Conference (*Nippon kaigi*), which exerts much influence on the government's reactions to overseas "comfort women" commemoration.

Linking these wide-ranging and somewhat disparate organizations together is the common understanding that the "comfort women" controversy in particular poses a grave threat to Japan's international reputation.<sup>15</sup> More pragmatically, these groups are linked through a YouTube channel called Channel Sakura, which broadcasts news and talk shows that attract both mainstream and fringe reaches of rightwing Japanese individuals into a single media cyberspace.<sup>16</sup> That Kōichi Mera, leader of GAHT, frequently appears on Channel Sakura to promote GAHT and its U.S.-based activism is one indication that Japanese

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> See Tomomi Yamaguchi, "The 'History Wars' and the 'Comfort Women' Issue," YouTube video, 1:14:23, May 10, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2OFLzqP5KE&t=2452s>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

neonationalist activists living in the U.S. are oriented around the historical and political views espoused by Channel Sakura.

Little scholarship has been published on “comfort women” commemorative activities in the United States. Most relevant to the content in this thesis are two books. One is a small edited volume written in Japanese by Tomomi Yamaguchi, Motokazu Nogawa, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and Emi Koyama, whose title translates to *The “Comfort Women” Problem Crosses the Ocean: Interrogating Rightists’ “History War”* (*Umi wo wataru ‘ianfu’ mondai: Uha no ‘rekishisen’ wo tou*). Its four chapters center on the Japanese government’s persistent attempts to quash international discourse on comfort women, the rise of various rightwing organizations and alliances in Japan, and theorizing apology and redress.<sup>17</sup> Koyama’s chapter in this volume provides the most extensive account of Kōichi Mera’s personal history and involvement in Japanese historical revisionism, though her attention remains on him and the Japanese government’s (failed) attempts to prevent San Francisco from building a “comfort women” memorial.<sup>18</sup>

The other scholarly work on “comfort women” commemoration in the U.S. is Elizabeth Son’s *Embodied Reckonings: “Comfort Women,” Performance, and Transpacific Redress*.<sup>19</sup> In this book she examines various national and transnational commemorative activities dedicated to “comfort women,” including the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal, the Wednesday Demonstrations in Seoul, stage productions, and monument construction in the

---

<sup>17</sup> Yamaguchi Tomomi, Nogawa Motokazu, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and Koyama Emi, *Umi wo wataru ‘ianfu’ mondai: Uha no ‘rekishisen’ wo tou* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016).

<sup>18</sup> Koyama Emi, “Amerika ‘ianfu’ hi secchi he no kōgeki,” in *Umi wo wataru ‘ianfu’ mondai: Uha no ‘rekishisen’ wo tou*, eds., Yamaguchi Tomomi, Nogawa Motokazu, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and Koyama Emi (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016), 42-68.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Son, *Embodied Reckonings: “Comfort Women,” Performance, and Transpacific Redress* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2018).

United States. She argues that survivors' participation in commemorative activities, producing materials that will perpetuate an element of their memories and experiences long after they themselves pass away, and working toward a more peaceful future gives their lives meaning far more powerful than whatever the Japanese government could provide in the form of apologies and reparations. Son's important book provides the most thorough accounting of "comfort women" memorial-building in the U.S. and their intersection with survivors' own personal desires concerning the redress movement. However, her concentration is not on those who oppose these commemorative activities. Therefore, this thesis contributes to this burgeoning scholarship by focusing less on the leadership of Japanese historical revisionist organizations and instead considers the more rank-and-file members who take time out of their day to face public censure and speak out against something they find personally threatening.

I center my analysis primarily on the controversy that took place in Glendale, California beginning in 2012 for several reasons. First, Glendale was the first municipality outside of South Korea to host a replica of the "comfort women" memorial built in Seoul, directly across the street from the Japanese Embassy, called the "Girl Statue of Peace" (*Pyŏnghwau sonyŏsang*). As such, along with Glendale being in a region where an abundance of expatriate Japanese, Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, and many other diverse communities reside, Glendale garnered a remarkable amount of domestic and international media attention. Second, the most influential Japanese activist networks in the U.S. engaged in combating the spread of these memorials established themselves in the wake of Glendale's adamant refusal to acquiesce to their appeals. While the first "comfort women" memorial in the U.S. was a small commemorative stone and plaque built in 2010 in Palisades Park, New Jersey, grassroots mobilization against such memorials first took shape in the context of Glendale. These factors

make Glendale a productive case study that speaks to the sorts of individuals who participate in anti-commemoration activism, their tactics, and the underlying sociality that revisionist organizations like GAHT can provide its members.

On the surface, this controversy was about how the horrific experiences of women who fell victim to the “comfort women” system should be interpreted in the present. It variously addressed questions about how the system operated, who should bear responsibility for it, and how that responsibility should be demonstrated. While the historiography of the comfort women system and how to properly acknowledge it today might well belong to the most widely studied singular phenomena of the Asia-Pacific War, scholarship hardly figures in this public and transnational debate. Saito describes Japan’s “history problem” not as a debate on historiography, but rather as an “emotionally charged disagreement between the governments and citizens in [Japan and South Korea] over how to construct autobiographical narratives as foundations of their national identities.”<sup>20</sup> Iwasaki Minoru and Steffi Richter, writing about historical revisionism in Germany and Japan, characterize revisionism as a fundamentally emotional and largely fear-driven behavior that has little to do with rigorous standards of history-writing. As an intensely emotional topic, my approach to Glendale’s case is influenced by two analytic concepts in which emotion is central.

One of these critical lenses is art historian Erika Doss’s notion of the affective lives of monuments. She argues that American society is embroiled in what she calls “memorial mania,” an obsession with issues of memory and history and an urgent desire to express and claim those issues in visibly public contexts.<sup>21</sup> According to Doss, commemorative cultures in

---

<sup>20</sup> Saito, *The History Problem*, 6.

<sup>21</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2010).

the U.S. aim to evoke intimate, emotional, and authentic ties between different American publics and the U.S. as a whole, thereby encouraging an affective allegiance to the nation that would be as strong and as sacred as that extended to family, region, religion, and other ethnic/racial groups.<sup>22</sup> In this contemporary context, monuments function as “memory vectors,” that is, bodies of feeling and cultural entities whose social, cultural, and political meanings are determined by—and also structure—the emotional states and needs of their audiences.<sup>23</sup> The community-building effects of Glendale’s Peace Monument are undeniable, as will be apparent in the chapters that follow. However, since the monument in Glendale sits at the intersection of domestic, international, and transnational forces, widely divergent readings of the Peace Monument’s meaning have deepened certain intercommunal divisions as well as connections. Along those lines, I argue that the monument serves as an emotionally charged conduit of identity politics that actors engage in within local, international, and transnational contexts.

The other concept I draw from is Barbara Rosenwein’s “emotional communities.” For Rosenwein, emotional communities are bounded in much the same way as any social community—families, neighborhoods, parliaments, churches—but are held together and organized by the repertoire of emotional expressions individuals experience and communicate. Such emotions are shaped by the cultural norms of the community. Furthermore, emotional communities overlap with one another, and individuals move among them more or less successfully based on their knowledge of the “modes of emotional expression that [these

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 46.

communities] expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore.”<sup>24</sup> Rosenwein developed this concept as a historian trying to recover the emotional lives of medieval Europeans. While the original context of her term is a far cry from twenty-first-century California, I aim to demonstrate that it is nevertheless an appropriate and productive conceptualization regarding the “comfort women” controversy in Glendale.

Japanese anti-monument activists in particular fail repeatedly to convince local city councils to avoid becoming involved in an “international dispute.” They also inadvertently inspire additional communities to build more monuments to spite Japanese protestors. Considering why these people would persistently face public censure despite the apparent futility of their actions and the consistently negative responses they receive is the core question this thesis seeks to address. Combining an understanding of Glendale’s Peace Monument as an emotional entity as well as a site in which differently oriented communities emotionally clash opens a window into the anxieties at the root of the local controversy. Doing so also allows me to consider these communities’ turn to nationalism to allay collective anxieties, despite the transnational flow of information, cooperation, and increasingly popular identification with the victims of the “comfort women” system on a universal human level.

In the following chapters, I argue that the controversy about the monument in Glendale has served as an emotional conduit through which activists pull new participants into the debate via what may appear to be historical arguments, but which I suggest are grounded far more in emotion than in historiographical standards. These emotional appeals are based either on a deeply sanitized national past or the invocation of universal human rights. Ultimately,

---

<sup>24</sup> Barbara Rosenwein, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *The American Historical Review* 107:3 (June 2002):821-845, 842.

however, my research suggests that nationalist identity persists even among pro-monument individuals advocating for universal human rights. Further, that most participants in this debate are people who did not themselves directly experience WWII and who in many cases have never resided in the territories where the “comfort women” system operated speaks to the transnational scope of this project even though its primary site being in Glendale.

The first chapter examines local media coverage of three “comfort women” controversies in American locales: Palisades Park, New Jersey in 2012; Glendale, California in 2013; and San Francisco, California in 2017. In each case, Japanese resistance followed consistent patterns, as did local responses. At first, local representatives of the Japanese government approach the city council responsible for permitting the construction of “comfort women” memorials in public space with requests that the memorial be removed. Their reasoning invariably is that the memorial’s historical narrative is incongruent with the Japanese government’s stance, and that such memorials risk harming U.S.-Japan relations. In conjunction with the Japanese government’s actions, Japanese activists organize email campaigns that flood city councilmembers’ inboxes with messages demanding the memorial’s removal from public space. With the exception of Palisades Park, since it first occurred before such commemorative activities became so controversial, each time a local community considers building a “comfort women” memorial, nearby Japanese residents of the U.S. attend city council meetings in force to present various historical arguments implying the illegitimate historical basis for “comfort women” commemoration and their criticisms of the Japanese government. However, oppositional activism tends to not only fail to persuade communities to remove their memorials, it actually convinces other communities to build their own “comfort women” memorials. The repetition of this dynamic raises the question of why oppositional

activists would continue to use the same tactics despite them being obviously counter-productive.

Chapter Two describes Glendale, the local arena for the main controversy I focus on, with the purpose of explaining why these passion-fueled events unfolded in a town often described by residents as “boring.”<sup>25</sup> The most significant factor about Glendale for this thesis is that it is home to a politically active Armenian American community. This factor is important because the diasporic Armenian community has long struggled within the United States for official recognition of their own victimhood in the Armenian Genocide, which made it more attuned to Korean Americans’ similar claims to historical and continued victimhood by a reticent government denying its responsibility to provide redress. I also consider why certain Japanese members of this community reacted differently to this commemorative project than every other community.

Chapter Three begins my examination of arguments presented at a special public hearing that Glendale’s city council held on July 9, 2013 regarding the proposal for the Peace Monument. I specifically center on Japanese opponents to the project and frame them as an emotional community anchored in an intense identification with Japanese neonationalism and held together by shared experiences of fear. I also address in this chapter the subjective, emotional foundations of “truth,” especially “historical truth,” which applies to both the monument’s opponents as well as its supporters, who I address in the following chapter.

In Chapter Four, I similarly describe supporters of the monument project as an emotional community, but one that is anchored in an identification with human rights and

---

<sup>25</sup> Brittany Levine, “Glendale to get ‘animated’ in image makeover,” in the *Los Angeles Times*, November 30, 2011, accessed March 5, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/tn-gnp-1130-glendale-to-get-animated-in-image-makeover-story.html>.



victims of atrocities anywhere at any time in history. I argue that the convergence of the transnational movement to establish a women's human rights regime with the "comfort women" redress movement helped make such redress activism in Glendale appear intimately relevant to the city's leadership. However, I also argue that, despite the transnational orientation of this particular emotional community, support tends to remain in the domain of symbolism. The primarily symbolic mode of these events serves as one example of how activists and politicians globally have politicized human rights rhetoric to a degree that such rhetoric is used mostly for partisan inter- and intranational identity politics.

I based this research on ten interviews I conducted in 2017 with people who were actively involved in either the project to install the Peace Monument in Glendale or who spoke in favor of or against that project at the public hearing on July 9, 2013. Such individuals include Kōichi Mera, leader of the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT)—the group dedicated to opposing comfort women commemoration—and several members of that organization. I spoke with Phyllis Kim, director of the Korean American Forum of California (KAFC), who is the single person most responsible for Glendale's Peace Monument project. I interviewed Zareh Sinanyan, who was at the time and continues to be a city councilmember, and Dan Bell, who is the Community Relations Coordinator for Glendale and the person who manages the city's various sister city relationships. I also spoke with several prominent Japanese Americans who are leading figures in the Southern California branches of two organizations: the Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress (NCRR) and the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). In addition to the interviews, I reviewed the city's records of their deliberations on whether to build the peace monument, with special attention given to video recordings of public hearings in which the matter was discussed. I similarly reviewed pertinent local and international

newspaper articles mentioning Glendale and the actors involved. The information I gathered from these various sources form the corpus from which I formulate my take on how the controversy in Glendale functioned and how we should situate it in the continuously expanding redress movement across the United States.

## **Chapter One—Persistence Despite Futility: Japanese Anti-Monument Activists in American Media**

Each time Japanese activists or representatives of the Japanese government intervene in local deliberations to force the removal of a commemorative project dedicated to “comfort women” in the United States, they inadvertently inspire other communities to build more memorials. Commemorative activism for “comfort women” in the U.S. began in 2007, when grassroots Korean American activists organized to lobby the House of Representatives to pass a nonbinding resolution that would call on Japan to apologize for sexually enslaving women during WWII. Coinciding with the first administration of Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, whose revisionist views are well known, dozens of Japanese politicians and opinion leaders attempted to preempt the American resolution by placing a full-page public comment in the June 14, 2007 issue of the *Washington Post* entitled “The Facts,” which denied the historical basis of the redress movement. The House of Representatives then passed the “comfort women” resolution (HR 121) unanimously. Between Abe’s resignation in 2007 and his reelection in 2013, the Japanese government took greater precaution when voicing its concerns. However, this precaution has since faded, and the apparent futility in directly confronting local governments across the U.S. has done little to deter grassroots Japanese nationalist activists.

Why would Japanese activists continue to engage in the same heavy-handed tactics even though they tend to be remarkably counterproductive? This question emerges out of a broad examination of news reporting on the controversies each time an American community constructs a memorial dedicated to “comfort women.” In the cases I review in this chapter, Japanese activists, mostly first-generation immigrants, took direct action to prevent a memorial’s construction or to have it removed once it had already been installed. In each case,

I outline how local English-language news sources characterized the stakes of the controversy to extrapolate how local communities reacted to Japanese opposition. I then chart the remarkable consistency of this dynamic across the examples of Palisades Park (New Jersey), Glendale (California), and San Francisco (California) to raise the question as to why oppositional activists appear to only commit more passionately to their seemingly counterproductive tactics.

### **Palisades Park, New Jersey**

The first memorial dedicated to “comfort women” was installed in 2010 in Palisades Park, New Jersey, a small town just outside New York City with approximately 20,000 residents, nearly half of whom are ethnically Korean.<sup>26</sup> The idea for this memorial came from Chejin Park, an attorney working for an organization called Korean American Civic Empowerment (KACE). Founded in New York in 1996 and then again in New Jersey in 2000, KACE is dedicated to “empowering and mobilizing the Korean American community to take action locally, nationally, and internationally to address concerns of the community.”<sup>27</sup> Park noticed one day at the county’s courthouse in Hackensack a group of African Americans attending a ceremony for a memorial to the history of slavery in the United States.<sup>28</sup> He relayed to journalists that he noticed this slavery memorial was positioned alongside other memorials dedicated to the Irish famine, the Holocaust, and the Armenian Genocide.<sup>29</sup> He believed

---

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates,” accessed April 11, 2018,

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

<sup>27</sup> Korean American Civic Empowerment, “Mission & Goals,” accessed April 11, 2018, <http://us.kace.org/about-us/mission-goals/>.

<sup>28</sup> Samantha Henry, “Tensions linger in US over ‘comfort women’ plaques,” *The San Diego Tribune*, January 30, 2013, accessed April 11, 2018, <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-tensions-linger-in-us-over-comfort-women-plaques-2013jan30-story.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth Son, *Embodied Reckonings: Memorial Building in the Korean Diaspora* (Ann Arbor, MN: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 162.

placing a memorial dedicated to “comfort women” among these other memorials would further associate it with human rights, which would in turn contribute to the Korean American awareness-raising that had begun with House Resolution 121. Over the course of one year, after gathering over one hundred signatures for a petition to build a memorial and giving historical presentations to the Palisades Park city council, that town unveiled the first “comfort women” memorial in the U.S.

Located on the grounds of the town’s public library, the memorial consists of a block of gray stone with a bronze plaque depicting an outline of a soldier about to strike a crouching woman with his hand. The plaque reads:

In memory of the more than 200,000 women and girls who were abducted by the armed forces of the government of Imperial Japan 1930s - 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.

By framing the history of “comfort women” as a “human rights violation” and a “crime against humanity,” it reflects Park’s initial desire to avoid the issue’s potential dismissal as only a specific Korean grievance against Japan. However, given the remarkably high percentage of Palisades Park’s ethnic Korean population, local media coverage of the memorial’s unveiling focused heavily on the role of Korean American activism in this project. And yet, in highlighting activists’ logic behind building this memorial, they simultaneously emphasized the history’s framing as a Korean grievance, as well as a matter of human rights and a crime against humanity.

Local newspapers, notably *The Record*, based in Hackensack, N.J., Palisades Park’s neighbor and the county seat, presented a broad sense of unification throughout New Jersey

and New York City in their reports on this memorial. For example, Elizabeth Llorente's "Pain of Wartime Crimes Lingers" includes statements by Steve Cavello, the local artist who designed Palisades Park's memorial. After realizing the seriousness and, indeed, contemporariness of this history when he visited the House of Sharing in South Korea, which is a home built specifically for survivors in 1992, he stated that the survivors "don't want to let it rest, so we'll help them let people know this is a part of history."<sup>30</sup> Monsy Alvarado, also in *The Record*, reported on a locally-held press conference where two Korean survivors, Ok-seon Yi (84) and Yongsoo Lee (83), along with two unnamed Holocaust survivors, were in attendance. She notes the local artists involved in promoting these events, including Cavello and Shinyoung An from nearby Cliffside Park, who had held an art exhibit and reception in Queens, N.Y. earlier that week.<sup>31</sup> Framed as a human rights issue akin to the Holocaust, broad community support for the memorial and related commemorative events is presented as a natural response to learning about the history of the "comfort women" and their unanswered demands for justice.

Conversations on the memorial proliferated once the Japanese government took notice. In 2012, Kirk Semple from *The New York Times* reported that two delegations from the Japanese government paid a visit to Palisades Park.<sup>32</sup> The first delegation provided two documents to Mayor James Rotundo, who was an ardent supporter of the project from the

---

<sup>30</sup> Llorente, Elizabeth, "Pain of Wartime Crimes Lingers," *The Record* (Hackensack, NJ), October 9, 2010: A01 accessed April 18, 2018,

<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/132CC757413FEE58?p=AWNB>.

<sup>31</sup> Monsy Alvarado, "UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE," *The Record* (Hackensack, NJ), December 16, 2011: L01, accessed April 18, 2018,

<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/13BAE83066FD4708?p=AWNB>.

<sup>32</sup> Semple, Kirk. "In New Jersey, Memorial for 'Comfort Women' Deepens Old Animosity," *The New York Times*, May 18, 2016, accessed April 11, 2018, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html?_r=0).

beginning.<sup>33</sup> One was a copy of the 1993 “Kōno statement,” which contains the Japanese government’s first official acknowledgement that imperial military authorities were vaguely involved in the “comfort women” system. The other document was a letter written by former Prime Minister Jun’ichiro Koizumi in 2001 apologizing to survivors for their treatment during the war. The delegation then requested that the memorial to “comfort women” be removed, and that the Japanese government would donate some cherry trees and some books for the public library “to show that we’re [Japan and the U.S.] united in this world and not divided.”<sup>34</sup> Mayor Rotundo and Deputy Mayor Jason Kim expressed their shock and disbelief at the request. Semple’s article also featured statements from the previously-mentioned Chejin Park, New York councilman Peter Koo, and the executive director of the Korean-American Association of Greater New York, Paul Park, all of whom expressed confusion at the Japanese requests and enthusiastic support for continuing commemorative activities along the same lines.

