



Special Exhibition No. 1

All About the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal: -- Victimized "Comfort Women" and the Responsibility of the Perpetrators

"The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery" (the Women's Tribunal) was a People's Tribunal to adjudicate the criminal responsibility of high-ranking Japanese military officials, and of the state of Japan, for military sexual slavery. First proposed by women in Japan, the perpetrating country, it became a reality through the solidarity of those determined to end the ongoing cycle of impunity for wartime sexual violence against women. These included women and men from victimized countries, women's human rights organizations, and international NGOs.

The international media gave extensive coverage to this landmark Tribunal; the Japanese media, however, were quite reluctant to publicize the news, for the Tribunal dared to challenge the greatest post-war taboo with its guilty verdict for the Showa Emperor, HIROHITO.

In January 2005, it was revealed that political interference was behind the sabotage of a TV program on the Tribunal aired by NHK, the Japanese public broadcasting network, early in 2001. In addition, in recent years editors of history textbooks are being forced to edit out references to "comfort women." With a growing backlash movement trying to erase the "comfort women" issue from our memory, now is a good time to look back together on the Women's Tribunal, so that you can see what it was all about. This summer, the 60th anniversary of Japan's defeat in WWII, here in the museum, you will learn firsthand everything about the Women's Tribunal.

What's Where in This Exhibition

EXHIBITION ROOM I: Indictment

The panels in this room will give you an overview of the proceedings. Each country's indictment is introduced in a separate panel, plus one for the Common Indictment.

EXHIBITION ROOM II: Testimony

Come face to face with each of the brave women who took the witness stand at the Women's Tribunal. Learn of their early lives, and of what they suffered as "comfort women." Read also the accounts of the two Japanese veterans who joined them and testified as perpetrators. Learn how they came to take this courageous step.

EXHIBITION ROOM III: Judgment

Learn about the charges, and the verdict that was handed down to high-ranking Japanese military and government officials, as well as the State of Japan. Find out what the judges, prosecutors, expert witness, and survivors had to say at the conclusion of the Women's Tribunal.

PARTITION WALLS: Before (Preparation) and After the Tribunal

Background data on preparations for the Women's Tribunal, and the volunteers who made it happen are introduced here. There are also panels of international and domestic media coverage of the Women's Tribunal, and issues surrounding NHK's sabotage of its own program on the Tribunal.

LIBRARY CORNER:

Reading materials include *Josei Kokusai Senpan-houtei no Zenkiroku* (*The Complete Records of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal*, Volumes I-VI), related books, references, and other information.

VIDEO CORNER:

Video materials available for viewing on the deck here include videotaped records of the Women's Tribunal, video testimonies, and unedited footage covering all stages of the proceedings.

VIDEO SHOWING:

Every hour on the hour starting at noon, our digest version of *Josei Kokusai Senpan-houtei no kiroku* (21 min) is shown on the video monitor.
(Japanese only)