

Center for Japanese Studies Seminar Series

Rivalry among Major Newspapers in Japan on the “Comfort Women” Issue



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Major newspapers, such as the *Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Sankei Shimbun*, have been crucial actors in the politics of the so-called “comfort women” in Japan although academia in Japan as well as in other countries largely ignore their roles in the development of the issue. The *Yomiuri* and the *Sankei* believed that in the early 1990s, the *Asahi* fabricated the coercive recruitment of Korean women for “comfort stations” through the volunteer labor corps (*teishintai* in Japanese), and argued that the *Asahi* was partly responsible for creating the rocky relationship between Japan and South Korea. In response to them, the *Asahi* began to include the cases of “comfort women” from other countries and redefined the coerciveness. This dispute conducted through newspaper editorials and reports has continued until today. This presentation will demonstrate how these newspapers competed with each other over the “comfort women” issue in the 1990s and further complicated the public discourse. The presentation will also attempt to provide insights on the role of newspapers on the “comfort women” issue today, and their impact on Japan's relations with South Korea.



Tokioka Room (Moore Hall 319)

Friday, April 4 (3:30 - 5:00 pm)