The delegations’ requests backfired by provoking local outrage. “They’re helping us, actually,” said Chejin Park, since the controversy functions to increase awareness of the issue.<sup>35</sup> His assumption, while evidently accurate, reflects the extent to which residents in and around Palisades Park, regardless of ethnicity, were virtually unanimous in their support of human rights, and that the “comfort women” redress movement should be aided by any who support human rights. Reporters from *The Record* reinforced this sentiment. Alvarado quoted Mayor James Rotundo’s response as representative of the community’s reactions at large: “[The Japanese delegates’] purpose was to have us pretty much remove it. Regardless of

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

whatever else they said their main goal was, to come here to think we would be intimidated to take it away, and we are not.”<sup>36</sup> While the Japanese consulate in New York denied that such an offer was made to Mayor Rotundo, incendiary reports on the request to have the monuments removed clearly motivated other nearby communities to push for more memorials. Internal disagreement among supporters regarding the specific design and wording of the memorials has delayed their progress, yet deliberations on these projects continue to this day, such as those in Fort Lee, New Jersey.<sup>37</sup>

### **Glendale, California**

Despite a drastically different ethnic composition and a far larger residential population than Palisades Park, local media representation of the controversy in Glendale differs little from the case in New Jersey. Descriptive reports as well as editorials and opinion pieces consistently framed the matter of “comfort women” as a human rights issue, that Japan should be more forthcoming in taking responsibility for it, and that it was perfectly appropriate for American communities to commemorate atrocities that occurred elsewhere. Compared to Palisades Park, however, in Glendale Japanese opposition was more prevalent, organized, and persistent, but nevertheless represented as so backwards as to be confusing.

Glendale was the first city outside of South Korea to host a replica of the original monument in Seoul, which is officially called the “Girl Statue of Peace” (Korean original, *Pyŏnghwau i sonyŏsang*), though it is more often simply called the “girl statue” (*sonyŏsang*). Like reporting on Palisades Park’s own controversial memorial, in Glendale the history

---

<sup>36</sup> Monsy Alvarado, “HISTORICAL TUG-OF-WAR,” *The Record* (Hackensack, NJ), May 10, 2012: A01, accessed April 18, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/13EAF5699891F290?p=AWNB>.

<sup>37</sup> Michael W. Curley, Jr., “Comfort Women memorial moving forward in Fort Lee,” *NorthJersey.com*, December 17, 2017, accessed April 18, 2018, <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/bergen/fort-lee/2017/12/21/comfort-women-memorial-moving-forward-fort-lee/961667001/>.



commemorated by and embodied in the monument is portrayed in the news media as a human rights issue that should transcend ethnicity or nationality. Chang Lee, a member of Glendale's Korean Sister City Association, said "it's not about one ethnicity against one ethnicity. It's about human rights. [The monument is] here so this atrocity will not be repeated. I'm glad that Glendale has taken a bold step to do that."<sup>38</sup> Before a pre-reception crowd at the monument's unveiling, Councilmember Laura Friedman remarked that "we stand on the side of history. We stand on the side of truth. [The monument] stands to honor and recognize the innocent victims of all wars."<sup>39</sup> As an expression of support for this project, four of the five city councilmembers appealed to the concept of human rights and the need to band together to make sure the world never forgets an atrocity like this.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to statements made by city councilmembers and the monument's proponents, most English-language media coverage also framed the issue as an egregious violation of human rights. Realizing that most Americans and, in fact, English-speaking audiences in general, know little to nothing about the Japanese military's sexual slavery during WWII, the history and victimization the monument commemorates had to be summarized frequently and concisely. Nearly every article published in English explained that "comfort women" refers to the over 200,000 Asian women who were taken as sex slaves for the Japanese military during the war.<sup>41</sup> The most common descriptive points are the "200,000" estimate and

---

<sup>38</sup> Brittany Levine, "Statue honoring WWII sex slaves comes to Glendale," *Glendale News-Press*, June 26, 2013, accessed April 15, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/tn-gnp-me-comfort-women-memorial-planned-20130626-story.html>.

<sup>39</sup> Brittany Levine and Jason Wells, "Glendale unveils 'comfort women' statue, honors 'innocent victims,'" *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2013, accessed April 15, 2018, <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/30/local/la-me-in-glendale-comfort-women-20130730>.

<sup>40</sup> The fifth city councilmember voted against the proposal ostensibly due to a desire to first draft plans for a parking ramp that would be constructed underneath the park.

<sup>41</sup> For a representative example, see Christina Villacorte, "Glendale approves controversial 'comfort women' memorial," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 9, 2013, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.dailynews.com/2013/07/09/glendale-approves-controversial-comfort-women-memorial/>.

the term “sex slaves” or “sexual slavery,” both of which are the primary points of contention for the Japanese government and a vocal contingent of the diasporic Japanese community living across the U.S.

Such dissenting voices are more present in the reporting on Glendale compared to Palisades Park. However, they are framed in a manner that suggests their unreasonableness. For example, a National Public Radio article by Aaron Schrank on the Glendale controversy describes how, in the weeks leading up to the July 9, 2013 public hearing on the proposal, hundreds of emails from Japanese addresses flooded into city councilmembers’ boxes angrily demanding that they vote against the proposal.<sup>42</sup> “The tone of probably 98 percent, 99 percent of the email was total denial,” councilmember Frank Quintero said.<sup>43</sup> “Not just of the comfort women issue, but the Rape of Nanking and all of the other atrocities. They are in total denial.”<sup>44</sup> In addition to the emails, however, many Japanese nationals residing throughout southern California attended the city council meeting, forming an overwhelming majority presence in the chambers, where they recited a variety of Japanese nationalist talking points, which I analyze in more detail in Chapter Three. Schrank quotes Kōichi Mera, a man who would eventually file a lawsuit against the City of Glendale, to substantiate Quintero’s remarks about Japanese denials: “The story told by Koreans is not based on the fact[s]. It’s a kind of, say, manufactured story.”<sup>45</sup> The author also quoted Yoshi Miyake: “These girls were allowed to refuse customers if they want to. You call this sex slave?”<sup>46</sup> Schrank immediately dismisses

---

<sup>42</sup> Aaron Schrank, “Statue Brings Friction over WWII Comfort Women to California,” *National Public Radio*, July 29, 2013, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2013/07/29/206655160/statue-brings-friction-over-wwii-comfort-women-to-california>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

these arguments as “flying in the face of the evidence” to alert readers as to the absurdity of such claims.<sup>47</sup>

But, even when journalists do not directly write off such assertions, they tend to position opponents’ statements around the middle of an article, sandwiched between direct statements from survivors and activists. This same NPR article by Schrank, for example, begins by describing the monument’s design, but quickly transitions to a quote from Ok-seon Lee, a survivor who was present at the Glendale monument’s unveiling: “The comfort station where we were taken was not a place for human beings to live. It was a slaughterhouse. I’m telling you, it was killing people.”<sup>48</sup> The article ends by noting the urgency that in part motivates survivors and activists to build these memorials with another quote from Lee:

Why didn’t I die? Why am I alive? I lived for this long, and that’s why I can at least say something about this. But think of what sorrows the other women must have died with. We need to speak for them too.<sup>49</sup>

Sandwiching oppositional voices between those of proponents and survivors is effective at judging their arguments as backward and amoral. This rhetorical strategy, common across most English-language media on this controversy, reflects the widely held assumptions, in American media at least, that it is only natural to support the monument and its proponents’ agenda. The logic undergirding this memorial-building movement is the common Holocaust maxim “never forget.”

Although neither email bombing nor overwhelming numbers of Japanese attendants at the public hearing could convince Glendale’s city council to refuse the proposal, that did not

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

discourage these activists—or Japanese governmental representatives for that matter—from continuing to challenge the presence of the monument in Glendale’s public space. Following the vote on the Peace Monument, a group of eighty Japanese individuals opposed to the monument gathered at a nearby restaurant to discuss their disappointment.<sup>50</sup> With the leadership of Kōichi Mera, they decided to form an organization to better manage their collective resources in a fight against the spread of “comfort women” commemoration across the U.S. One of the first actions of this newly formed organization, which they called the Global Alliance for Historical Truth, was to file a lawsuit against the City of Glendale to force the removal of the monument. Their primary argument was that, by installing the statue, Glendale had “infringe[d] upon the federal government’s power to exclusively conduct the foreign affairs of the United States and violates the supremacy clause of the U.S. Constitution.”<sup>51</sup> One of the co-plaintiffs, a longtime resident of Glendale, Michiko Gingery, also asserted that she suffers “feelings of exclusion, discomfort and anger” due to the monument’s presence in the park.

Glendale’s city councilmembers were not fazed by the lawsuit. Laura Friedman reportedly commented that she thinks “the lawsuit will be put to bed very quickly and we can move on and we can be proud of this statue,” including a note that she was glad that the statue had garnered international attention for Glendale and the victims they wished to honor.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Phyllis Kim, the single person most responsible for the Peace Monument project,

---

<sup>50</sup> Kōichi Mera, “*GAHT Nyūsu rettā sōkangō*,” The Global Alliance for Historical Truth, February 20, 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Brittany Levine, “Lawsuit seeks removal of Glendale ‘comfort women’ statue,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 2014, accessed April 17, 2018, <http://articles.latimes.com/2014/feb/22/local/la-me-ln-glendale-comfort-women-statue-sparks-lawsuit-20140222>.

<sup>52</sup> Brittany Levine, “Glendale City Council denounces anti-statue lawsuit,” *Glendale News-Press*, February 27, 2014, accessed April 19, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14C3D1795F6F1E80?p=AWNB>.

stated that “I trust the city of Glendale will handle it without any problems.”<sup>53</sup> This lawsuit and councilmembers’ refusal to feel intimidated by the pressure occurred after several visits by Japanese politicians, who insisted that they came of their own accord, not as official representatives of the Japanese government.<sup>54</sup> The city council refused to meet with them since they had agreed among themselves not to provide any fuel for unsympathetic Japanese media.<sup>55</sup> Councilmember Sinanyan did remark to the Glendale New-Press, however, that he does “regret the fact that the lawsuit was brought. It takes something that’s pure and it drags that pure into the gutter.”<sup>56</sup> This series of attacks on the monument—the email campaign, flooding the city council chambers at the public hearing, Japanese politicians’ delegations, and the lawsuit—thus only further motivated the city council to rally around the monument. Their personal reactions additionally inspired greater support from residents of nearby communities, such as John Gee, who said “this city, having that statue placed here, shows that it has a conscience. We need to keep the truth no matter how painful.”<sup>57</sup>

Private citizens were not the only ones to express support for the City of Glendale in the face of the lawsuit. Sidley Thomas LLP, a Los Angeles law firm, offered to represent the city pro bono because it had a “long history of protecting the freedom of expression,” the law

---

<sup>53</sup> Marcie Kagawa, “Lawsuit seeks removal of comfort women statue from California park,” *Kyodo News International, Inc.*, February 21, 2014, accessed April 19, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14C223BCAE303BE8?p=AWNB>.

<sup>54</sup> “‘*Ianfu wo hitei suru no ka!*’ *Tanshin tobei shita Sakai shigi wo machikamaeta Kankoku media: ‘Seiron’ wo ‘bōgen’ to hōjiru ‘chōhenkō,’*” *Sankei Shimbun*, December 15, 2014, accessed April 18, 2018, <https://www.sankei.com/west/news/141215/wst1412150005-n1.html>.

<sup>55</sup> Zareh Sinanyan, interview with Kai Wasson, September 13, 2016.

<sup>56</sup> Brittany Levine, “Glendale City Council denounces anti-statue lawsuit,” *Glendale News-Press*, February 27, 2014, accessed April 19, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14C3D1795F6F1E80?p=AWNB>.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

firm's chairman, Frank Broccolo, said.<sup>58</sup> He continued to explain how, while the lawsuit was clearly without legal merit, "if the claims were to be accepted, it would restrict cities from expressing their freedom of expression, educating their citizens and encouraging discussion respective to matters of historical significance."<sup>59</sup> In other words, the stakes were considered to be very high from an American perspective, even if the lawsuit had little chance of succeeding. Neither the city councilmembers, the monument's proponents, nor residents of surrounding communities were worried about the outcome of this lawsuit, nor were they intimidated by the international attention the controversy was attracting. Instead, it emboldened them to continue defying the Japanese government's and nationalist activists' desire to, as the English-language media portrays it, sweep Japan's sordid past under the rug.

Disregard for Japanese nationalist arguments has not deterred those activists from persevering, however. In addition to frequent fundraising activities held mostly in Japan to pay the lawyers' fees for the lawsuit and its appeals, GAHT has organized a wide range of other activities aimed at convincing American society at large that the women involved in the "comfort women" system were not sex slaves, just regular prostitutes. Toward that end, Mera and a couple of other representatives of GAHT attended the July, 2014 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to assert that it is not appropriate for CEDAW to consider "comfort women" an unresolved matter.<sup>60</sup> Mera continued to assert his views by conducting informational meetings and lectures in Los Angeles and San Diego in the latter half of 2014.<sup>61</sup> He also led a press conference and lecture in New York City

---

<sup>58</sup> Brittany Levine, "Law firm agrees to defend Glendale in comfort-women statue lawsuit," *Glendale News-Press*, March 22, 2014, accessed April 19, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14CB62E0625AEFE8?p=AWNB>.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Kōichi Mera, "GAHT Nyūsu rettā sōkangō," Global Alliance for Historical Truth, February 20, 2016, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

that coincided with the March, 2015 meeting for the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>62</sup> The following month, GAHT members held a two-day conference at Central Washington University. It featured a revisionist film and lecture by Taniyama Yujiro, a man known for citing Western scholarship out of context to paint “comfort women” redress as a movement meant to oppress Japanese people.<sup>63</sup> In addition to these events, by 2015 Mera had self-published a book entitled *Comfort Women Not Sex Slaves*. Along with his own book, he raised the funds to send to North American Japan scholars free copies of international relations professor Sonfa Oh’s *Getting Over It: Why Korea Needs to Stop Bashing Japan* (2015) and a book published by *Sankei Shimbun*’s editors entitled *History Wars: Japan-False Indictment of the Century*, *Sankei Shimbun* (2015). Mera believes that, while it may take a while, his organization’s efforts to debunk the “myth” of the “comfort women” will eventually make American society realize that the “comfort women” redress movement is using human rights language as a cover for their “real motive,” which is to promote hatred of Japan.<sup>64</sup>

Thus, in Glendale, we again see a total failure on the part of conservative Japanese politicians and grassroots Japanese activists to convince a local American municipality to disengage from the movement commemorating “comfort women.” Not only did their collective actions fail to change the Glendale city council decision, it actually convinced them that their support of the monument was well founded. Furthermore, the city council’s stalwart refusal to budge on the monument proposal only encouraged Japanese activists to work harder

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Emi Koyama, “The U.S. as “Major Battleground” for “Comfort Women” Revisionism: The Screening of Scottboro Girls at Central Washington University,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13:22:2 (June 3, 2015), <https://apjif.org/Emi-Koyama/4324.html>.

<sup>64</sup> The original in Japanese: 「(慰安婦像の) 目的は女性の人権を擁護するのであるとしているが、その実際の目的は、日本国を蔑むことである」 “*(Ianfuzō no) mokuteki ha josei no jinken wo yōgo suru no dearu to shiteiru ga, sono jissai no mokuteki ha, Nihonkoku wo sagesumu koto dearu.*”

Kōichi Mera, “GAHT Newsletter Number 1,” Global Alliance for Historical Truth, February 20, 2016, 1.

and to become better organized in a war they saw as much larger than Glendale alone. As their organization's name would suggest, they see anti-Japanese forces as global in scope and, indeed, more powerful than themselves. GAHT's members see this daunting task, however, as a worthwhile one, and they continued to pursue it as comfort women redress made its way to San Francisco, the first "major" U.S. city to build a "comfort women" memorial.



*Image 2: Women's Column of Strength, San Francisco*

## **San Francisco**

The "comfort women" memorial in San Francisco entailed far more fanfare than the Palisades Park or Glendale memorials, though with an equal dose of controversy. Its more spectacular unveiling is likely attributable to the commemoration movement having steadily gained momentum since it first began five years earlier in the small town of Palisades Park. The cultural character of San Francisco also had a great influence on the media attention the project received, the funding

it could attract, and the design of the memorial itself. The city of San Francisco has a law requiring that all public buildings must feature original artwork. The specific provision requiring that public art be original is one reason why San Francisco is not hosting the same monument as Glendale. Instead, the San Francisco Arts Commission held an international



design competition with over thirty submissions. They decided on Steven Whyte's submission in 2015.<sup>65</sup>

Titled "Women's Column of Strength," Whyte's design features three young women, with each one wearing clothes indicating their Korean, Chinese, or Filipino origins. Standing ten feet tall atop a cylindrical steel base, the height symbolizes victims' rising above their violated past. They are holding hands, signifying their solidarity with all sexual abuse survivors. A few steps away stands another, elderly figure resembling Kim Hak-sun, the first survivor to speak in public about her painful life. She is looking at the young women with her hands clasped, a look of resilience on her face reminding audiences that justice will eventually have its resolution (see image 1).<sup>66</sup>

San Francisco's project was led by two Chinese American women, Lillian Sing and Julie Tang. Both retired from their positions as Superior Court judges in order to raise the considerable funds required to commission this project and to navigate the city's bureaucracy. Toward that end, they cofounded the Comfort Women Justice Coalition, which joined forces with the Korean American Forum of California, led by Phyllis Kim, to navigate the labyrinthian process that eventually entailed nearly twenty public hearings and committee meetings to attain the necessary approvals. At the urging of then-City Supervisor Eric Mar, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved in 2015 the memorial's installation on a terrace off the southeastern corner of St. Mary's Square in Chinatown.<sup>67</sup> After raising the \$205,000 to

---

<sup>65</sup> Comfort Women Justice Coalition, "The Making of the Monument," accessed April 20, 2018, <http://remembercomfortwomen.org/the-making-of-the-monument/>.

<sup>66</sup> Photo credit: "Comfort Women's Column of Strength," CODAWORX, accessed April 21, 2018, <https://www.codaworx.com/project/comfort-women-s-column-of-strength-san-francisco-art-commission>.

<sup>67</sup> Heather Knight, "War victims some would rather forget," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 12, 2017, accessed April 20, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/166E40700CE8BFA0?p=AWNB>.

commission and maintain the memorial, Sing and Tang unveiled the memorial on September 22, 2017.

While the proposal for the memorial passed unanimously through the San Francisco government, it did not do so without the same protesting forces that converged on Palisade Park and Glendale. Perhaps primed by news of previous “comfort women” memorials being built across the United States and the Japanese government’s well-known opposition to it, Japanese and Japanese American residents of San Francisco expressed their worries that the statue could give rise to a new wave of discrimination against people of Japanese descent in the city.<sup>68</sup> Steven Whyte himself received well over one thousand negative social media messages and emails (mostly copy-and-paste) threatening economic boycotts of his work.<sup>69</sup> Kōichi Mera was in attendance at the Board of Supervisors public hearing where the council voted unanimously in support of the project. He stated that the 200,000 estimate of the number of victims, their forcible recruitment, and the slave-like conditions they endured are all fabrications. He proceeded to then attempt to highlight discrepancies in one particular survivor’s testimonies to suggest that all such testimonies are unreliable. Supervisor David Campos, exasperated at Mera’s words, interrupted him to say, “Mr. Mera, that’s not what she said. Are you calling her a liar?”<sup>70</sup> That survivor was Lee Yongsoo, who was also in attendance at that very same meeting. Once Mera’s time was up, Lee, who was 89 years old at the time, stood up and yelled across the chambers at him in Korean. Although Mera was not the only

---

<sup>68</sup> Sally McGrane, “An important statue for ‘Comfort Women’ in San Francisco,” *The New Yorker*, October 12, 2017, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/an-important-statue-for-comfort-women-in-san-francisco>.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> To view this exchange, see FeND. *Koichi Mera Testimony, 09/17/2015*. YouTube. Accessed April 20, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sFSN6Dect0>.

Japanese national voicing his opposition at this meeting, Campos and other audience members did not conceal their vexation with such claims.

Additional dissenting voices came from outside the U.S. Yoshihide Suga, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary, said San Francisco's decision is out of line with Japan's official position, and that it was "extremely regrettable."<sup>71</sup> Jun Yamada, the consul general of Japan in San Francisco, published his own op-ed in the *San Francisco Chronicle* the same day the memorial was unveiled. He wrote how the memorial movement is perpetuating certain one-sided interpretations without credible evidence.

This is unwarranted and hardly conducive to objective fact-finding and mutual agreement, let alone a final reconciliation. Rather, they are rapidly alienating the entire Japanese public, who could otherwise be sympathetic to the wartime plight of these women, by unduly exacerbating emotional antagonism.<sup>72</sup>

Protests emanating from Japan extended even to San Francisco's sister city, Ōsaka. The two had become sister cities in 1957 as part of a project meant to foster reconciliation between two former enemies.<sup>73</sup> In response to San Francisco agreeing to build the memorial despite vehement protests from Japan, Hirofumi Yoshimura, Ōsaka's mayor at the time, stated "our relationship of trust was completely destroyed."<sup>74</sup> He severed the 60-year-old sister city ties

---

<sup>71</sup> Mari Yamaguchi, "Japan protests San Francisco's 'sex slave' statue decision," *Associated Press State Wire: California (CA)*, November 24, 2017, accessed April 21, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/1685FEFA992BF458?p=AWNB>.

<sup>72</sup> Jun Yamada. "Memorials are alienating Japanese public," *San Francisco Chronicle (CA)*, September 22, 2017: A10, accessed April 21, 2018, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/167137D4DAC14DE0?p=AWNB>.

<sup>73</sup> Adam Taylor, "Osaka mayor to end sister city status with San Francisco over 'comfort women' statue," *The Washington Post*, November 25, 2017, accessed April 21, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/25/osaka-mayor-to-end-sister-city-status-with-san-francisco-over-comfort-women-statue/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.5b188cd2ca8c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/25/osaka-mayor-to-end-sister-city-status-with-san-francisco-over-comfort-women-statue/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.5b188cd2ca8c).

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

between the two cities, thereby preventing any public money from Ōsaka contributing to privately organized cultural exchanges between the two cities.

San Francisco witnessed the same types of oppositional strategies at work in Palisades Park, in Glendale, and in every other example of “comfort women” memorial construction in the United States. These strategies included preemptive email campaigns featuring identical messages, the frequently overwhelming presence of Japanese nationals at public hearings who deny the historical validity of characterizing “comfort women” as sex slaves, and not-so-subtle pressure from official representatives of the Japanese government urging the city council to reconsider their plans. These tactics have been consistent in both their approach and, more importantly, in their failure to prevent American communities from building increasingly provocative memorials.

In the face of these failures, grassroots activists persist. Considering that these anti-monument activists’ stated goal is to prevent or remove “comfort women” memorials from public spaces in the U.S. because they are manifestations of unfair anti-Japanese sentiment, it is perplexing that they appear wedded to tactics that only undermine their cause. In the chapters that follow, I suggest that their stated goals are actually of secondary importance relative to an underlying desire for a community in which they can feel proud of their Japanese identity. In other words, certain first-generation immigrants from Japan living in the U.S. feel to some degree alienated from the rest of American society and are genuinely fearful of the growing criticism of Japan for historical crimes that, for whatever reason, they do not believe are true. Rather than being primarily motivated by a desire to see the statues removed, however, I argue that they are instead seeking social and emotional refuge in a community of likeminded and

proud members of the Japanese nation. Participating in anti-monument activism is a vehicle through which they can pursue this emotional refuge.

## **Chapter Two—Why Glendale? The Cosmopolitan Heritage of an American City**

In the face of hundreds of emails and protesting audience members warning the city not to involve itself in an ongoing “international issue,” Glendale’s city council voted 4-1 in

favor of building the Peace Monument on July 9, 2013. Why would the city council in an otherwise unassuming suburb immerse the city in a deeply politicized dispute over mass rape in a war that occurred over a half century before? The part of the answer I discuss here involves the local factors of the dispute in California (and the United States more generally). With its large and politically active Armenian American population, their own legacy of suffering a genocide in the early twentieth century made the city more sensitive to others' claims to suffering violence on a massive scale and being denied justice for that suffering. Korean American activists then oriented themselves toward Glendale's particular social fabric to maximize the effectiveness of their message and agenda. Importantly, activists were not inclined to communicate with their opponents in this debate. Rather, if we for the moment collapse the nuances of the controversy into two basic sides—whether the monument is or is not appropriate in Glendale—each side targeted its activities and publications toward those who might be, or who was already, sympathetic to their cause. Nobody was trying to change anyone else's opinion if they already had one. Further, each side's indirect motivations for engaging in this controversy diverge slightly. These indirect motivations, I suggest, stem from the histories of violent discrimination suffered by their ethnic communities in the United States and how those before them responded to such violence by asserting their, in this case, hybrid Korean and Korean American identity. On the other hand, rather than seeking to secure their position within an American sociopolitical environment, I argue that Japanese anti-redress activists were instead attracted to the community-building effects of mobilizing against the monument because, in part, it championed a diasporic Japanese identity as opposed to a more hybrid Japanese American identity.

The City of Glendale looks a lot like many other suburbs in California. With a rapidly growing population of approximately 200,000 residents, it is sandwiched between the City of Los Angeles and the Verdugo Mountains to its north. Glendale has played a relatively prominent role in American aviation history as it hosted the Grand Central Airport, which was the departure point for the first west-to-east transcontinental flight flown by Charles Lindbergh.<sup>75</sup> Along with its multiple upscale shopping centers, architecturally significant homes, and multi-purpose theaters, Glendale is home to several large companies, including the Walt Disney Company, DreamWorks Animation, Nestlé, and the U.S. headquarters of the International House of Pancakes. Compared to many areas of Los Angeles, Glendale is an affordable yet accessible city with an impeccable safety record, making it attractive for families with children as well as for both newer and already well-established companies. Demographically, Glendale is a rather diverse city, much in line with the rest of the populous and multiethnic State of California. Though predominantly Caucasian, it is also home to well-established Mexican American and Filipino American communities. However, key to this thesis's argument are members of four other communities—Armenian Americans, Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, and Japanese expatriates—that I will briefly describe here.

Observant visitors to Glendale will immediately notice the ubiquity of businesses featuring Armenian names and the red, blue, and orange colors of Armenia's flag, Armenian churches, Armenian private schools, and public spaces named after Armenian philanthropists. Comprising approximately one-third of the city's total population, Armenian Americans dominate much of the city's government and civic life. Indeed, as of the completion of this

---

<sup>75</sup> Glendale City Government, "Grand Central Air Terminal," Airport History, accessed March 3, 2018, [http://grandcentralair.glendaleca.gov/pages/airport\\_history/3\\_grand\\_central\\_air\\_terminal.htm](http://grandcentralair.glendaleca.gov/pages/airport_history/3_grand_central_air_terminal.htm)

thesis, four of the five city council members are Armenian Americans. One of them, Zareh Sinanyan, is the mayor. At the peak of the controversy over the “comfort women” monument in 2013, Sinanyan and another Armenian American man, Ara Najarian, were and continue to be councilmembers. That the city council features a majority of Armenian Americans demonstrates how much the situation has changed in Glendale. In the 1920s, an active Ku Klux Klan group located itself in Glendale, and in the 1960s the West Coast Headquarters of the American Nazi Party did so as well.<sup>76</sup> As Armenian migrants began arriving in northern Los Angeles and Glendale in the late 1980s, they were often greeted with discrimination and hatred based on their Armenian identity. Even in the face of this enmity, growth of ethnic Armenians continues unabated, with Glendale becoming one of the largest centers of diasporic Armenians in the world.

This growing presence and local experience of the Armenian American community is pertinent to this thesis because that community remains passionately invested in commemorating the tragic legacy of the Armenian Genocide. Much of the international community considers as genocide the forceful deportation of Armenians from Ottoman territory in the years around 1915, in which 800,000 to 1.5 million people died, though the contemporary Turkish government continues to deny such claims.<sup>77</sup> It also spends millions of dollars every year through international political, economic, and military arrangements to sustain its own official narrative that no genocide occurred.<sup>78</sup> According to Melissa King’s ethnographic study of Armenian American youth in Glendale, Armenian Americans preserve

---

<sup>76</sup> Stephanie O’Neil, “Racist Incidents Spark Debate on City Image,” in *The LA Times* (November 26, 1987), accessed January 18, 2018, [http://articles.latimes.com/1987-11-26/news/gl-24929\\_1\\_city-officials](http://articles.latimes.com/1987-11-26/news/gl-24929_1_city-officials).

<sup>77</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present and Collective Violence Against the Armenians, 1789-2009* (New York: Oxford university Press, 2015), 1.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.



memories of Armenian woundedness and genocide to enable a form of resistance when claiming Armenian American subjectivity. More specifically, she maintains that the *lack* of official American recognition of the genocide is just as significant for the construction of Armenian American identity as is the memory of the genocide itself.<sup>79</sup> I argue below that a similar process of identity construction operates among Korean Americans regarding the “comfort women” history, and that this similarity was integral to the successful construction of the Peace Monument in 2013.

The small, yet vocal, Korean American community in Glendale has roots in the larger Korean American community in nearby Los Angeles. Koreans began immigrating to Los Angeles in the early twentieth century, followed by greater rates of immigration in the wake of the Korean War. The Hart-Cellar Act of 1965 instituted a preferential immigration system based on family relationships and occupational skill, thereby opening the door to yet more immigrants from Korea.<sup>80</sup> This latter wave of immigration brought many highly educated individuals intent on escaping the long-term instability of the Korean peninsula to Southern California. Migrants from all over the world, including Koreans, felt attracted to the United States’ advertised promise that justice there was equal and that anything was possible with hard work, the “American dream” as it were. As Claire Jean Kim articulated in “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans,” Asian migrants came to the U.S. unaware of racial hierarchies and where they might fall within that classification system. They would eventually realize that American popular culture would represent Asian Americans in a more positive way than, say, African Americans, but as nevertheless perpetually foreign, as not fully American.

---

<sup>79</sup> Melissa Ruth King, “Survivors: An Ethnographic Study of Armenian American Activism and Expression” (PhD diss., UC Riverside, 2013), 3.

<sup>80</sup> Katherine Yungmee Kim, *Los Angeles’s Koreatown* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 9.

Kim then argues that this triangulating configuration of Asian Americans helped to uphold the unequal racial status quo by encouraging non-whites to maintain race-based divisions among themselves.<sup>81</sup>

As a community, Korean Americans remained mostly indistinct, even invisible, to the rest of American society until April 29, 1992, when they experienced what Elaine Kim has called their unwilling initiation into being American or, more precisely, their forceful incorporation into the centuries-long systemic practice of racial violence and inequality.<sup>82</sup> On that day, a predominantly white jury acquitted four white police officers of all charges regarding the use of overwhelming force in their arrest of Rodney King, an African American taxi driver. A local resident had recorded the incident, which validated repeated complaints by minority leaders in Los Angeles about harassment and excessive use of force by LAPD officers.<sup>83</sup> The “not guilty” verdict threw Los Angeles into several days of violent, civil unrest that mass media broadcasted as it was happening. In what became known as the “L.A. riots,” Korean Americans suddenly found themselves on the front lines of the uprising. Korean American shop owners in the South Central neighborhood at the time were relatively affluent compared to the impoverished residents, whom they often exploited as laborers or looked down upon as lazy fools.<sup>84</sup> These predominantly African American local residents in turn tended to see Korean Americans as foreigners who only took from the surrounding communities without contributing anything in return. Thus, since the police essentially abandoned South Central to

---

<sup>81</sup> See Claire Jean Kim, “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans,” *Politics & Society* 27:1 (March 1999): 105-138.

<sup>82</sup> Elaine H. Kim, “Home is Where the Han Is: A Korean American Perspective on the Los Angeles Upheavals,” *Social Justice* 20:1/2 Rethinking Race (Spring-Summer 1993): 1-21.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Reinhold, “Violence and Racism Are Routine In Los Angeles Police, Study Says,” in *The New York Times*, July 10, 1991, accessed January 21, 2018, <http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/02/08/home/rodney-report.html>.

<sup>84</sup> Kim, “Home is Where the Han Is,” 5.

protect more affluent neighborhoods westward toward the coast, Korean American businesses became the most obvious target for looters.

As Korean American businesses bore the brunt of the destruction and looting in these riots, live broadcasts focused on images of unfathomable, gun-wielding Korean American merchants fending off mostly African American and Latino inner-city residents trying to plunder their stores. Subsequently, news programs and talk shows explained the violence through scapegoating Korean Americans by having black and white commentators—and no Korean Americans—rail against Koreans as rude and exploitive merchants who had ruined peaceful race relations for everyone else.<sup>85</sup> When the riots erupted, Korean American store owners dialed 911 to get help defending their property and to call ambulances for people who were shot. Yet, neither the police nor the ambulances came. Over the course of six days, Korean American property damage totaled approximately \$350 million, roughly forty-five percent of the total damages incurred, despite Korean Americans only comprising 1.6 percent of the city's population.<sup>86</sup>

Abandoned by the police, ignored by politicians, and scapegoated by the media, the 1992 L.A. riots, known to Korean Americans as *sa-i-gu* (literally “4-2-9,” or April 29 in Korean), powerfully affected younger Korean Americans' political consciousness. Subsequent scholarship, poetry, theater plays, documentaries, and music memorialized this event and helped create a distinctly racialized identity among Korean Americans as both racially Asian (resulting from their representation in the media) and culturally American (resulting from their inclusion in the American racial hierarchy). Subsequently, the riots prompted many better-off

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>86</sup> Rose M. Kim, “Violence and Trauma as Constitutive Elements in Korean American Racial Identity Formation: The 1992 L.A. Riots/Insurrection/Saigu,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35:11 (2012): 1999-2018.

Korean American families to move to suburbs. Nearby Glendale was one of these suburban havens for Korean Americans keen on leaving Los Angeles. Korean American political engagement in mainstream American politics has strengthened and maintained momentum to this day, including broad efforts across the United States to construct monuments to the victims and survivors of imperial Japan's military "comfort women" prostitution system. The Peace Monument in Glendale is both a reflection and mobilizing component of grassroots Korean American activism.

Media coverage of Glendale's Peace Monument controversy often conflate two more pertinent communities in and around Glendale—the Japanese and Japanese American communities. Both communities are internally divided in myriad ways, as is any community, but when it comes to relating to Japan and WWII, the two tend to diverge in a clear manner. First, Japanese Americans in Southern California are largely supportive of Korean American efforts to commemorate imperial Japan's wartime victims. The term "Japanese American" refers to people whose parents or even grandparents were born in the United States, typically before or during the Second World War, and who are American citizens. As an Asian minority, Japanese Americans' history in the United States is as tumultuous as that of Korean Americans. Most notably, during WWII, regardless of their citizenship, Japanese Americans were rounded up and forced into concentrations camps located in isolated and harsh areas of desert or swamps in Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. Following the cessation of the war, Japanese American civil rights organizations, such as the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress (NCR), campaigned persistently for redress from the federal government for the wholesale violation of their rights as Americans. In his exploration of the strained relationship between second-

and third-generation Japanese Americans in the Bay Area of California, Jere Takahashi, a Japanese American born in the Topaz internment camp, discussed how Japanese Americans upheld ethnic solidarity and reliance on group structure within overarching narratives of citizenship and loyalty to America.<sup>87</sup> Efforts couched in this ethos culminated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which granted an official apology from the U.S. government and authorized the payment of reparations to all camp survivors.<sup>88</sup> Japanese Americans whose identities are shaped by this heritage tend to be politically progressive and supportive of other ethnic minorities' struggles for civic recognition and protection in the U.S., such as when the JACL issued a statement condemning anti-Muslim rhetoric in 2015.<sup>89</sup> JACL and NCCR support of "comfort women" statues is similarly in line with their tradition of social justice activism.

Distinct from Japanese Americans is a separate Japanese community also present throughout California. Labelled as *shin issei*, or "new first generation," by Asian American activists and scholars, this community consists of first-generation immigrants from Japan who moved to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, typically as employees of Japanese companies that were then expanding their operations overseas.<sup>90</sup> Unlike most prewar Japanese immigrants, *shin issei* tend to be highly educated individuals who migrated with greater financial resources as part of the post-1965 wave of skilled Asian immigrants.<sup>91</sup> Their

---

<sup>87</sup> Jere Takahashi, *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997).

<sup>88</sup> "About NCCR," Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, accessed November 26, 2016, <http://www.nccr-la.org/about.html>.

<sup>89</sup> Priscilla Ouchida and Jeff Moy, "JACL Condemns Dangerous Anti-Muslim Rhetoric," Japanese American Citizens League, December 9, 2015, <https://jacl.org/jacl-condemns-dangerous-anti-muslim-rhetoric/>.

<sup>90</sup> Tritia Toyota, "The New Nikkei: Transpacific Shin Issei and Shifting Borders of Community in Southern California," *Amerasia Journal* 38:3 (2012): 2-27.

<sup>91</sup> Jane H. Yamashiro, "Japanese Transnational Identity," in *Asian Americans: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History*, eds. Xiaojian Zhao and Edward J. Park. Santa Barbara, (California: Greenwood, 2014).

immigration to the U.S. roughly coincided with a rise in the 1980s of widespread anti-Japanese sentiment, however, due to trade conflicts between the two countries and perceptions among American workers that Japan was actively destroying their livelihoods. This anti-Japanese sentiment centered mainly in regions hosting car manufacturing centers, such as Detroit. Anti-Japanese sentiment eventually resulted in a violent crime that achieved national visibility, namely, the murder of Vincent Chin on June 19, 1982. Two white employees of the local Chrysler car plant mistook the Chinese American man for a Japanese man and assaulted and murdered him in a suburb of Detroit. The two murderers were eventually acquitted of all charges and spent zero days in jail.

The Vincent Chin murder case had an enormous impact on not just how Japanese Americans, but how all Asian Americans understood their position within an American racial hierarchy. While this case's specific impact on *shin issei* communities across the United States is understudied, Dana Frank examines how the American auto industry used advertising campaigns to attribute American workers' massive layoffs to Japan, which combined with already prevalent anti-Japanese images in American popular culture.<sup>92</sup> For instance, blockbuster movies like *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Back to the Future II* (1989) portrayed American workers being worked like slaves under Japanese superiors. Whereas Japanese Americans have striven to assert their authentic American-ness through political activism, *shin issei* seem to have kept their collective heads down, preferring to avoid confrontation rather than try to change American society. Thus, throughout their time in the U.S., members of the *shin issei* community have undoubtedly experienced hostility, but they have nevertheless

---

<sup>92</sup> Dana Frank, "Demons in the Parking Lot: Auto Workers, Buy American Campaigns, and the 'Japanese Threat' in the 1980s," *Amerasia Journal* 28:3 (2002): 33-50.

quietly persisted, and many continue to reside in the U.S. to the present day. Many have also married American citizens and raised their families in the U.S. while still orienting their own selves toward Japan, retaining their Japanese citizenship, and seeing themselves as “Japanese residents in America” (*zaibei nihonjin*) rather than as Japanese Americans.

The Armenian American, Korean American, Japanese American, and *shin issei* Japanese communities in and around Glendale all have their own separate experiences of discrimination as racialized minorities, whether they experienced that violence personally, heard stories about it from older family members living in the United States or abroad, or a combination of all those possibilities. Additionally, with the exception of *shin issei* Japanese residents, each of these communities has struggled, often with help from people of other ethnic communities, to create a space in which they can belong and be accepted as Americans. These struggles have taken various forms, though the most prominent was demonstrated by Japanese Americans who successfully demanded redress from the federal government for the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII. This social context and extensive experience fighting for civil rights in the U.S. has molded Glendale’s residents and leadership to be particularly receptive to human rights debates that emerge within the purview of their city.

\*\*\*

In Chapter Three, I examine in detail the special meeting in Glendale where members of the public could state their opinion on the proposal to build a monument dedicated to the victims and survivors of imperial Japan’s wartime system of sexual slavery. I consider the tense interaction between pro-monument and anti-monument speakers through the lens of Rosenwein’s emotional communities. That is, rather than characterizing this event as a debate on historiographical standards, which is how it looks on the surface, examining the emotional

dimension of this debate suggests that the conflict has more to do with conflicting collective identities than with a concern for how history is to be written. I also reflect on the relationship between “historical truth” and “historical revisionism,” two frequently used terms in this debate, and how the blurry distinction between these two concepts corresponds to present political concerns.

### **Chapter Three—The Emotion of Historical Truth and Historical Revisionism**

In this chapter, I analyze the various arguments people used during the July 9, 2013 public hearing in Glendale concerning the proposal for the Peace Monument. The social fracturing in Glendale surrounding this proposal may appear to coincide with ethnic boundaries, though I contend that a clash of emotional communities, as opposed to ethnic



communities, more accurately reflects the mutual antagonism in the room. In other words, Glendale, as represented by its city council, is emotionally oriented around honoring victims. Glendale's most politically represented emotional community then collided with a local expatriate Japanese community emotionally oriented toward defending the honor of their national forebears. These two emotional communities came into conflict because each believed that the history they use to justify their target of veneration necessarily discounts the other group's preferred history. Here, I focus on the opponents to the monument who eventually formed an organization called the "Global Alliance for Historical Truth" (GAHT).

While historical interpretations must be based on evidence, which evidence is deemed legitimate and valid is a subjective and often political process, especially when it involves large-scale and grievous matters like mass sexual slavery. A multitude of factors go into this process of determining "correct" history, but in the case of the controversy in Glendale, I maintain that fear is a central motivating factor that should not be ignored. Hinging on the fear that motivates the various actors in this story are two terms that come up frequently in the debate on Japan's wartime sexual slavery, including at the special hearing in Glendale: "historical truth" and "history denial." When people claim their own historical interpretation to be "the truth," they often do so on the assumption that their position is vindicated by the extant evidence and that anyone who diverges from their interpretation is a "history denier." If the person is more formally educated, they are often called a "historical revisionist." Although labelling someone a history denier is obviously pejorative in intent, labelling someone a historical revisionist has greater nuance.

In the context of the debate on the history of Japan's military sex slaves, historical revisionism refers to those who would erase sexual slavery entirely from the official story of

Japan's actions during the Second World War. However, every act of representing the past in the present is an act of revising the past in light of the present. In their discussion of historical revisionism regarding the Holocaust and the Asia-Pacific War, Iwasaki Minoru and Steffi Richter postulate that, rather than being a reflexive practice of reevaluating evidence, historical revisionism should instead be understood as an emotion or disposition, a mode of being uninterested in actual debate that seeks rather to eliminate the negative implications of historical events for the present via discursive strategies to mystify historical consensus.<sup>93</sup> Here, I set aside the details of scholarly historiography on "comfort women" to instead consider how grassroots activists and local politicians make sense of contradictory historical "truths" on the ground. My approach in this chapter combines Rosenwein's emotional communities with Iwasaki's and Richter's characterization of historical revisionism as fundamentally an emotional and, in this case, a largely fear-driven behavior. This compulsion manifests in anti-monument speakers' use of the language of "unbiased knowledge," "objectivity," and "truth" to challenge the city council's understanding of the historical consensus. I argue that conceiving historical revisionism as an emotional disposition and as the core of an emotional community helps to explain one important dimension of how this controversy operated on the local, rather than transnational, level.

### **Facts as Weapons**

Unlike most meetings designed for receiving public comments in Glendale, the one that took place on July 9, 2013 attracted so many people that the chambers filled to capacity and the building's overflow room put to use. A total of thirty speakers from the audience

---

<sup>93</sup> Iwasaki Minoru, Steffi Richter, and Richard F. Calichman (translator), "The Topology of Post-1990s Historical Revisionism," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 16:3 (Winter 2008): 507-538, 516.

expressed their thoughts to the city council. Only seven individuals spoke in support of the monument. While this relatively small number of vocal supporters may make it seem that Glendale residents were apathetic regarding the potential monument, more people might have been unable to attend since the meeting began at three in the afternoon on a Tuesday, before most people finish their workday. Of these seven individuals, three were from the Korean American Forum of California, the organization that raised the funds and commissioned the monument in the first place. One additional person, Alex Wu, was the representative for Glendale's two Korean sister cities at that time. The remaining three advocates who spoke that day were unaffiliated residents of Glendale.

Most speakers in the room that day were Japanese individuals living scattered across California. The city council expected a large turnout since, in the weeks leading up to the special meeting, their inboxes were flooded with hundreds of emails fiercely demanding that the city reject the proposal for a monument honoring "prostitutes." The vast majority of these emails were identical copies, with only the name of the sender differing (for one example, see the appendix). These were not sent by spamming robots, however. Rather, a Japanese woman and neonationalist activist living in Japan named Yamamoto Yūmiko provided model emails in both English and Japanese, where an individual merely needed to copy and paste the text, include their name, and send it off to the target. She provided these models through the website for her organization, "Nadeshiko Action: Japanese Women for Justice and Peace," though the Japanese version of the name translates to "Nadeshiko Action: The Network Connecting Correct History for the Next Generation." Her choice to use "nadeshiko," which refers to a flower traditionally associated with Japanese feminine beauty, reflects her multifaceted attempts to attract women to an otherwise male-dominated movement of reviving nationalistic

pride among Japanese people. The success she has had at attracting Japanese women to the cause of defending Japan from redress activism related to former military sex slaves is conveyed to some extent in the considerable turnout and composition of speakers at the special meeting in Glendale who were opposed to the monument. Out of the thirty total speakers, twenty-three expressed their opposition, and all but two of them were *shin issei* Japanese immigrants, and roughly half of them were women.

Each speaker had two minutes to make a statement. For nearly every speaker that day, English was their second language, which added to the difficulties of speaking smoothly and clearly about something they considered important while in public and on camera.<sup>94</sup> The majority of them were older (at least fifty years of age) individuals who had been born in Japan and had moved to the United States two to four decades prior. Perhaps self-conscious of their accents and worried about being seen as outsiders, many of them took care to preface their statement by emphasizing the time they have lived in the U.S. and their gratitude for the opportunity to express their opinions on this issue.

Most opponents of the proposal insisted that the monument was not based on a thorough historical investigation. The first speaker for the opposition was Tomoyuki Sumori, a late-middle-aged *shin issei* man living in Irvine, California. After thanking the council for the opportunity to speak and stating his opposition, he went on to assert that no Asian country can claim to be innocent of violating human rights. He did not accuse the United States of violating human rights at any time, however. The combination of nervousness and having a lot to say led Sumori to lose his place in his notes, though once he recovered, he said:

---

<sup>94</sup> Video recordings of the city council's meetings are available at:  
<http://www.glendaleca.gov/government/departments/management-services/gtv6/watch-city-meetings>

I hope you, councilmembers and mayor, you will make a decision based on [the] spirit of fair[ness] and justice. And, comfort women issue is a controversial issue. I hope you have exhausted your investigation, independent, unbiased investigation. This is so controversial, unless you have made a thorough and unbiased checkup, you should not make judgement now. At least you should defer it until you find it.<sup>95</sup>

Sumori had run out of time before continuing to the next point he had prepared. Several of the speakers following him similarly suggested that, if only the council had indeed investigated the historical relationship between “prostitutes” and the imperial Japanese military, they would realize that the stories told by survivors’ supporters were biased, inaccurate, or fabricated entirely.

Sumori’s comments suggest an understanding of history as a compilation of objective facts that exist independently of the interpretation of the historian. That is to say, a person in the present must merely read the facts with an “unbiased” mind to arrive at the historical truth. However, most historians today would not agree that reading the past is simply a matter of reading the facts that have been collected. As E.H. Carr notes in his essay “The Historian and His Facts,” there is a crucial difference between facts about the past and historical facts.<sup>96</sup> For example, prior to the 1980s when South Korean activists first began raising awareness about wartime sexual slavery, it was a demonstrable fact based on confidential oral testimony that a very large number of women had been deceived, kidnapped, or sold into the “comfort women” system, though it had been ignored by all official governing entities since the Tokyo Trials.<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Throughout this thesis, I lightly edit individuals’ grammatical mistakes for readability, but include brackets to mark those edits and preserve the original statements as accurately as possible. Tomoyuki Sumori, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

<sup>96</sup> E.H. Carr, “The Historian and His Facts,” in *What is History?* (University of Cambridge Press, 1961).

<sup>97</sup> Allied prosecutors did raise the issue of sexual slavery during the trials, but they never convicted anyone for the crime of sexual slavery, and the issue went on unacknowledged for several decades. See Yuma Totani, *The*

It was a fact about the past, but not a *historical* fact. Once this issue of wartime sexual slavery started to become acknowledged in public, considered a central aspect of the war, and explanations for it debated, it became a historical fact, much like the fact that the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 is a statement of truth about the past that virtually everyone agrees carried profound significance for subsequent events in the human world. Such a comparison demonstrates the basic point that history is not a compilation of every piece of information available. Rather, history is necessarily a selection of facts considered relevant to the present by the historian, whether they be professionally trained or someone merely trying to understand the past. In other words, facts do not become historical facts without the subjective input of the one making evidence-based claims about the past.

History, then, is made by people, professionally trained or not, who are inescapably bound to the present conditions in which they live. Carr himself is also quick to point out that history is not only the interpretation of select facts. It is, rather, a continuous process of interaction between the historian and their facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past.<sup>98</sup> Another thing history is not is the opinion of a single historian. Which facts are considered relevant to the present are determined by the often uneven consensus of others. Interpretation, disagreement, and consensus about what select information about the past means for us in the present is the substance of history, not the facts those interpretations are grounded in.

---

*Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Pursuit of Justice in the Wake of WWII* (Cambridge, Mass.: University of Harvard Press, 2008).

<sup>98</sup> Carr, "The Historian and His Facts," 30.

Even if one were to subscribe to the understanding of history as a compendium of verifiable facts, one could easily find an immense body of scholarship on the “comfort women” system. However, Sumori and those like him seem to be unaware of this more reflexive conception of history. More important than this, however, is that most speakers that day had greater reason to see history as a compendium of verifiable facts and to also discount anything that fails to support their ostensible “side” of the debate (i.e., the victims of imperial Japan’s sexual slavery or the nation of Japan). Sumori’s passion for this subject suggests that he cares deeply about Japan’s reputation in the world since he sees it as his true home, his heritage, and that much of what defines him as a person is rooted in Japan. When such a sacred object is criticized for gross violations of human dignity, he feels as if he is personally being attacked. He responded with a mixture of anger and fear his fellow *shin issei* in the audience received in sympathy. In contrast, the city council and other supporters of the monument responded to him with censure, outrage, and condemnation. Before considering supporters of the monument, let us continue to examine opponents’ arguments.

Other monument opponents repeatedly cited a specific document to dismiss the evidentiary basis of the proposed monument. Invoking this document usually accompanies the argument that more objective information about the sexual slavery system needs to be uncovered, as Sumori suggested, but that available *American* evidence proves that the system had not constituted any form of slavery at all. A middle-aged man wearing a short-sleeve Hawaiian shirt with thick, wavy black hair and a mustache named Yoshi Miyake, for example, phrased this position in the following words:

It’s about time for [Koreans] to face the truth and reality. The comfort women were, as [the] U.S. army noted in 1944 during World War II: “Comfort ladies are nothing more than

prostitute[s] or professional camp followers. These girls were allowed to refuse customers if they want[ed] to, and they were making at least fifty times more than [what the] average Japanese soldier get[s].” You call this sex slave?!<sup>99</sup>

The document Miyake is referring to is “Report No. 49: Japanese Prisoners of War Interrogation on Prostitution undertaken by United States of War Information Psychological Warfare Team Attached to U.S. Army Forces India-Burma Theater, APO 689.” The document is based on information gathered from twenty Korean women and two Japanese civilians U.S. forces had captured in 1944 in southern Burma. It is a frequently misquoted document by nationalistic groups in Japan dedicated to sanitizing Japan’s history. One of the most influential of these groups is the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact (SDHF), whose secretary, Moteki Hiromichi, is well known among North American Japan specialists as the man who sends them unwanted essays written in English justifying Japan’s wartime actions during WWII.<sup>100</sup> Tessa Morris-Suzuki has debunked this document along with many other primary sources—mostly passing mentions, sketchy anecdotes, tersely labeled photographs—produced by Allied troops and civilians across Asia who observed the “comfort women” system.<sup>101</sup> Report No. 49 documents the testimony of a man named Kitamura who ran a brothel on behalf of the Japanese military in Burma. It details the heavy reliance on recruitment by deception and subsequent use of debt bondage to keep recruited women in line. Kitamura is attributed with stating that the girls on average would gross approximately 1,500 yen per

---

<sup>99</sup> Yoshi Miyake, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

<sup>100</sup> Here is one such essay in which a contributor to SDHF cites this very document out of context to portray the women trapped in the brothel system as receiving far more money than is suggested by all of the available evidence; see Ogata Yoshiaki, “The Truth about the Question of ‘Comfort Women,’” the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact, accessed January 29, 2018, [http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02\\_1/24\\_S4.pdf](http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/24_S4.pdf).

<sup>101</sup> Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “You Don’t Want to Know About the Girls? The ‘Comfort Women’, the Japanese Military and Allied Forces in the Asia-Pacific War,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13:31:1 (August 3, 2015), <http://apjjf.org/2015/13/31/Tessa-Morris-Suzuki/4352.html>.



month, though when cross-referenced with a separate report also written by U.S. forces, Morris-Suzuki demonstrates how the average gross income of each girl was likely under 300 yen, which was then almost entirely confiscated for various fees by Kitamura.

Using documents like Report No. 49 in this (or any similar) controversy without critical contextualization regarding the circumstances of its production is poor historiographical practice. When Miyake and others use this document in this unreflexive way, it becomes a prime example of Iwasaki and Richter's conceptualization of "historical revisionism" as an emotional disposition rather than a more dialogical practice of reevaluating evidence in light of present circumstances. Historical revisionists, in Iwasaki and Richter's perspective, are uninterested in and unable to endure a more comprehensive assessment of historical data when formulating their positions because their goal is not to revise history in light of new information and changing perspectives. They are rather forcing an interpretation to justify an ongoing and defensive emotional reaction.<sup>102</sup>

Iwasaki and Richter additionally identify three characteristics or rhetorical strategies typical of historical revisionism. One is the obsession with "objective" facts that, in a paradoxical manner, works to undermine consensus on most facts. Along these lines, Miyake's insistence that imperial Japan's sexual slavery system was actually just plain prostitution is an attempt to challenge everything else we know based on historical documents and oral testimonies about how the Japanese imperial regime managed soldiers' sexuality. This rhetoric of objective facts also echoes with and is, to a large extent, rooted in the constant publications of the previously mentioned SDHF, whose reach is indeed global.<sup>103</sup> Another characteristic is

---

<sup>102</sup> Iwasaki, Richter, and Calichman (trans.), "The Typology of Post-1990s Historical Revisionism," 513.

<sup>103</sup> In the past decade, Japanese nationalist organizations including the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact (SDHF), Nadeshiko Action, and the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT) have

the desire for a strong national narrative that often becomes a monologic narrative of narcissism. Miyake and others conflate the imperial Japanese regime with the current Japanese government. They also seem to equate themselves with this ahistorical notion of “Japan,” thereby conflating the honor of the Japanese nation-state with their own personal dignity as Japanese citizens. In other words, in his configuration of this controversy, Miyake’s fight is as much about defending Japan as it is about defending himself. Failing to fight for Japan would not only leave it morally tainted in the eyes of the world, he too, even in his Californian present, would be morally tainted regardless of his personal, historical, and geographical distance from the events being discussed. The final characteristic Iwasaki and Richter identify is the implicit anxiety within historical revisionism about globalization as an inherently destabilizing force.<sup>104</sup>

Iwasaki and Richter locate the root of historical revisionism as emotional disposition in a deep-seated collective identity crisis that many people born after the end of the war seem to be experiencing. Referring to participant-observation studies into the infamous Society for History Textbook Reform (*Atarashii kyōkasho wo tsukuru kai*, hereafter “Tsukurukai”) conducted by Ueno Yōko and Oguma Eiji, they discuss how the older generation of this organization’s members sought a social space where they, as people who experienced the war and who wished to recuperate the pride they felt being Japanese, could clearly express their memories and views on life and the world.<sup>105</sup> However, the children and grandchildren of this older generation do not possess the same core identity as those who personally experienced the

---

attempted to influence the United Nations’ official position on the matter of “comfort women.” Specifically, they want the U.N. to stop using the terminology of “sexual slavery,” “sexual slavery practices,” and “forcible abduction” by claiming that these terms are not based on sufficient evidence. See Moteki Hiromichi, “Open Letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Universal Periodical Review Working Group for Japan in November 2017,” accessed February 3, 2018, <http://www.sdh-fact.com/essay-article/1094/>.

<sup>104</sup> Iwasaki, Richter, and Calichman (trans.), 513.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 533.

war even if they are similarly seeking a recuperated pride in Japan and being Japanese. This finding echoes Jeffrey Alexander's conception of cultural trauma, specifically the role of social context and representation (i.e. memory) in the inheritance of trauma across generational lines. In many cases, Alexander asserts, generations of people with no direct experience of trauma can nevertheless feel equally, or even more, traumatized than generations who did have direct experience.<sup>106</sup> My findings concerning the controversy in Glendale are in line with this much broader scholarship on cultural trauma and historical memory, though I see fear as a particularly potent motivating factor for anti-monument activists in Glendale. Further, finding a sense of social or emotional refuge by sharing this fear with others is the deeper attraction for these individuals than is arguing about standards for evaluating historical evidence.

Building on Iwasaki and Richter's exploration of post-1990s historical revisionism, my findings suggest that historical revisionism attracts fearful people. Take, for example, a man named Takahashi, a thin man in his fifties or sixties wearing a loose-fitting brown polo shirt and glasses who spent most of his two-minute time allotment at the Glendale meeting trying to add authoritative weight to his concluding comment by listing the seventy-five countries he had travelled to:

Now, I just wanted to say one thing. Looking at those seventy-five countries I visited, I've never seen anything like that kind of, so-called, 'Peace Monument' other than in a Communist country where there's a lot of well-planned propaganda. I don't think the City of Glendale is one of them.<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> Jeffrey Alexander, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 35.

<sup>107</sup> Takahashi, "City Council Special Meeting – 3pm," *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

Regardless of whether a monument dedicated to the memory of victims of sexual violence in warfare exists in communist countries, by vaguely comparing the Peace Monument to a threatening specter of communism, Takahashi was probably expressing both his own fear of communist manipulations of public memory in California and trying to stoke that same fear among the city council.

References to communism—likely used as a thinly veiled code word for the People’s Republic of China—as a threat to Japan were echoed by Kiko Suji, who presented her own take on the history of the comfort women system. A shorter woman in her 60s and in conservative attire, she read slowly and carefully from a script. She spoke of a book, *Watashi no sensō hanzai* (My War Crimes, 1983), written by a Japanese man named Yoshida Seiji. In the book, Yoshida included vivid details of how he recruited hundreds of Korean women through deception and physical force when he worked for the state, coordinating the flow of labor conscripts between Korea and Japan. Agents of the Japanese state, he described in vivid detail, would force women into military warehouses where they were kept so that soldiers could rape them before embarking on ships headed to the warfront. Suji called him a communist, one who eventually admitted that he had lied in his book for money. (Indeed, both progressive and conservative historians have disproven Yoshida’s claims). Suji concluded her statement with the following words:

I do not know why [the] City of Glendale tried to give permission to build the statue. It will bring hate crimes to the world and I think it is not good for children or the country.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> Kiko Suji, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

I believe it is appropriate to consider as hyperbolic her claim that a monument dedicated to an historical case of sexual slavery would increase hate crimes on a global level. She more likely means that she fears that such a monument would make her own world in southern California seem more hateful, and that, by “children of the country,” she specifically means Japanese children living in the United States.

Female “historical revisionists” in particular invoke fear on behalf of their own children’s wellbeing, or for children in general. The only woman who spoke against the proposal who also identified herself as a Japanese American introduced herself by the letters TN and wore a large hat and sunglasses, all to protect her privacy, but made a point to mention that she had been a resident of Glendale for over thirty years. TN reported that she had researched anti-Japanese protests in Seoul. With a nervous tremble in her voice, she held up a photograph of one such demonstration in Seoul. As a single mother of a five-year-old, she was concerned about the violence depicted in the photograph coming to Glendale if the Peace Monument were to be installed there. She was sure that the monument would have an enormous effect:

[The Peace Monument will] not only bring violence, but hatred. I would like to see the council and the mayor reconsider this decision to approve, and to investigate with fairness as the other speaker has said. Please take a look at this, what part of this picture shows peace? I have many Korean friends, I have been a citizen here for a long time, I am not anti-Korean, but peace can be demonstrated in a different way, and this is going to be an international chaos and separation and prejudice toward the Japanese Americans and Japanese who live here.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup> TN, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

TN expressed an urgent sense of danger, that the Peace Monument would inevitably spark violent chaos in the streets of Glendale and would alienate Japanese and Japanese Americans from the rest of society. What is absent from her rationale is any consideration of what the activists who commissioned the monument intended it to mean (i.e., to commemorate the victims of the “comfort women” system so that it never happens again). She does not contest any particular version of the history of the comfort women system, nor does she seem bothered with a distinction between sexual slavery and prostitution. Instead, her overwhelming concern is with the potential threat of violence against herself, her child, and her community that this monument represents to her. That certain members of the public read the monument as signifying meanings that are literally the opposite of what its supporters repetitively say their intentions are demonstrates how, as the controversy unfolds, the original intention behind the monument can become murkier as participants in the debate interpret it in divergent and self-oriented ways. Rather than a starting point for a discussion for how to make the world a safer place for women, TN’s statement demonstrates how the monument can come to evoke a specter of violence and terror.

### **Organizing the Emotional Community through the Global Alliance for Historical Truth**

Before examining the arguments of the monument’s supporters in a similar fashion, which I do in detail in the following chapter, I will first discuss the effect that special meeting in Glendale had on the *shin issei* who spoke there. Their failure to convince the city council to reconsider their support for the monument prompted a group of like-minded individuals to gather at a local restaurant to discuss their disappointment with how that meeting had gone. They were also seeking solidarity with others who felt similarly disrespected, even persecuted, after the city council dismissed their pleas. They found a leader in a man named Kōichi Mera.

Born in 1933, he received his bachelor's degree in engineering and architecture from Tokyo University and a Ph.D. from Harvard University in urban planning. Throughout his life he has worked for the World Bank as an economist and as a professor of business and public administration for Tsukuba University, Tokyo International University, and, most recently, University of Southern California (USC). He is reviled among pro-redress and human rights activists as a man uninterested in anything other than asserting that the women in this system were voluntary prostitutes, not sex slaves, and not deserving of being honored in any way. However, before becoming a central figure in the American arena of Japanese resistance against comfort women commemoration, to occupy his time after retiring from his university-teaching position at USC he founded the Study Group for Japan's Rebirth (*Nippon saisei kenkyū kai*) in 2006. This is a Japanese-language study group on modern Japanese history from a nationalist perspective for *shin issei* residents in California. I first met Dr. Mera, or Mera-sensei, as he prefers to be called, through an alumnus of Tokyo University I met at a symposium at the University of California, Los Angeles. After I explained to him that I was trying to contact the man in charge of the opposition to Glendale's Peace Monument, he serendipitously informed me that he personally knows Mera from the Southern California Alumni Association of the University of Tokyo (*Nanka tōdai kai*).<sup>110</sup> After contacting Mera, we met at the Brentwood Country Club to discuss his activism and the organization he is leading.

---

<sup>110</sup> This alumni association is one of the many examples of various networks that *shin issei* use to maintain strong social ties in Japan and among overseas Japanese, which speaks to the transnational character of this community. For more information, see Nanka Tōdai Kai, accessed February 3, 2018, [http://nanka-todaikai.com/?page\\_id=210](http://nanka-todaikai.com/?page_id=210).

According to Mera, after that public hearing in Glendale in 2013, he and a large group of others decided to form an organization that would better coordinate their resources to combat what they saw as a transnational movement to tarnish Japan's reputation in the world, especially within the United States, Japan's most important ally. They called themselves the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT). Its website consists primarily of Japanese text, reflecting the organization's strong identification with and orientation toward Japan.<sup>111</sup> Most of its funding also comes from individual donors in Japan, according to Mera.<sup>112</sup> GAHT's self-proclaimed mission is to defend Japan's "national honor" from movements seeking to disgrace it. GAHT believes these movements are led by "neighboring countries" (i.e., South Korea and China) and harm Japan by spreading among Japan's allies "fabricated history" that portrays Japanese people as "abnormally cruel" and "inhumane." GAHT's purpose, then, is to counter these movements by sharing what they declare to be fact-based historical evidence and interpretations. It also raised funds for lawsuits and appeals against the City of Glendale based on the argument that the city violated the supremacy clause of the U.S. Constitution, which invests the power to conduct international relations solely in the federal government. By involving itself in what he considered an exclusively diplomatic issue between the governments of South Korea and Japan, Mera maintained that Glendale had violated the Constitution.<sup>113</sup> Mera appealed the case each time the presiding judge dismissed it until the Supreme Court declined to hear it in 2017.

---

<sup>111</sup> Within a year of this writing, a link to a much more basic website with English text was incorporated, though it lacks the frequent updates included on the Japanese page: <http://gaht.jp/aboutGAHT.html>

<sup>112</sup> Kōichi Mera, Interview by Kai Wasson, January 19, 2017.

<sup>113</sup> Kōichi Mera, Interview by Kai Wasson, January 19, 2017.



GAHT is a registered nonprofit organization in the state of California that targets a small section of diasporic Japanese individuals who live there. Apart from its informational meetings and fundraising initiatives, I maintain that it functions as a social and emotional refuge for Japanese residents in southern California who feel to some degree alienated from the rest of American society, even though most of GAHT's members have lived in the U.S. for decades, have married American citizens, and have children and even grandchildren who grew up in the U.S. I understand emotional refuge in the same way as William Reddy, a prominent historian of emotions, who defines it alongside the concept of "emotional regime."<sup>114</sup> Emotional regime refers to the cultural, social, and political institutions that help determine which emotional reactions are appropriate or inappropriate in a given situation or social space. Emotional refuge, by contrast, refers to a physical or metaphorical space in which one can utilize normally inappropriate or unsanctioned emotional expressions without social repercussion, thereby accommodating individual agency and allowing people to shape or challenge the emotional regime. Overlapping to a large extent with Rosenwein's emotional communities, I contend that attending informational meetings, donating money, or at least subscribing to GAHT's emails constitutes that space in which people can express otherwise sanctioned emotional reactions or political opinions (e.g., the notion that redress for the victims of the "comfort women" system is unnecessary and ill-informed).

Take, for example, Yōko Takahashi's discovery of and entrance into GAHT.<sup>115</sup> Having moved to the United States when she was twenty-three years old with a desire for adventure,

---

<sup>114</sup> William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>115</sup> Yōko Takahashi (a pseudonym). Interview by Kai Wasson. February 11, 2017.

she first enrolled in a community college in the San Francisco Bay area, then earned a master's degree in architecture, and eventually opened her own interior design business that operated in both the United States and Japan. Sometime during the summer of 2015, reports spread of a proposal for a "comfort women" monument in downtown San Francisco. Takahashi, who had only been vaguely aware of the history and believed it to have been settled long ago, felt panicked by the news. She did not belong to any politically active Japanese community at the time. In fact, she characterized Japanese people in general as being very quiet regarding political activism and easily pushed around as a result. Feeling vulnerable in this way, she contacted the nearby Japanese consulate for information about the "comfort women" redress movement. The consulate suggested that she google some keywords that would lead her to GAHT's webpage. According to Takahashi's recollection, the consulate was specifically taking care not to come off as outright supportive of GAHT or other organizations like it, though the consulate nevertheless seemed aware of and sympathetic to GAHT's mission. Takahashi's sense of vulnerability eased once she learned of GAHT and the coordinated efforts she could partake in to make sure that other activists were not spreading "false" narratives in American cities without challenge.

Takahashi's anecdote that the Japanese consulate in San Francisco actually directed her toward GAHT's website implicates Japan's official diplomatic agencies in GAHT's grassroots activism. The Japanese government, notably under the nationalist leadership of Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, whose own suspicions about the legitimacy of the comfort women redress movements is well known, has on at least three occasions directly involved itself in attempts to prevent comfort women commemoration within the United States. First was in the month leading up to the House of Representatives' vote on House Resolution 121 (HR 121) in 2007,

led by notable Japanese American and former representative Mike Honda. HR 121 was a nonbinding resolution that passed unanimously urging the Japanese government to sincerely apologize and provide reparations to former comfort women. To preempt the resolution, dozens of conservative Japanese politicians and opinion leaders placed a full-page public comment in the June 14, 2007 issue of the *Washington Post* entitled “The Facts,” which criticized the historical basis of the redress movement in much the same manner as I have already described. The second instance came a few years later when the local Japanese consul general approached the mayor of Palisades Park, New Jersey to ask that they remove the modest memorial plaque they dedicated in 2010 to the victims of imperial Japan’s sexual slavery.<sup>116</sup> Finally, shortly after Mera submitted his appeal to the Supreme Court for his lawsuit against the City of Glendale, the Japanese government officially filed an amicus brief on behalf of GAHT insisting that the “comfort women issue should be handled as a matter of government-to-government diplomacy” and that Glendale’s actions harm Japan’s core national interests.<sup>117</sup> Clearly the Abe administration is barely concealing its support for GAHT’s efforts to spread nationalist Japanese messages throughout the United States.

Even though Takahashi’s specific trigger for becoming a member of GAHT was geographically removed from Glendale (though she still lives in California and is a *shin issei*), her experience of seeking and finding emotional refuge in GAHT is typical for people who have been reacting fearfully to the comfort women redress movement as it has expanded across

---

<sup>116</sup> Kirk Semple, “In New Jersey, Memory for ‘Comfort Women’ Deepens Old Animosity,” in *The New York Times*, May 18, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html>.

<sup>117</sup> Brief for the Government of Japan as Amicus Curiae Supporting Petitioners, *Koichi Mera and GAHT-US Corporation v. City of Glendale*, No. 16-917, \*ii-12 (Supreme Court of the United States), available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000231732.pdf>.

the United States. Such a fearful response is particularly noteworthy since Takahashi, along with most other members of GAHT, had never had confrontational or even uncomfortable interactions with members of the Chinese or Korean communities around her. She explicitly notes this in our conversation about changes she experienced once the redress movement came to San Francisco:

I used to take [a] dance class, and I danced with a Chinese guy and Korean people, all these other people and had a good time, but now I think ‘wow, what [do] they think of me?’ Like, I have to think, I have a really bad feeling now, which is created by...what’s happening. It’s not because of them, it’s because of what I hear about the comfort women issue.<sup>118</sup>

Similarly, friends told her that they no longer shop at their local Asian markets since they are owned by Chinese Americans and they worry about their safety being Japanese people.

\*\*\*

In this chapter I have examined the arguments and rationales put forth by certain first-generation Japanese immigrants for why they believe it is both inappropriate and harmful if Glendale were to approve the installation of a monument dedicated to the victims of the imperial Japanese military’s institution of sexual slavery. They consistently speak of the need to be objective when investigating historical records and cite certain documents out of context as undeniable proof for their claims that oral testimonies from survivors are fabrications inspired by the opportunity to harm Japan and receive money in the process. However, building on Iwasaki and Richter’s characterization of historical revisionism as an emotional disposition rather than a reflexive practice of history writing, I have suggested that these individuals’ apparent respect for historiographical standards should be understood less as the reflexive

---

<sup>118</sup> Yōko Takahashi (a pseudonym). Interview by Kai Wasson. February 11, 2017.

evaluation of evidence characteristic of professional history-writing and more as an exercise in communicating personal perceptions of fear, vulnerability, and estrangement. GAHT then harnesses that underlying anxiety by articulating it in terms of a global threat against the nation of Japan, which is synonymous with a threat against the people of Japan, wherever they may be. Thus, while GAHT in this sense reinforces members' sense of fear, it simultaneously provides a measure of relief as a space in which members can feel pride in their Japanese identity and heritage without accusations of being apologists for mass sexual violence against women.

My findings suggest that the emotional and social refuge these *shin issei* individuals seek and find in GAHT's anti-monument activism provides them the psychological support they need to repetitively face rebuke from city councils and their constituents for their opposition to "comfort women" memorials and, by association, to human rights. As I explored in Chapter One of this thesis, American media portrayals of these activists depict them as irrational actors utilizing tactics that seem to only undermine their professed goals. However, I argue that activists' yearning to belong to a proud Japanese community in the United States is the more powerful motivation than is their disagreement with the history conveyed in "comfort women" memorials. Therefore, regardless of whether they successfully convince the city council to reject proposals for a "comfort women" memorial, the act of participating in the opposition alongside other Japanese citizens in defense of Japan's national honor is satisfying in and of itself. Additionally, persisting in the face of so much opposition may further encourage activists to see themselves as warriors fighting for a noble cause despite the unlikelihood of success, which is often the imagery neonationalistic media depicts when discussing Japan's actions in World War II.

In the next chapter, I turn to the supporters of the monument and their rationale for why the city council and residents of Glendale should proudly install the Peace Monument in their city's public space. Key to understanding the stakes pro-redress activists have in this debate, I argue, rests on the expansion of the global women's human rights regime, particularly since the 1980s. What results, I suggest, is an emotional community that is centered locally, but defines itself in relation to the transnational women's human rights movement. Underneath proclamations of transnational solidarity with victims everywhere, however, is an underlying concern with American national identity that risks distracting us from the fact that sexual slavery did not end with the comfort women system, and that the United States is one of the largest consumers of trafficked humans in the contemporary world.

## **Chapter Four—Universal Human Rights and Victimhood as an Emotional Community**

In this chapter, I characterize supporters of the proposal for the Peace Monument as constituting another emotional community, one that is first and foremost centered locally, yet also oriented toward the global agenda of instituting and defending human rights, especially for women. Such an emotional community can exist, I suggest, because of a convergence of certain transnational developments. Highly publicized accounts of genocidal rape in international media in the 1980s and 1990s coincided with the beginning of the redress movement, which resulted in “comfort women” rising to international ubiquity as an iconic historical example of how women’s physical safety and dignity are systematically destroyed in wartime. One major result of reframing the redress movement from a specific, postcolonial movement into a human rights one was that it could now be intimately relevant to other aggrieved ethnonational groups waging their own redress movements. Thus, the legitimacy and communicability a human rights framing granted to the victims of the comfort women system made the issue resonate with Glendale’s city council, which was already sensitive to the legacy of the Armenian Genocide. However, while human rights is central in both Korean American activists’ own reasons for engaging in the redress movement and in understanding

Glendale's receptivity to it, I suggest that a deeper motivation is also at work. This deeper motivation is rooted in the implicit understanding that redress activists can use the emotionality of representations of sexual slavery to empower themselves within the racialized American politics of belonging. To be clear, this is not to say that activists are cynically using redress politics for their own selfish gain. Rather, my findings suggest that underneath the intense focus on restoring the dignity of survivors and making their stories widely known lies other motivations concerning Korean Americans' position within the United States.

Below, I continue to use the lens of emotional communities to characterize the different factions of this controversy. I additionally draw from Samuel Moyn's historical account of universal human rights as a utopian ideology that came into popular usage only in the 1970s and 1980s. The significant delay it took for human rights rhetoric to find support in the international arena, coinciding with increasing awareness of violence against women in wartime, help to explain why the comfort women redress movement began so many decades after the fact and why it expanded so rapidly. Further, I engage with Michael Rothberg's notion of "multidirectional memory," which refers to the use of traumatic events from distant places and times for local rights concerns and abuses. Finally, drawing from the extensive scholarship Sarah Soh has conducted on the "comfort women" topic will underscore my ultimate point in this chapter, which is that the organizations most engaged in the redress movement, even in the spatially, temporally, and culturally removed space of Glendale, use it as a vehicle to improve their positions in a politics of recognition within national and international contexts. By combining Rosenwein's emotional communities with Moyn's account of human rights and Soh's work on the structural aspects of the comfort women system, I aim to create a sharp description of what happened in Glendale.



## **Appeals to Universal Human Rights in Glendale**

Most directly affecting the city council's decision to approve the installation of the Peace Monument was their and their constituents' shared understanding that the project was a dual matter of commemorating the victimization of the former "comfort women" and amplifying the importance of human rights as a universal, basic moral value. This is interesting because activists and scholars only began considering the sexual enslavement of women in the Japanese empire as a violation of their human rights in the early 1990s, nearly fifty years after the system had been dismantled and several years after the redress movement began building momentum. Coinciding with new and highly publicized instances of mass sexual violence and murder in Rwanda in the early 1990s and then again in Bosnia in the late 1990s, activists reconceptualized the comfort women redress movement's goal: what had been a specific issue clearly located within the boundaries of the Japanese empire began to take on the much larger, global, and current issue of sexual violence against women during times of war. While undeniably more powerful in rhetoric and framing, the redefinition of the movement's mission deemphasized, in some ways, the postcolonial and ethnic specificity of the movement's original focus and its core demands of the Japanese government. The universalizing pull of the human rights agenda eventually coalesced with the specificities of "comfort women" survivors' victimhood to establish a simplified, standardized narrative. This narrative is meant to summarize victims' experiences, communicate them to sympathetic audiences, and maximize transnational public pressure on the Japanese government to provide redress. It is this powerful, universalizing narrative that helped make the redress movement's goal relevant to city officials in Glendale. Subsequently, city officials envisioned the Peace Monument as an opportunity to physically mark the city's position on the right side of history and, at the same

time, as upstanding defenders of human rights. Glendale's case contrasts with that of the smaller town of Buena Park, whose city council voted against accepting their own Peace Monument by the same organization that proposed it to Glendale.

At the public hearing on July 9, 2013, Phyllis Kim most concisely articulated this productive interrelation of the city's own moral code with a human rights repertoire conceived of as universal and transnational. Kim was first in line to present. In her role as Director of the Korean American Forum of California (KAFC), she addressed the global and local dimensions of valuing human rights:

...[this] is an issue that speaks to everyone, it's a universal issue, you know, not specific to any one ethnicity, but for all women. Especially we are concerned about the sexual violence that is still happening in this world, especially during the time of war. This is an education piece for our younger generations and I am really proud to live in the city that has taken a bold step to speak to the public about correct history and to teach ourselves not to have the same atrocity repeat itself in the future.<sup>119</sup>

As in many of her utterances and writings elsewhere, Kim intertwines three discrete claims. She asserts that the comfort women issue is just one variant of the victimization of women regardless of ethnicity. Additionally, she links wartime sexual violence against women in the past to sexual violence in the present. Though the time limit for public speakers prevented her from further elaborating on this point, linking past sexual violence to contemporary sexual violence reflects the importance of intimate understandings of history for the present. That is to say, without broad historical awareness specifically of the sexual slavery these women suffered—and recognizing it precisely as sexual slavery rather than as prostitution—such an

---

<sup>119</sup> Kim, Phyllis, "City Council Special Meeting – 3pm," *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

atrocities could easily be repeated. And, finally, she connects Glendale's own moral courage to recognize and honor the victims of human rights violations with what should be a global act of moral courage.

Other than being the Director of KAFC, Kim is a certified court interpreter for Korean language speakers, a resident of Glendale, and a self-identified Korean American woman who, while born in South Korea, has lived in the United States for most of her life. She is also the person primarily responsible for Glendale's Peace Monument. By the time of the special city council meeting, she had promoted local awareness of the redress movement, raised funds for the monument's construction, and worked to link the conversation on comfort women to other conversations about human rights issues in other communities, including participating in a panel discussion on how to commemorate the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust.<sup>120</sup>

Kim's leadership regarding the Peace Monument project earned her the respect of many influential individuals throughout the state. Democratic State Representative Adam Schiff, for instance, selected her as one of three Women of the Year for 2017. The other two women were Lena Kortoshian, an Armenian American woman who has worked as a mathematics educator and principal at various local schools, and Betty Porto, a Cuban American woman who runs a highly successful bakery and has supported organizations that provide children and others in the community with healthy food.<sup>121</sup> This selection, particularly the celebration of Kim's accomplishments regarding Glendale's Peace Monument alongside those of other outstanding women in California's 28<sup>th</sup> congressional district (including the cities of Glendale, Burbank,

---

<sup>120</sup> For example, in April, 2016 at Glendale's public library, Phyllis Kim participated in a panel entitled "Commemoration as Public Art," hosted by the Armenian American Museum's "Armenia: An Open Wound" exhibition.

<sup>121</sup> Mark Kellam, "Rep. Adam Schiff honors Kim, Kortoshian, Porto as Women of the Year," *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 2017: <http://www.latimes.com/socal/glendale-news-press/news/tn-gnp-me-women-of-the-year-20170421-story.html>

and Pasadena), is but one indicator of Glendale's consistent public support for humanitarianism and human rights.

City councilmembers similarly positioned Glendale and the Peace Monument project within the purview of universal human rights. Throughout the process of proposing the monument project to the city council, hearing public comments on the proposal, voting on it, and the media coverage of the controversy, human rights were and continue to be frequently invoked. In large part due to the specific ethnic composition of Glendale and these ethnic communities' struggles for recognition of their own tragic histories, which I briefly touched upon in Chapter Two, Glendale residents and officials alike consistently conceived of human rights as fundamental to their city's moral fabric. In effect, the notion of human rights functioned as a focal concept at the core of an emotional community, one that local residents felt Japanese opponents to the monument were challenging. They derisively labelled these opponents as "history deniers" who bear the real shame in this matter.

For example, councilmember Zareh Sinanyan reported that in the week leading up to the public hearing, he and the other councilmembers had received hundreds of emails from Japanese individuals claiming that this problem was a diplomatic one between South Korea and Japan, and that Glendale had no legal right to intervene. Sinanyan, an Armenian American actively involved in the Armenian redress movement against the government of Turkey, prefaced his subsequent statement by describing the constant resentment and anger he feels as the grandson of a survivor of the Armenian Genocide. He also pointed out the remarkable parallels between those emails and Turkey's strategies to deflect any criticism of its own past atrocities. Most importantly, Sinanyan repeatedly emphasized that commemorating "comfort women" history was neither primarily a diplomatic nor a legal issue, but a moral one:

Again, this is a moral issue. We are taking a meaningful step to show our moral support, sense of camaraderie, and our sharing of the pain that our Korean American brothers and sisters feel about this issue. It's very simple. That's why I'm in support of it. And I'm strongly in support of it. If anything after today I'm even more strongly in support of it.<sup>122</sup>

As a moral issue, that is, a question that strikes at the heart of what a society deems to be fundamentally right or wrong, he insisted that Glendale's involvement in this matter is naturally legitimate. He took particular offense to the prevalent argument that victimized women had been ordinary prostitutes, not sex slaves, and that prostitutes deserved what they got. The anger and disgust he evoked by describing such a claim as offensive to himself personally, to Koreans, and to anyone else with a moral compass reflected the boundary between the two emotional communities in conflict over the proposal for the monument. In other words, the unsympathetic sentiment against survivors that Sinanyan was reacting against violated his own (and the council's) emotional code of conduct regarding the victims of atrocities. Encountering it in emails and in person only deepened his support for the monument. Historical technicalities were irrelevant.

Differing in tone with Sinanyan, though agreeing with his sentiment, councilmember Laura Friedman attempted to reach across the proverbial aisle to opponents of the proposal. Her statements, which I paraphrase for readability, asserted that, regardless of whether the women were technically prostitutes at the time, or whether their parents voluntarily sold them into the system, or whether some women did receive some amount of money—all of which the monument's opponents had variously argued that day—she declared that none of that should matter once one recognizes that teenage girls had been turned into sexual servants for the

---

<sup>122</sup> Zareh Sinanyan, "City Council Special Meeting – 3pm," *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

Japanese military.<sup>123</sup> Regardless of the technicalities, she emphasized, that undisputed fact in and of itself constitutes a tragedy and that recognizing it as a tragedy is something that “everybody should be able to get behind morally.”<sup>124</sup> Again, Friedman, though intentionally using a less combative tone of voice, nonetheless implies that a certain emotional reaction to this monument and the historical narrative it promotes is incontestable, that reacting in any other way is immoral and unbecoming of basic human values. Thus, Kim’s, Sinanyan’s, and Friedman’s statements, along with other public speakers’ statements, repeatedly invoked the moral authority of human rights to rationalize Glendale’s acceptance of the Peace Monument proposal. In the minds of the city council and its constituents, human rights concepts were common sense and a powerful currency in the controversy circling the Peace Monument.

Glendale’s enthusiastic embrace of the Peace Monument contrasts markedly with the response of nearby Buena Park, a town with an overall population less than half of Glendale’s. Phyllis Kim and KAFC proposed the same exact project to Buena Park’s city council around the same time in 2013. They convinced Miller Oh, a first-generation Korean American city councilmember, to add the commemoration project to the city council’s agenda on July 23, 2013.<sup>125</sup> The council did not initially vote on the proposal since another councilmember, Art Brown, requested more time to research the matter before making his decision. In the meantime, city councilmembers’ inboxes were flooded with emails from Japan denouncing the project, just as had happened in Glendale. One month after Oh brought the issue to the council’s

---

<sup>123</sup> Laura Friedman, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Rebecca Kheel, “Buena Park council wary of sex slave memorial,” *The Orange County Register*, accessed April 5, 2018, <https://www.ocregister.com/2013/07/24/buena-park-council-wary-of-sex-slave-memorial/>.

attention, Brown and two other councilmembers, Steve Berry and Mayor Beth Swift, announced their vote against the proposal.

While none of the councilmembers questioned the validity of the history as presented by KAFC, three of the five had misgivings about the monument's placement in their city. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 10 percent of Buena Park's residents are racially Korean, compared to 4.7 percent of Glendale's residents being racially Korean, though both percentages equate to around 9,000 people.<sup>126</sup> Glendale's councilmember Zareh Sinanyan weighed in on Buena Park's deliberations and promoted the project as a symbol of the city's support of its Korean residents.<sup>127</sup> Buena Park councilmember Oh insisted that the symbolism of justice and peace should be sufficient in demonstrating the monument's appropriateness for the city, regardless of the number of its Korean residents.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, three of Buena Park's councilmembers remained unconvinced that they should willingly step into this controversy. Mayor Swift agreed with the emails she received from opponents arguing that it was inappropriate for Buena Park to involve itself in an "international dispute" between the Japanese and South Korean governments.<sup>129</sup> Steve Berry was concerned that taxpayer money would be requisitioned if the controversial monument were vandalized, despite KAFC's insistence that they would be responsible for all installation and maintenance costs.<sup>130</sup> Finally, councilmember Brown, who noted that his father was an abused prisoner of war held by Japan

---

<sup>126</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates," accessed April 11, 2018, <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

<sup>127</sup> Brittany Levine, "Comfort women statue opponents sway Buena Park," *Los Angeles Times*, July 27, 2013, accessed April 5, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/tn-gnp-me-comfort-women-statue-opponents-sway-buena-park-20130727-story.html>.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

during WWII, stated the following on August 30, 2013: “While I have sympathy for victims of past and present wars and conflicts throughout the world, I do not support placing memorials throughout the city for any and all.”<sup>131</sup> In short, these three councilmembers believed the monument to be too irrelevant to the city to warrant its placement in public space.

Glendale’s city council evinced no such trepidation regarding the monument’s relevance to Glendale, even if the victimization occurred in another place and time. Akin to Art Brown’s own claim to victimhood at (imperial) Japan’s hands, at the July 9 public hearing in Glendale, councilmember Quintero responded to opponents’ comments in part by citing Japanese wartime actions in Bataan that resulted in massive casualties among American and Filipino prisoners of war.<sup>132</sup> With this historical claim, Quintero was partly suggesting, as American op-eds related to this controversy have likewise often noted, that Americans have also suffered at the hands of wartime Japan, and that many individual Americans maintain this grievance to the present day. Underpinned by the transnational scope of human rights rhetoric, such statements broaden the boundaries of the “victims of Japan” category to include Americans, a strategy Quintero used to justify the relevance of a “comfort women” commemorative project in Glendale. Additionally, as I described above, councilmember Sinanyan emphasized that his support for the monument only strengthened in the face of the opposition and that he took personal offense at much of what opponents had argued regarding the history of the “comfort women” system.

---

<sup>131</sup> Rebecca Kheel, “Comfort women monument officially shot down,” *The Orange County Register*, accessed April 5, 2018, <https://www.ocregister.com/2013/08/30/comfort-women-monument-officially-shot-down/>.

<sup>132</sup> Frank Quintero, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.



The contrast between these two cases demonstrates how Buena Park’s leadership consciously decided to forgo supporting the expanding “comfort women” redress movement by taking the position that local governments should not play a role in contestations over transnational morality. On the other hand, Glendale’s city council made the explicit decision to position itself within the transnational conversation on Japan’s wartime system of sexual slavery and cast itself as a staunch defender of women’s human rights. The social, ethnic, and moral self-imagining in Glendale, while perhaps not entirely unique (since several other American cities have also accepted replicas of the Peace Monument), was anchored strongly enough in the transnational ideals of human rights to overcome both the considerable opposition they faced and the historical specificities of the “comfort women” issue that could also lead one to conclude its irrelevance to American towns. Not only did the city council see this commemorative project as relevant to Glendale as a whole, its relevance was exceedingly obvious. As Laura Friedman noted, “*everybody* [emphasis added] should be able to get behind [this project] morally.”<sup>133</sup>

### **How Sexual Slavery Became a Human Rights Violation**

Equating the “comfort women” phenomenon with human rights was not always so commonsensical. In fact, given the early history of the notion of “crimes against humanity,” it is not obvious at all that participants in the controversy in Glendale would employ the language of human rights. Human rights were first instituted on an international level and the notion of “crimes against humanity” coined immediately following the end of WWII. Despite calls to respect “correct” history on both sides of the debate in Glendale, one historical fact that went

---

<sup>133</sup> Laura Friedman, “City Council Special Meeting – 3pm,” *Glendale, California*, July 9, 2013. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

unmentioned at the public hearing was that the Allied powers never prosecuted Japan's sexual violence against (mostly) Asian women technically as a crime during the proceedings at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials. The charter for the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMFTE) in part defined "crimes against humanity" as:

...murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political or racial grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of domestic law of the country where perpetrated.<sup>134</sup>

While recent scholarship has emphasized that Allied prosecutors during the trials did, in fact, present evidence of Japanese military sexual violence against Asian women, they ultimately did not include sexual slavery in any convictions of "crimes against humanity."<sup>135</sup> In other words, while "military atrocities" and civilian massacres were newly considered to be "crimes against humanity," prosecutors did not consider mass rape in warfare to be criminal despite the availability of pertinent evidence. In a revealing exception, however, most of the evidence of sexual slavery presented during the trials concerned the sexual enslavement of thirty-five Dutch women during Japan's occupation of Indonesia. As Carol Gluck noted, some Japanese soldiers were tried in Batavian courts for forcing Dutch women prisoners of war into their prostitution system. However, those soldiers were tried for violating Western racial boundaries

---

<sup>134</sup> "Crimes Against Humanity," United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, accessed November 5, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.html>

<sup>135</sup> See, for example, Yuma Totani, *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Pursuit of Justice in the Wake of World War II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008); Hayashi Hirofumi, *BC-kyū senpan saiban* (Class BC War Crimes Trials). Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2005; Utsumi Aiko, "Seibōryoku to Tōkyō saiban" (Wartime Sexual Violence and the Tokyo Trial), in *Nihongun seidoreisei wo sabaku 2000-nen josei kokusai senan hōtei no kiroku* (The Records of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal to Prosecute Japanese Military's Sexual Slavery, Year 2000), ed. VAWW-NET Japan. Vol. I. Tokyo: Ryokufū shuppan, 2002, 57-102.

rather than for sexual exploitation per se.<sup>136</sup> In the end, judgements against convicting anyone for sexual slavery suggests that women did not necessarily belong to the category of “human” in the conception of crimes against “humanity.” Furthermore, as Laura Hein posited, the greater attention paid to white victims of rape similarly suggests that internal boundaries existed within “humanity” along both racial and gender axes in the immediate postwar period as far as which victims deserved recognition and sympathy.<sup>137</sup>

As I mentioned earlier, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. However, they were not conceived nor did they function in the 1940s the way they do today. Samuel Moyn explains how human rights were, in their original conceptualization in the 1940s, dead on arrival because they did not contain a pragmatic program for achieving their moral vision for the world, a world free of imperial domination.<sup>138</sup> Put differently, the powers that be (i.e., the Allies) were not yet interested in dismantling empire, despite the lofty rhetoric of a new, freer world order. Human rights would remain peripheral to world politics, however, subordinated to Cold War political agendas and heightening demands for decolonization across the world. They would remain an uninspiring and marginal utopian language until the 1970s and 1980s, when a confluence of global political shifts led to widespread disillusion with prior utopian ideologies that had promised a free way of life, but had only led to more blood and death.<sup>139</sup> An internationalism

---

<sup>136</sup> Carol Gluck, “Operations of Memory: ‘Comfort Women and the World,’” in *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia*, eds. Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 47-76, 67.

<sup>137</sup> Laura Hein, “Savage Irony: The Imaginative Power of the ‘Military Comfort Women’ in the 1990s,” *Gender & History* 11:2 (July 1999): 336-372.

<sup>138</sup> Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

centered on individual rights then rose to fill the void, though the challenge of actually implementing and enforcing them remained a central obstacle to their realization in the world.

The South Korean redress movement began in the 1970s as a women's campaign against international sex tourism.<sup>140</sup> Specifically targeting male Japanese visitors, the campaign evolved over two decades into a postcolonial dispute revolving around opposing views of the legitimacy of Japan's colonization of Korea and the proper way to represent that history. This postcolonial dispute then escalated throughout the 1980s with the first of several textbook controversies in which the Japanese government approved a middle school history textbook that omitted references to the comfort women, thereby inspiring more rounds of criticisms against Japan for its unrepentant attitudes toward its past aggression.<sup>141</sup> "Comfort women" came to epitomize (South) Korea's grievances against Japan by the early 1990s in part because of this trajectory, though other global forces coincided with this trajectory to transform it into a transnational human rights movement.

International media coverage of the genocidal conflicts in Rwanda in the early 1990s and then again in Bosnia in the late 1990s greatly accelerated the global embrace not only of discourse on human rights, but also on human rights specifically for women. Graphic reporting on the violence produced a sense of urgency that the international community needed to give greater teeth to human rights laws so they could actually be pragmatically implemented and enforced. Further, that women were prime targets in these genocidal conflicts catalyzed transnational feminist movements in particular to strive to instill the notion of "women's

---

<sup>140</sup> C. Sarah Soh, "Japan's National/Asian Women's Fund for 'Comfort Women,'" *Pacific Affairs* 76:2 (Summer 2003): 209-233, 214.

<sup>141</sup> For details on the 1982 textbook controversy, see John K. Nelson, "Tempest in a Textbook: A Report on the New Middle-School History Textbook in Japan," *Critical Asian Studies* 34:1 (2002): 129-148.

human rights” as a fundamental international moral value. They argued that human rights for women would make wartime sexual violence against women visible, unacceptable, as well as transform the “shame of women” into the “crime of men,” as the Japanese feminist Ueno Chizuko once described.<sup>142</sup> The burgeoning redress movement for imperial Japan’s wartime victims of sexual slavery was partially informed by and coincided with the global surge in demand for women’s human rights, leading to a rapid expansion of scholarship and an escalation of political discourse on “comfort women” throughout the 1990s.

United Nations representatives and South Korean redress activists quickly joined forces to make the comfort women issue the iconic historical example of the systematic sexual violation of women in wartime. By raising global awareness of the history of the comfort women system, U.N. activists such as Radhika Coomaraswamy sought to emphasize the consequences of not having a legal framework specifically protecting women by bolstering that claim with historical examples. Greater global awareness of the redress movement, in turn, mobilized more organizations and polities to pressure the Japanese government to apologize and provide reparations to survivors. Toward that end, Coomaraswamy, who worked as a U.N. special rapporteur of violence against women from 1994 to 2003, published a research report in 1996 in which she described the comfort women system as “military sexual slavery” where women suffered “multiple rapes on [an] everyday basis and severe physical abuse in wartime.”<sup>143</sup> The following year, Gay J. McDougall, also a special rapporteur, published another report that took her characterizations of the system a step further by portraying the

---

<sup>142</sup> Ueno Chizuko, “Kioku no seijigaku: Kokumin, kojim, watashi,” *Inpakushon* 103 (1997): 154-175.

<sup>143</sup> Radhika Coomaraswamy, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences,” (United Nations, 1997).

brothels as “rape camps” and “rape centers.”<sup>144</sup> By framing the issue in language that conformed to the U.N.’s criteria for officially recognizing the violation of women’s human rights, both Coomaraswamy’s and McDougall’s reports established previously absent institutional support for survivors’ right, in an explicitly legal sense of the word, to claim adequate compensation for the personal damages they suffered.

The U.N.’s establishment of institutional support for victims of sexual slavery through the legal terminology of human rights violations undermined two legal precedents that had long forestalled redress claims by victims of sexual violence. First, as I mentioned earlier, was the Tokyo Trials’ own implicit acceptance of mass sexual violence and sexual slavery as an inevitable and tolerable aspect of modern warfare. Second is the 1965 normalization treaty between Japan and the Republic of Korea, which stipulated that, in exchange for substantial economic aid loans from Japan to South Korea, all legal issues and claims regarding the relationship between imperial Japan and South Korea were to be null and void. Thus, Coomaraswamy’s and McDougall’s characterization of the comfort women system with the language of “rape” and “sexual slavery” were attempts to strengthen survivors’ demands for restitution from the Japanese government by incorporating comfort women discourse into the legal and legitimizing rhetoric of human rights, which then had the effect of rendering the redress movement more understandable and relatable to audiences beyond East Asia.

I agree with Sarah Soh’s scholarship, that, despite the enormous, positive impact these reports and reframing have had on illuminating this history for the world, they have not prevented the rise of a simplistic victim-perpetrator binary that obscures structures of violence

---

<sup>144</sup> Gay J. McDougall, “Systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflict: final report,” (United Nations, 1998).

against women larger than the specific system masterminded by the imperial Japanese government. In other words, the gendered social structures that led to the comfort women system are far from unique to Japan. Recognizing this, one can then see how the scope of responsibility for the comfort women system, while undeniably including Japan, reaches beyond it as well. Consider, for example, the South Korean government's longstanding tepidness regarding the comfort women redress movement. Hyunah Yang discussed how South Korean nationalism contributed to victims' silence after the war. According to her, South Korea's government judged it to be a "matter of the past" (*kwagōsa*), implying that it saw no benefit to revisiting it in the present, though it changed its tune in the 1990s.<sup>145</sup> This dismissal likely stemmed from the predictable impulse to ignore the unsavory fact that, during the Korean War as well as the Vietnam War, the Korean military availed itself of its own "special comfort units," which has garnered little public attention.<sup>146</sup> Additionally, ever since the Korean War, the camp towns surrounding American military bases have hosted adult entertainment industries populated by Korean women to service American troops. While questions about the agency of these sex workers are too complicated to explore here, parallels between camp town prostitution and the "comfort women" system were made apparent by a 2014 lawsuit in which over one hundred South Korean women sued their own government for its role in directing women to work as prostitutes for the U.S. military since the 1960s.<sup>147</sup> In 1965, after signing the bilateral treaty normalizing relations with Japan, the Korean

---

<sup>145</sup> Hyunah Yang, "Re-membering the Korean Military Comfort Women: Nationalism, Sexuality, and Silencing," in *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, eds. Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi (New York and London: Routledge, 1998), 123-135.

<sup>146</sup> Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 215.

<sup>147</sup> Ju-min Park, "Former Korean 'comfort women' for U.S. troops sue own government," *Reuters* July 11, 2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-usa-military/former-korean-comfort-women-for-u-s-troops-sue-own-government-idUSKBN0FG0VV20140711>

government even promoted sex tourism for Japanese men in the name of national economic development.<sup>148</sup> These examples are not meant to exonerate Japan of any responsibility or to defend it from the censure it deserves. I am rather attempting to point out that, as Soh explores more fully elsewhere, the less obvious mechanisms of class exploitation combined with a legacy of sexually commodifying women risks being obscured if we only view the comfort women system as a war crime that Japan committed against Koreans (and many other peoples) rather than one instance of a more insidious problem that has continued to this day.<sup>149</sup>

### **Comfort Women Redress Trapped in the Quicksand of Nationalism**

The 1990s were a major turning point for the redress movement and witness to the rapid surge of international demand that Japan address its sordid history honestly. Although initially met with predictable resistance, this international pressure did succeed in sparking a series of apologies from the Japanese government. While it is not my intention here to chart out the debate on what exactly convinced Japanese government officials to begin apologizing, in 1993 then Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno Yōhei issued the now infamous Kōno statement. This was the first official Japanese admission that, among other details, the Japanese military was “directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations.”<sup>150</sup> The careful wording of the various components of this statement, however, seemed to only intensify the indignation expressed among South Koreans and sympathetic audiences worldwide. Contending with internal dissension between conservatives and progressives, the Japanese government’s diplomatic efforts to address the now bilateral

---

<sup>148</sup> Soh, 203.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> “Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the result of the study on the issue of ‘comfort women,’” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed November 17, 2014, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>.



controversy resulted in the establishment of the “Asian Peace and Friendship Fund for Women” (also known as the “Asian Women’s Fund” AWF) which, while being set up and operated with public funds, would collect private donations for the survivors while additionally distributing a signed letter of apology from the Prime Minister. Japanese progressives involved in the design of the AWF, most prominently professor of international law Ōnuma Yasuaki, lauded its hybrid public-private design as a vehicle that more accurately represented the reconciliatory desires of the Japanese public than a Diet resolution could.<sup>151</sup> While conservative nationalists in Japan were, from the beginning, opposed to any and all admissions of Japanese responsibility, even some proponents of the redress movement read the AWF as the government equivocating on its legal responsibility to provide reparations.

Most leaders of the comfort women redress movement in South Korea took a hardline, dogmatic stance against the AWF and other components of Japan’s attempts at apologizing. Most representative of this refusal to accept any apology is, to a large extent, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereafter, “Korean Council”), one of the main activist organizations advocating for redress on behalf of survivors.<sup>152</sup> Despite the Korean Council’s criticisms of the AWF, in 1997 seven South Korean survivors accepted AWF funds.<sup>153</sup> In response, the Korean Council launched another fund-raising campaign to lobby the Kim Dae Jung administration, which resulted in the Korean government paying approximately \$26,000 in support money to each of about 140 survivors, excluding the seven who accepted money from the AWF. Soh recounts the story of one of

---

<sup>151</sup> For an elaboration, see Ōnuma’s panel discussion with conservative historian Hata Ikuhiko: The Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan, “Ikuhiko Hata & Yasuaki Onuma: ‘Panel Discussion on Comfort Women Issue,’” YouTube video, 1:51:07, March 17, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy1-ckr8FIE&t=1997s>.

<sup>152</sup> Soh, 44.

<sup>153</sup> For greater detail on the tortuous political history of the AWF, see Soh, “Japan’s National/Asian Women’s Fund for ‘Comfort Women,’” *Pacific Affairs* 76 (2): 209-233.

these seven survivor-recipients, Pak Pok-sun (1991-2005), who became the target of death threats and hate calls for eight years until her death for going against the Korean Council's position.<sup>154</sup> Pak was also implicated in angry Korean rhetoric characterizing Japan as performing a "second rape" of survivors with the temptation of money through the AWF.<sup>155</sup> South Korean survivors who wished to receive the Korean government's payments had to sign a pledge that they would never receive money from the AWF.<sup>156</sup> This is just one potent example of how national identity politics and the logic of restoring honor to victims can override the individual wishes of survivors and even lead to their outright harassment.

Rumi Sakamoto has made a similar point about the appropriation of female suffering for male-centric nationalist discourse. Regarding the "comfort women" issue in Korea, she mentioned how it is often configured as "national shame" and followed by logic such as "we must rescue our women and our history from the Japanese."<sup>157</sup> Of course, this appropriation is not unique to South Korea. In Japan, conservatives argued that Japan should never apologize so that future Japanese could be proud of themselves as a nation. Japanese liberals countered that Japan *should* apologize in order to be a proud nation. Both positions, Sakamoto rightly asserts, are forms of nationalism that have little to do with the suffering of victims. She goes on to explain that Japanese and Korean feminists have positioned themselves away from nationalism, instead choosing to link themselves with the international movement of human rights and global feminism. However, my own research suggests that feminism and human rights, particularly as applied to the comfort women redress movement, has nevertheless

---

<sup>154</sup> Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 96.

<sup>155</sup> Soh, "Japan's National/Asian Women's Fund for 'Comfort Women,'" 228.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>157</sup> Rumi Sakamoto, "'Comfort Women,' National Apology and Feminist Politics," in *Asian Futures, Asian Traditions*, ed. Edwina Palmer (Folkstone, Kent: Global Oriental, 2005), 305.

succumbed to appropriation for identity politics as the movement has travelled across the world.

### **Glendale on the “Right Side of History”**

In Glendale, the idea for a monument dedicated to Japan’s wartime sex slaves first germinated in 2011, at a meeting in which Glendale’s city council began debating whether to incorporate monuments dedicated to its sister cities in their Central Park.<sup>158</sup> By that time, media representations of the comfort women problem had settled into a neat victim-perpetrator binary portraying Japan as the unrepentant perpetrator and South Korea—or sometimes women in general—as the innocent victim(s). Short news articles about the subject matter frequently omit the fact that many actors within the Japanese government and among Japanese citizens have done much to elevate awareness of what happened during the war and to make amends, which is not to say that those efforts are beyond criticism or that they should be deemed sufficient. The simplicity of the narrative in which imperial Japan committed atrocities against hapless women is of course not untrue, but it ignores the enormous complexity of how crimes against humanity are waged, reifies responsibility, and fuels simple narratives of collective blame, which tend to devolve into endless politicking over collective responsibility and the “sincerity” of national apologies. Regardless, the simplicity of this narrative and its framing as a human rights movement made the proposal for the monument attractive to Glendale’s leadership. In effect, the project to build the Peace Monument and the controversy that would become attached to it functioned as an opportunity for local redress activists and the city council to

---

<sup>158</sup> Glendale City Council, “Director of Community Service and Parks, RE: Potential Re-Naming of Central Park to Veterans Memorial Park,” *Glendale, California*, September 9, 2011. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.

reaffirm for themselves their own status as a cosmopolitan and morally upstanding society on the right side of history. In the end, however, survivors themselves, even if physically present at the unveiling ceremony, were obscured by such identity politics.

The particular entanglement of historical memories I have been discussing in the context of Glendale reflects Michael Rothberg's work on "multidirectional memory," in which a temporally and spatially distant traumatic event serves as the basis for addressing local rights issues and abuses.<sup>159</sup> He contrasts this multidirectional memory against "competitive memory," a model that understands public recognition of collective memories as a scarce resource in which ethnonational groups compete to display their own historical grievances at the cost of public recognition for other groups.

My research on Glendale's Peace Monument controversy, however, demonstrates how these two models of memory are not mutually exclusive. For example, while city councilmembers and other supporters rhetorically linked the comfort women history with contemporary human trafficking phenomena, it is not clear that the Peace Monument has played any role in changing how the City of Glendale combats human trafficking. The monument can simultaneously be seen as an example of Korean Americans' greater involvement in local organizations and government. Since the 1992 Los Angeles riots, when the police abandoned Korean American communities, those communities have responded by asserting themselves in the public sphere to end their social invisibility in American society in the hope that they would be recognized by others as authentic Americans. In the shadow of this local, distinctly American heritage, the comfort women monument project helped

---

<sup>159</sup> Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford University Press, 2009).

demonstrate Korean American savvy when navigating civil bureaucracy and appealing to an American sensibility of honoring the victims of human rights abuses. Furthermore, as an issue that can speak to human rights issues everywhere, the symbols and history of the comfort women could also strengthen the grievances and memory work of the Armenian American community in Glendale. With the Korean American and Armenian American communities mutually supporting each other's claims to victimhood, they reinforce each other's claims to recognition as good Americans on the right side of history.

At the same time, however, the Peace Monument controversy also evinces a competitive model of collective historical memory. GAHT, that *shin issei* organization dedicated to opposing comfort women commemoration in the United States, proclaims on its website that nefarious forces are vigorously working to tarnish Japan's national reputation and that the comfort women monument in Glendale is one such example.<sup>160</sup> One of Rothberg's own examples of competitive memory centered on how the Holocaust Museum in Washington physically occupied space that could otherwise have been used to preserve the memory of African American history, something more obviously relevant to American society. The competitive dimension of Glendale's case is markedly different. Rather than the Peace Monument physically crowding out the potential for a monument dedicated to an example of Japanese victimization, such as the suffering of atomic bomb victims, GAHT members maintain that the Peace Monument promotes a falsified history that harms Japan and Japanese people. And yet, declaring one's own victimhood on the basis of negating another group's claim to victimhood fails to adhere to the cosmopolitan spirit and rhetoric of human rights

---

<sup>160</sup> The Global Alliance for Historical Truth, "*GAHT to ha*," accessed November 19, 2017, [https://gahtjp.org/?page\\_id=169](https://gahtjp.org/?page_id=169).

morality. As such, at least within the local context of Glendale, GAHT's insistence that Japanese people are the true victims of the current situation comes across to self-identified Americans as not only unconvincing, but morally offensive. Such arguments nevertheless reaffirmed for other *shin issei* in the room that they are all engaged in the noble mission of defending Japan's honor. In this sense, while they present arguments in public as if they are trying to convince people who do not already agree with them, my research suggests that these utterances function more as a show of solidarity with other *shin issei* rather than as an attempt to change anyone else's mind.

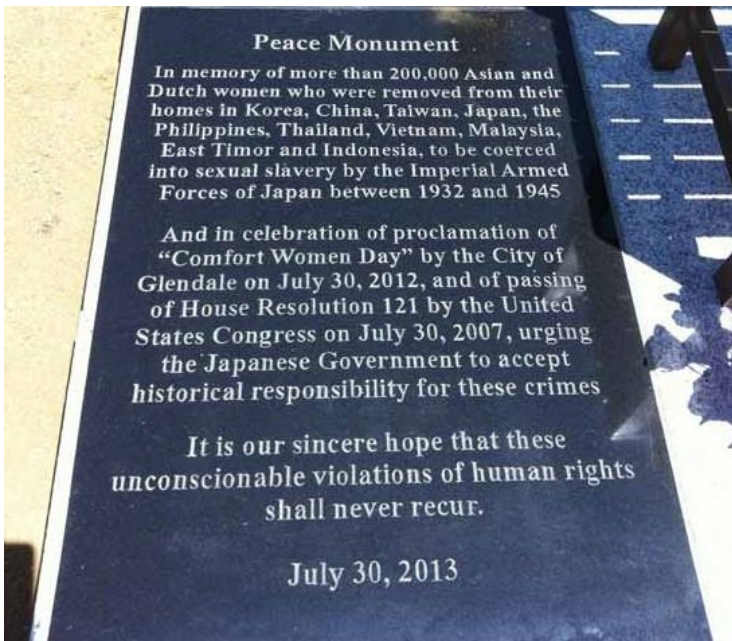
\*\*\*

In Chapter Four, I examined pro-redress actors' arguments and rationales through the same "emotional communities" lens as I did with anti-redress activists. By exploring the emotional dimension of this public debate underneath arguments over which historical interpretation is the "correct" one, I demonstrated how transnational historical discourse can be used for local politics and identity construction. I also reviewed how wartime sexual slavery transformed from being considered an inevitable side-effect of war to being considered a "crime against humanity" that should be criminalized to prevent it from happening again. The global proliferation of human rights discourse, and the association of "comfort women" with that discourse, helped make the cause of women from the other side of the world who were victimized in a war there seventy years prior appear intimately relevant to the city of Glendale, California. This chapter also illustrates how what on the surface appears to be a historiographical debate in the public sphere is simultaneously—and often more potently—an arena for collective identity construction in local, national, and transnational registers. That is, pro-redress activists and actors in Glendale were positioning themselves within a transnational

debate on an egregious case of sexual violence against women, a national debate on Korean Americans' belonging to the U.S., and a local debate on Glendale's moral valuing of human rights. While history was invoked to bolster these performative claims on (Asian) American identity, they ignored those historical details that would have tarnished America's image as a land where human rights are stalwartly defended. Although the transnational expansion of discourse on "comfort women" has had an undeniably positive impact on general awareness of history, the obscuring effects on this progress of national appropriation is a real risk I have attempted to highlight.

## Conclusion

The city of Glendale unveiled the Peace Monument on July 30, 2013, in spite of demands to reject it by Japanese individuals living across southern California and in Japan. Its design features a 1,100-pound bronze statue of a young girl, dressed in Korean clothes, sitting in a chair next to another, empty chair, with bare feet, roughly shorn hair, clenched fists, a bird on her shoulder, and a black mosaic shadow in the shape of an elderly woman, all of which are meant to signify the violence and abandonment young Korean girls faced in the comfort women system. It also speaks to the hope the few remaining survivors have in their old age for a meaningful apology and that future generations will not forget what happened. The Peace



*Image 3: Lower plaque of the Peace Monument, Glendale, CA*

Monument also features two plaques: one that outlines in bullet-points each symbolic element; the another, more typical of monuments, conveys the sponsoring community's intentions in three parts (see image 3).<sup>161</sup> First, it dedicates the monument to the more than 200,000 women "who were removed from their homes" in the ten different countries from which the women came. Second, it celebrates Glendale's

---

<sup>161</sup> Image taken from "Comfort Women Monument Unveiled in Glendale," Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, accessed March 5, 2018, <http://www.ncrr-la.org/news/comfortwomenmonument/comfortwomenmonument.html>.



proclamation in 2012 that July 30 is “Comfort Women Day” and expresses gratitude that the United States Congress passed House Resolution 121 on July 30, 2007, urging “the Japanese Government to accept historical responsibility for these crimes.” It concludes by expressing the hope that such violations of human rights will not recur.

With the reelection of Prime Minister Abe Shinzō in 2012, the Japanese government has proactively involved itself in combating the spread of “comfort women” commemorative practices anywhere in the world. Having largely succeeded in suppressing such activities within Japan, the government has turned its focus elsewhere, most notably the United States. Upon realizing that the small town of Palisades Park, New Jersey had built a “comfort women” memorial in public space, they sent official representatives to request that the town remove the memorial because it was based on “false” history and it harmed the U.S.-Japanese relationship. Despite their efforts having backfired, they nevertheless persisted each time another American municipality began considering building their own monuments at the behest of their Korean American residents. In Glendale’s case, Japanese opposition garnered the most media attention. Further, largely negative media coverage of such commemorative acts within Japanese media fed into a fear experienced by diasporic Japanese immigrants in the U.S. that American public sentiment was turning against them as a community, thereby necessitating their mobilization in a fight against the spread of “fabricated” history designed to turn the world against Japan.

Each time these grassroots *shin issei* activists speak out in public against “comfort women” memorials, they almost always inadvertently convince the local city council that building a memorial is indeed the appropriate action to take. Japanese activists’ increasingly

enthusiastic embrace of the same counterproductive tactics makes one question why they would pursue the same strategy repeatedly despite continuous failures to prevent the spread of “comfort women” memorials and general awareness of the history. I argue in this thesis that grassroots activists’ ostensible goal of preventing the spread of such memorials or removing from public space those that have already been built is secondary to a more fundamental, if implicit, attraction to strengthening a communal network based on pride in being Japanese even if they do not live in Japan. Through my interviews and analysis of news media and Glendale’s city records, I have sought to use an analysis of emotional performance to demonstrate this underlying and, indeed, fundamentally human desire for community, particularly among those who fear that violence may be directed toward themselves or their children in the near future.

When considering the sort of place Glendale is, as I did in Chapter Two, one must take into account the diverse ethnic communities that see Glendale as their home. Particularly with a large and politically active Armenian American population that cares deeply about obtaining redress for the Armenian Genocide, the city’s leadership was logically more attuned to human rights rhetoric than other cities in the region. Thus, it seemed only natural to Glendale’s leadership to accept Phyllis Kim’s proposed donation of a “comfort women” monument since it could benefit the city in several ways. It would improve Glendale’s relationship with its South Korean sister cities, the representatives of which were supportive of Kim’s proposal. It would also enhance Glendale’s global profile as the first city outside of South Korea to host a replica of the original and highly controversial “Girl Statue of Peace” (in Korean, *Pyŏnghwau i sonyŏsang*), which was originally built in South Korea across the street from the Japanese embassy in Seoul. In part because of this association with the monument in Seoul, several

weeks prior to the monument's unveiling in Glendale, the *shin issei* Japanese immigrants in California attended the city's public hearing to air their vehement opposition to the proposal. While this local opposition cannot be understood outside of the larger, international context of South Korean-Japanese relations, my research in Glendale suggests that more personal motivations are also crucial for understanding why so many people could oppose a monument that calls for a future without sexual slavery.

Inspired by Erika Doss's work on the emotional lives of monuments in the contemporary United States and Barbara Rosenwein's conception of "emotional communities," I employed these concepts and analytic privileging of emotional communication to uncover the more visceral motivations of redress and anti-redress activists. For anti-redress activists, the most common theme in their arguments in the Glendale public arena was that the narrative presented by the statue, and by the sort of group funding it, was based on misconstrued history and a reliance on evidence that has no documentary basis. I have argued in this thesis, however, that this controversy has little to do with a commitment to historiographical standards. More clearly communicating the underlying reality of the controversy were public speakers' emotional appeals, such as when several women insisted that an "anti-Japanese" monument in the city's public space would endanger their own and their children's wellbeing. Their equating criticism of the imperial Japanese government with an attack on their own personal dignity reflects how deeply they identified as Japanese nationals, even though most of them have lived in the United States for nearly half their lives, have married Americans, and have raised children, even grandchildren, in the U.S.

My findings suggest that these *shin issei* are attracted to the anti-monument movement in part because of an underlying sense of alienation from American society, an alienation that

is worsening as more communities build their own monuments dedicated to “comfort women.” As the first American city to loudly step into the transnational debate on Japan’s responsibility for its wartime system of sexual slavery, Glendale’s acceptance of the monument provided a rallying point around which otherwise physically scattered Japanese immigrants in California could coalesce. Many of these *shin issei* individuals found emotional refuge in Kōichi Mera’s Global Alliance for Historical Truth. Collectively, they attempted to convince Glendale’s city council to reconsider the proposal, but they only managed to further convince councilmembers of the importance of the monument. Based on the emotional satisfaction GAHT members experience defending Japan from what they believe are false accusations, I contend that the organization’s primary function is to facilitate the performance of publicly defending Japan, and to target that performance at other *shin issei* living in the U.S. Convincing their opponents is not as emphasized, nor do GAHT members realistically expect it to happen.

Those who did express support for the monument include, most notably, Phyllis Kim, fellow members of the Korean American Forum of California (KAFC), Glendale’s city council, and a few unaffiliated residents of Glendale, all of whom saw the monument as obviously appropriate as a symbol of women’s human rights. However, it is not obvious why Korean and other Americans would care so much about an atrocity perpetrated by another power against another people across the ocean nearly seventy years prior to the proposal for the monument. I argued in Chapter Four that the confluence of the originally postcolonial, bilateral redress movement with the burgeoning global women’s human rights movement helped reframe the comfort women issue as universally relevant. This major development suddenly granted survivors of the “comfort women” system a legitimacy they had not possessed prior to the 1990s, and discourse on their victimization proliferated as a result. This

is of course not to say that no one could possibly care about the history of the “comfort women” without a human rights framework in place, but such a framework did play a large role in promoting research into and discussion of this particularly horrifying episode of human history.

That the various boundaries around “comfort women” victimhood—such as the time, place, ethnicity, and perpetrator—could be overcome and allies galvanized as easily as KAFC did speaks to the power of working within a given emotional regime. The emotional work the Peace Monument accomplishes parallels how other monuments in the U.S. also operate. In her analysis of contemporary American commemorative culture, Erika Doss takes the stance that, in the context of heightened anxieties about national identity and change, American commemorative culture has become centered around affects such as shame, grief, or anger, rather than the awe for great people or great events that previous eras of commemorative culture centered on.<sup>162</sup> As I have demonstrated throughout this thesis, shame first and foremost was indeed the central emotion that fueled the Glendale controversy. The Peace Monument also operates along the same lines as Michael North’s reading of monuments like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which “achieve their aesthetic distinction and their emotional power from their political complexity” and “place their viewers in a public space that is articulated in terms of political controversy so that to view the piece is not simply to experience space but also to enter a debate.”<sup>163</sup>

Indeed, since the Glendale controversy, communities in five other municipalities across the United States have built their own “comfort women” monuments, including Fairfax (Virginia), Union City (New Jersey), Southfield (Michigan), San Francisco (California), and

---

<sup>162</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 46.

<sup>163</sup> Michael North, “The Public as Sculpture: From Heavenly City to Mass Ornament,” *Critical Inquiry* 16:4 (Summer 1990): 860-879.

Atlanta (Georgia). Not only did KAFC's strategy in Glendale demonstrate that "comfort women" redress could be waged successfully in the United States, it also provided a model for how to frame redress activism to utilize emotional communication effectively to galvanize otherwise apathetic observers ignorant about this dimension of the Asia Pacific War. Unfortunately, the Peace Monument's affective force and narrow focus on Japan as the unrepentant perpetrator obscures the larger picture in exchange for a simplified, easy-to-digest narrative. In Glendale's case, the Korean American community empowered itself by skillfully propagating this simplified version through bureaucratic and emotional channels and ultimately leaving a physical mark on the city's landscape. Doing so successfully makes the Korean American, and increasingly other Asian American, communities more visibly present in American public life. Their struggle against a Japanese community that fails to navigate American emotional regimes further improves Korean American inclusion within the category of authentic Americans.

While my intention is not to minimize Japan's historical responsibility for the victimization of hundreds of thousands of women, Japan is not the only responsible party for the "comfort women" system as it existed during the Japanese empire, nor is it solely responsible for the system's postwar evolutions. As a few of my examples have indicated, the close relationship between militaries and sexual slavery did not end with the comfort women system in 1945. Allied soldiers in Japan during the postwar occupation, American soldiers in Korea ever since the Korean War, and even Korean soldiers during the Korean and Vietnam wars all availed themselves of prostitution organizations akin to that of the comfort women. Indeed, this phenomenon is not unique to militaries in East Asia; militaries around the world engage in similar behavior to this day. The point I believe the comfort women redress

movement risks missing by immersing itself in the politics of recognition within an American, or any other national, context is ignoring the continued prevalence of sexual slavery in the contemporary world. Fixating on whether the Japanese government has “sincerely” apologized masks the unsavory fact that the U.S. continues to be a leading consumer of trafficked persons for sexual slavery.<sup>164</sup> My hope is that, as the redress movement expands across the United States and other countries as well, we as members of a transnational society take care not to become too distracted by certain details of the past and instead realize that sexual slavery is alive and well in the present, and that we all have a responsibility to address it as a problem that should shame us all.

## Appendix

July \_\_\_\_\_, 2013

Dear City Councilman Frank Quintero and the members of the City Council of Glendale,

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of many concerned Japanese.

---

<sup>164</sup> “Human Trafficking: Modern Enslavement of Immigrant Women in the United States,” American Civil Liberties Union, accessed February 24, 2018, <https://www.aclu.org/other/human-trafficking-modern-enslavement-immigrant-women-united-states>.

I learned the news that City Council of Glendale supported the idea of “Comfort Woman” Monument in March, and the monument will be unveiled on 30th of July at a public event in Central Park.

Recent few years, Korean American’s anti-Japanese propaganda and lobbying become extremely active. Korean’s allegation is during WWII the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan abducted approximately 200,000 young women and forced them into sexual slavery known as “comfort women”. Korean American groups have already put up monuments of comfort women in the public properties in NJ and NY. Japanese are upset about this situation.

We do not try to rewrite the history. Also we are not revisionists or right wings. As the fabricated history is spreading, we cannot miss damaged our ancestors’ honor, and we want you to know the fact what the real history is.

Japanese government and South Korean government authorities jointly conducted a survey on comfort women issue in the 1990s. There was no evidence proving participation and forcing nature of the Japanese government and the Japanese military other than former comfort women’s testimony. “Approximately 200,000 young women were abducted and forced into sexual slavery” is not the fact. If you believe this number and abduction as the fact, **please present reliable primary sources and name the historians which will fully convince we Japanese.**

Friendly relationship among US, South Korea, and Japan is very important due to stabilization for Asia-Pacific region. Because of this anti-Japan propaganda problem, public sentiment got worse among all three countries. Then those situations make happy military expansion countries and Communist terrorist counties, such as China and North Korea.

We are to cherish and share our growth and prosperity of the region together for years to come. Our partnership should never be affected by the phony propaganda. I am grateful to you for taking valuable time to read this mail.

Sincerely yours,

署名(ローマ字 又は 日本語)

なまえ (ローマ字)

住所 (市、県だけでも)

Japan

## Bibliography

“About NCCR.” n.d. Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress. Accessed November 6, 2016.  
<http://www.ncrr-la.org/about.html>.



- Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2004. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press.
- Alvarado, Monsy. 2010. "UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE." *The Record*, December 16, 2010, sec. L01.  
<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/13BAE83066FD4708?p=AWN>  
 B.
- . 2012. "HISTORICAL TUG-OF-WAR." *The Record*, May 10, 2012, sec. A01.  
<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/13EAF5699891F290?p=AWN>  
 B.
- Angst, Linda Isako. 2001. "The Sacrifice of a School Girl: The 1995 Rape Case, Discourses of Power, and Women's Lives in Okinawa." *Critical Asian Studies* 33 (2): 243–66.
- "Brief for the Government of Japan as Amicus Curiae Supporting Petitioners, Koichi Mera and GAHT-US Corporation v. City of Glendale, No. 16-917, \*ii-12 (Supreme Court of the United States)." n.d. Accessed March 7, 2018.  
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000231732.pdf>.
- Carr, E.H. 1961. "The Historian and His Facts." In *What Is History?* University of Cambridge Press.
- Chinkin, Christine M. 2001. "Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery." *The American Journal of International Law* 95 (2): 335–41.
- Chuh, Kandice. 2003. "Discomforting Knowledge: Or, Korean 'Comfort Women' and Asian Americanist Critical Practice." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 6 (1): 5–23.
- City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013a. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013b. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013c. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013d. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013e. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013f. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013g. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- . *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. 2013h. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- Coomaraswamy, Radhika, United Nations, and Commission on Human Rights. 1997. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy: Addendum: Report on the Mission of the Special Rapporteur to Brazil on the Issue of Domestic Violence (15-26 July 1996)*. Geneva: United Nations.
- Cornell, Drucilla L. 1992. "Gender, Sex, and Equivalent Rights." In *Feminists Theorize the Political*, edited by Judith Butler and Joan Scott. New York: Routledge.

- “Crimes Against Humanity.” n.d. United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect. Accessed November 5, 2017.  
<http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.html>.
- Curley, Michael W. 2017. “Comfort Women Memorial Moving Forward in Fort Lee.” *NorthJersey.com*, December 17, 2017.  
<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/bergen/fort-lee/2017/12/21/comfort-women-memorial-moving-forward-fort-lee/961667001/>.
- Dahn, Shinki. 2013. *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- Director of Community Service and Parks, RE: Potential Re-Naming of Central Park to Veterans Memorial Park. 2011. Glendale, California.  
<http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- Doss, Erika. 2010. *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- FCCJchannel. 2016. *Ikuhiko Hata & Yasuaki Onuma: “Panel Discussion on Comfort Women Issue.”* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy1-ckr8FIE>.
- FeND. n.d. *Koichi Mera Testimony, 09/17/2015*. YouTube. Accessed April 20, 2018.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sFSN6Dect0>.
- Frank, Dana. 2002. “Demons in the Parking Lot: Auto Workers, Buy American Campaigns, and the ‘Japanese Threat’ in the 1980s.” *Amerasia Journal* 28 (3): 33–50.
- Frühstück, Sabine, Michael Geyer, and Adam Tooze. 2015. “Sexuality and Sexual Violence.” In *The Cambridge History of the Second World War, Volume III: Total War: Economy, Society and Culture*, 422–46. Cambridge University Press.
- Gluck, Carol. 2007. “Operations of Memory: ‘Comfort Women’ and the World.” In *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia*, edited by Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter, 47–77. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Göçek, Fatma Müge. 2015. *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present and Collective Violence Against the Armenians, 1789-2009*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hayashi Hirofumi. 2005. *BC-kyū senpan saiban (Class BC War Crimes Trials)*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Hein, Laura. 1999. “Savage Irony: The Imaginative Power of the ‘Military Comfort Women’ in the 1990s.” *Gender & History* 11 (2): 336–72.
- Henson, Maria Rosa. 1999. *Comfort Woman: A Filipina’s Story of Prostitution and Slavery under the Japanese*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Hicks, George L. 1995. *The Comfort Women: Japan’s Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- “Human Trafficking: Modern Enslavement of Immigrant Women in the United States.” n.d. American Civil Liberties Union. Accessed February 24, 2018.  
<https://www.aclu.org/other/human-trafficking-modern-enslavement-immigrant-women-united-states>.
- Iwasaki, Minoru, and Steffi Richter. 2008. “The Topology of Post-1990s Historical Revisionism.” Translated by Richard Calichman. *Positions* 16 (3): 507–38.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/10679847-2008-012>.

- Joo, Hee-Jung Serenity. 2015. "Comfort Women in Human Rights Discourse: Fetishized Testimonies, Small Museums, and the Politics of Thin Description." *Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies* 37 (2/3).
- Kagawa, Marcie. 2014. "Lawsuit Seeks Removal of Comfort Women Statue from California Park." *Kyodo News International, Inc.*, February 21, 2014. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14C223BCAE303BE8?p=AWNB>.
- Kellam, Mark. 2017. "Rep. Adam Schiff Honors Kim, Kortoshian, Porto as Women of the Year." *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/socal/glendale-news-press/news/tn-gnp-me-women-of-the-year-20170421-story.html>.
- Kersten, Rikki. 1999. "Neo-Nationalism and the 'Liberal School of History.'" *Japan Forum* 11 (2): 191–203.
- Kim, Claire Jean. 1999. "The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans." *Politics & Society* 27 (1): 105–38.
- Kim, Elaine H. 1993. "Home Is Where the Han Is: A Korean American Perspective on the Los Angeles Upheavals." *Social Justice* 20 (1/2): 1–21.
- Kim, Katherine Yungmee. 2011. *Los Angeles's Koreatown*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing.
- Kim, Rose M. 2012. "Violence and Trauma as Constitutive Elements in Korean American Racial Identity Formation: The 1992 L.A. Riots/Insurrection/Saigu." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35 (11): 1999–2018.
- Kimura, Maki. 2016. *Unfolding the "Comfort Women" Debates: Modernity, Violence, Women's Voices*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- King, Melissa Ruth. 2013. "Survivors: An Ethnographic Study of Armenian American Activism and Expression." Dissertation, University of California, Riverside.
- Knight, Heather. 2017. "War Victims Some Would Rather Forget." *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 12, 2017. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/166E40700CE8BFA0?p=AWNB>.
- Koide, Reiko. 2016. "Critical New Stage in Japan's Textbook Controversy | The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus." May 20, 2016. <http://apjff.org/2014/12/13/Koide-Reiko/4101/article.html>.
- Koyama, Emi. 2015. "The U.S. as 'Major Battleground' for 'Comfort Women' Revisionism: The Screening of Scottboro Girls at Central Washington University." *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13 (22). <https://apjff.org/Emi-Koyama/4324.html>.
- . 2016. "Amerika 'ianfu' hi secchi e no kōgeki." In *Umi wo wataru "ianfu" mondai: uha no "rekishisen" wo tou*, edited by Tomomi Yamaguchi, Motokazu Nogawa, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and Emi Koyama. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Levine, Brittany. 2011. "Glendale to Get 'animated' in Image Makeover." *Los Angeles Times*, November 30, 2011. <http://www.latimes.com/tn-gnp-1130-glendale-to-get-animated-in-image-makeover-story.html>.
- . 2013. "Statue Honoring WWII Sex Slaves Comes to Glendale." *Glendale News-Press*, June 26, 2013. <http://www.latimes.com/tn-gnp-me-comfort-women-memorial-planned-20130626-story.html>.

- . 2014a. “Lawsuit Seeks Removal of Glendale ‘comfort Women’ Statue.” *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 2014. <http://articles.latimes.com/2014/feb/22/local/la-me-ln-glendale-comfort-women-statue-sparks-lawsuit-20140222>.
- . 2014b. “Glendale City Council Denounces Anti-Statue Lawsuit.” *Glendale News-Press*, February 27, 2014. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14C3D1795F6F1E80?p=AWN B>.
- . 2014c. “Law Firm Agrees to Defend Glendale in Comfort-Women Statue Lawsuit.” *Glendale News-Press*, March 22, 2014. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14CB62E0625AEFE8?p=AWN B>.
- Levine, Brittany, and Jason Wells. 2013. “Glendale Unveils ‘comfort Women’ Statue, Honors ‘innocent Victims.’” *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2013. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/30/local/la-me-ln-glendale-comfort-women-20130730>.
- Llorente, Elizabeth. 2010. “Pain of Wartime Crimes Lingers.” *The Record*, October 9, 2010, sec. A01. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/132CC757413FEE58?p=AWN B>.
- McDougall, Gay J, and Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices during Wartime UN. Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Systematic Rape. 1998. *Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices during Armed Conflict: Final Report*. Geneva: UN.
- McGrane, Sally. 2017. “An Important Statue for ‘Comfort Women’ in San Francisco.” *The New Yorker*, October 12, 2017. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/an-important-statue-for-comfort-women-in-san-francisco>.
- Mera, Koichi. n.d. “The Global Alliance for Historical Truth.” The Global Alliance for Historical Truth. Accessed March 7, 2018. <http://gaht.jp/aboutGAHT.html>.
- Miller, Steve. 2015. *Park Yuha and the Nuances of the Comfort Women*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bT2q6uSP4s4>.
- Moon, Katherine S. 1998. “Prostituted Bodies and States in U.S.-Korea Relations.” In *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, edited by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi, 141–74. New York and London: Routledge.
- Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. 2015. “You Don’t Want to Know About the Girls? The ‘Comfort Women’, the Japanese Military and Allied Forces in the Asia-Pacific War.” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13 (31). <http://apjjf.org/2015/13/31/Tessa-Morris-Suzuki/4352.html>.
- Moteki Hiromichi. n.d. “Open Letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Universal Periodical Review Working Group for Japan in November 2017.” *Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact* (blog). Accessed February 3, 2018. <http://www.sdh-fact.com/essay-article/1094/>.
- Moyn, Samuel. 2010. *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Nelson, John K. 2002. “Tempest in a Textbook: A Report on the New Middle-School History Textbook in Japan.” *Critical Asian Studies* 34 (1): 129–48.
- North, Michael. 1990. “The Public as Sculpture: From Heavenly City to Mass Ornament.” *Critical Inquiry* 16 (4): 860–79.

- Nozaki, Yoshiko. 2008. *War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Ogata, Yoshiaki. n.d. "The Truth about the Question of 'Comfort Women.'" *Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact* (blog). Accessed January 29, 2018. [http://www.sdhfact.com/CL02\\_1/24\\_S4.pdf](http://www.sdhfact.com/CL02_1/24_S4.pdf).
- Oguma, Eiji, and Chizuko Ueno. 2003. *Iyashi no nashonarizumu (Comforting Nationalism)*. Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai.
- Oliver, Kelly. 2001. *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- O'Neil, Stephanie. 1987. "Racist Incidents Spark Debate on City Image." *Los Angeles Times*, November 26, 1987. [http://articles.latimes.com/1987-11-26/news/gl-24929\\_1\\_city-officials](http://articles.latimes.com/1987-11-26/news/gl-24929_1_city-officials).
- Ouchida, Priscilla, and Jeff Moy. 2015. "JACL Condemns Dangerous Anti-Muslim Rhetoric." Japanese American Citizens League. December 9, 2015. <https://jacl.org/jacl-condemns-dangerous-anti-muslim-rhetoric/>.
- Park, Ju-min. 2014. "Former Korean 'comfort Women' for U.S. Troops Sue Own Government." *Reuters*, July 11, 2014. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-usa-military/former-korean-comfort-women-for-u-s-troops-sue-own-government-idUSKBN0FG0VV20140711>.
- Park, You-me. 2010. "Compensation to Fit the Crime: Conceptualizing a Just Paradigm of Reparation for Korean 'Comfort Women.'" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 30 (2): 204–13.
- Pilzer, Joshua D. 2012. *Hearts of Pine: Songs in the Lives of Three Korean Survivors of the Japanese Comfort Women*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Prosecutors and Peoples of Asia Pacific Region v. Hirohito; Prosecutors and People of Asia Pacific Region v. Japan, Summary of Findings and Preliminary Judgement*. 2000. Tokyo.
- Quintero, Frank. 2013. *City Council Special Meeting – 3pm*. Glendale, California. <http://glendaleca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/agendas-minutes>.
- Reddy, William. 2001. *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rienhold, Robert. 1991. "Violence and Racism Are Routine In Los Angeles Police, Study Says." *The New York Times*, July 10, 1991. <http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/02/08/home/rodney-report.html>.
- Rosenwein, Barbara H. 2002. "Worrying about Emotions in History." *The American Historical Review* 107 (3): 821–45. <https://doi.org/10.1086/532498>.
- Rothberg, Michael. 2009. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford University Press.
- Saito, Hiro. 2017. *The History Problem: The Politics of War Commemoration in East Asia*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sakamoto, Rumi. 2005. "'Comfort Women,' National Apology and Feminist Politics." In *Asian Futures, Asian Traditions*. Folkstone, Kent: Global Oriental.
- Sang-Hun, Choe. 2017. "Professor Who Wrote of Korean 'Comfort Women' Wins Defamation Case." *The New York Times*, January 25, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/world/asia/korean-comfort-women-park-yu-ha-japan.html>.

- Sankei Shimbun. 2014. "'Tanfu wo hitei suru no ka!' Tanshin tobei shita sakai shigi wo machikamaeta kankoku media: 'Seiron' wo 'bōgen' to hōjiru 'chōhenkō,'" December 15, 2014. <https://www.sankei.com/west/news/141215/wst1412150005-n1.html>.
- Schrank, Aaron. 2013. "Statue Brings Friction over WWII Comfort Women to California." *National Public Radio*, July 29, 2013. <https://www.npr.org/2013/07/29/206655160/statue-brings-friction-over-wwii-comfort-women-to-california>.
- Semple, Kirk. 2016. "In New Jersey, Memorial for 'Comfort Women' Deepens Old Animosity." *The New York Times*, May 18, 2016. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/nyregion/monument-in-palisades-park-nj-irritates-japanese-officials.html?_r=0).
- Shephard, Robert. 2016. "Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and the Heritage of Shame: Comfort Women Memorials and the Legacy of Slavery in the United States." *International Journal of Communication*. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2016.1253687>.
- Smith, Nathaniel Michael. 2011. "Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility." PhD diss., Yale University.
- Soh, Chunghee Sarah. 2003. "Japan's National/Asian Women's Fund for 'Comfort Women.'" *Pacific Affairs* 76 (2): 209–33.
- . 2007. "From Imperial Gifts to Sex Slaves: Theorizing Symbolic Representations of the 'Comfort Women.'" *Social Science Journal Japan* 3 (1): 59–76.
- . 2008. *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Son, Elizabeth. 2018. *Embodied Reckonings: Memorial Building in the Korean Diaspora*. University of Minnesota Press.
- "Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the Result of the Study on the Issue of 'comfort Women.'" n.d. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed November 17, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>.
- Takahashi, Jere. 1997. *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.
- Taylor, Adam. 2017. "Osaka Mayor to End Sister City Status with San Francisco over 'comfort Women' Statue." *The Washington Post*, November 25, 2017. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/25/osaka-mayor-to-end-sister-city-status-with-san-francisco-over-comfort-women-statue/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.5b188cd2ca8c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/25/osaka-mayor-to-end-sister-city-status-with-san-francisco-over-comfort-women-statue/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.5b188cd2ca8c).
- The Korea Times*. 2016. "Deciphering Symbolism of Girl Statue," September 6, 2016. <http://www.koreatimesus.com/deciphering-symbolism-of-girl-statue/>.
- Totani, Yuma. 2008. *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Pursuit of Justice in the Wake of WWII*. Cambridge, Mass.: University of Harvard Press.
- Toyota, Tritia. 2012. "The New Nikkei: Transpacific Shin Issei and Shifting Borders of Community in Southern California." *Amerasia Journal* 38 (3): 2–27.
- Ueno Chizuko. 1997. "Kioku no seijigaku: Kokumin, kojīn, watashi." *Inpakushon* 103: 154–75.
- Utsumi Aiko. 2002. "'Seibōryoku to tōkyō saiban' (Wartime Sexual Violence and the Tokyo Trial)." In *Nihongun seidoreisei wo sabaku 2000-nen josei kokusai senan hōtei no kiroku (The Records of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal to*

- Prosecute Japanese Military's Sexual Slavery, Year 2000*), edited by VAWW-NET Japan, I:57–102. Tokyo: Ryokufū Shuppan.
- Villacorte, Christina. 2013. "Glendale Approves Controversial 'comfort Women' Memorial." *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 9, 2013.  
<https://www.dailynews.com/2013/07/09/glendale-approves-controversial-comfort-women-memorial/>.
- Volp, Leti. 1994. "(Mis)Identifying Culture: Asian Women and the 'Cultural Defense.'" *Harvard Women's Law Journal* 17 (57).
- Women's Caucus for Gender Justice. 2001. "Transcript Of Oral Judgment Delivered on 4 December 2001 by the Judges of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery." The Netherlands: The Hague.  
<http://www.iccwomen.org/wigjdraft1/Archives/oldWCGJ/tokyo/summary.html>.
- Yamada, Jun. 2017. "Memorials Are Alienating Japanese Public." *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 22, 2017, sec. A10.  
<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/167137D4DAC14DE0?p=AWN> NB.
- Yamaguchi, Mari. 2017. "Japan Protests San Francisco's 'sex Slave' Statue Decision." *Associated Press State Wire: California (CA)*, November 24, 2017.  
<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/1685FEFA992BF458?p=AWN> B.
- Yamaguchi, Tomomi. 2013. "Xenophobia in Action Ultrnationalism, Hate Speech, and the Internet in Japan." *Radical History Review* 2013 (117): 98–118.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2210617>.
- . 2016. "Kanminittai no 'rekishisen' no yukue." In *Umi wo wataru "ianfu" mondai: Uha no "rekishisen" wo tou*, edited by Tomomi Yamaguchi, 97–136. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Yamaguchi, Tomomi, Motokazu Nogawa, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and Emi Koyama. 2016. *Umi wo wataru "ianfu" mondai: Uha no "rekishisen" wo tou*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Yamashiro, Jane H., Xiaojian Zhao, and Edward J. Park. 2014. "Japanese Transnational Identity." In *Asian Americans: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History*. California: Greenwood.
- Yang, Hyunah. 1998. "Re-Membering the Korean Military Comfort Women: Nationalism, Sexuality, and Silencing." In *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, edited by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi, 123–35. New York and London: Routledge.
- Yoneyama, Lisa. 2016. *Cold War Ruins: Transpacific Critique of American Justice and Japanese War Crimes*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Yoshimi Yoshiaki. 1995. *Jūgun ianfu*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho.