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# **Ramseyer's History Denialism and the Efforts to "Save Ramseyer": Focusing on Critique of "A Response to My Critics" (2022)**

By Sung Hyun Kang<sup>1</sup>

## **Abstract**

This article focuses on Ramseyer's "Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War: A Response to My Critics." Ramseyer did not accept critiques that evaluated his claims, logic, and empirical methods for denialism in document analysis as lacking academic integrity and research sincerity. His response is mostly limited to the issue of "contractual structure at the wartime 'comfort stations,'" and addressing the idea that women were never "forcibly conscripted at gunpoint or hauled away against their will." He continues to argue that women were not "forcibly conscripted" because they agreed on "indentured servitude" contracts based on "credible commitments," which represent "choices" that "reflect the intelligence and resourcefulness of the women." He also emphasizes that "there is no contemporaneous documentary evidence of forcible conscription" based on the fabrication of Yoshida Seiji's book. In doing so, he narrows down the idea of "enforced mobilization" to the term "forcible conscription." Under this framework, history denialists maintain that existing documents do not show proof of forcible conscription, despite examples such as a U.S. army report that clearly states "all of the 23 women became 'comfort girls,' apparently under compulsion and misrepresentation."

Although Ramseyer boasts improved evidence in the 2022 response paper, his list of "evidence" is still full of misappropriations and distortions of official documents from Japan and the U.S. Furthermore, he is presenting inaccurate claims as facts through a circular citation method in which his bibliography relies on history denialists' works that have already been refuted in academia. He even misappropriates testimonies of "comfort women" by cherry-picking quotes, distorting them in his interpretation, and using them against the victims.

This article critically examines his argument, logic, and empirical analysis that are grounded in the abovementioned two frames. I then scrutinize specific examples he empirically analyzed and critically evaluate U.S. military documents he presented as evidence, illuminating his selective appropriation, exaggerative interpretation, generalization errors, and distorted claims. Lastly, I explore the influence that the "Anti-Japanese Tribalism" phenomenon in Korea had on his counterargument, logic, and mechanism and illuminate his

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“circular citation” method which transforms falsity into truth.

**Keywords:** history denialism, Anti-Japanese Tribalism, saving Ramseyer, circular citation

## Introduction

In December 2020, an article by Harvard Professor J. Mark Ramseyer, “Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War,” was published in the online edition of the *International Review of Law and Economics*. As Japanese right-wing media Sankei first reported on the article and related reports spread across South Korea and the United States, Ramseyer’s claims denying the history of Japanese military sexual slavery sparked a major controversy.

“Contracting for Sex” (Ramseyer, 2020) draws from “Comfort Women and Professors,” a paper Ramseyer wrote in March 2019. This paper, in turn, heavily relies on his 1991 paper “Indentured Prostitution in Imperial Japan: Credible Comments in the Commercial Sex Industry.”<sup>2</sup> Conscious of Gordon and Eckert’s criticism, Ramseyer tries to argue that his 1991 paper addressed political and economic contexts and historiographical debate (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 5). However, the core arguments of Ramseyer’s papers written in 1991, 2019, and 2020 remain unchanged. The only added component engages with Korean unlicensed prostitutes’ (*shakufu*) contracts and comfort stations, but the basic hypotheses and explanations have not changed. Park Jung-ae and Onozawa Akane<sup>3</sup>, leading researchers on the state-licensed prostitution system (*kousyousei*) in Korea and Japan, respectively, have analyzed Ramseyer’s argument on the state-licensed prostitution system. According to them, unlike acceptable methods in the social sciences, Ramseyer sets a conclusion and selectively uses data that supports his hypothesis (Onozawa, 2022; Park, 2021, p. 8-16). The data that he draws from include inconclusive, indirect, and insufficient statistical analyses. Nevertheless, Ramseyer jumps to his conclusion.

Ramseyer argues for a “new truth” on the Japanese military “comfort women” system based on discussions of the “indentured servitude contract” and sex industry in pre-war Japan. His “new truth” uses game theory contracts from the 30-year-old New Institutional Economics perspective. Needless to say, his argument does not present new truth. Rather, it resembles the longstanding arguments of history denialists in Korea and Japan. In fact, Ramseyer mirrors the claims of Hata Ikuhito (1999) and Lee Young-hoon et al. (2019), who insisted that the Japanese military “comfort women” system is an extension of the state-licensed prostitution system and the Japanese military’s oversight was limited to managing sexually transmitted diseases. They also maintained that as the manager and “comfort women” freely contracted, any illegality in the contracts were crimes of the managers rather than the responsibility of the Japanese military or government. They claimed that “comfort women” earned high incomes and quit based on free will.

History denialists summon the state-licensed prostitution system to deny the Japanese military “comfort women” system. This denialist approach reflects the Japanese Government’s

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<sup>2</sup> Ramseyer’s 1991 paper can be summarized as follows. In the licensed prostitute (*shōgi*) contracts designed in line with modern Japanese legal regulations (state-licensed prostitution system), the manager and the licensed prostitute pursued their own interests. The law made it obligatory for licensed prostitutes to pay back the advance payment made by the managers and allowed licensed prostitutes to quit when they repaid their debts. Women from impoverished households earned high income by “selling their bodies,” and sought to maximize her profit as she had to face a loss in social status if she became a licensed prostitute. The manager promised her an advance payment large enough to offset a substantial part of her lost status. Through contracts made by credible commitments of both parties, licensed prostitutes could earn higher income than workers in other industries and quitted within the contractual period.

<sup>3</sup> This paper uses the last name-first name order for Korean and Japanese names.

position on the Japanese military "comfort women" issue. It also surfaces in a Sankei Shimbun article published on January 31, 2021, in which Fukui Yoshitaka<sup>4</sup> cites Ramseyer's paper to argue that "comfort women=sexual slavery" is but a mere theory. History denialists in Korea, Japan, and the U.S. have created a logical structure claiming that the Japanese military "comfort women" system was an extension of the state-licensed prostitution system, and as the prostitution system was legal, the Japanese military "comfort women" system was also legal. This logical fallacy demonstrates a lack of understanding not only of the Japanese military "comfort women" system but also of the state-licensed prostitution system. It stems from a lack of critical awareness of the "relationships" in which the state commodified sex (or women's bodies) to maintain security, control morality, and prevent sexually transmitted diseases and the legally managed "system" based on these relationships. A closer look at the actual conditions of the state-licensed prostitution system illuminates that illegal "toleration-regulation" was rampant behind the legal "authorization-regulation." Japan's pre-war state-licensed prostitution system was considered an oppressive sexual slavery system not only in the international community but also in Japan for aggravating the trafficking of women and children, which is prohibited by international law. The state-licensed prostitution system in regions colonized by Imperial Japan was neither addressed by the international community nor by the movement against licensed prostitution in Japan. Researchers in Korea and Japan have noted that the state-licensed prostitution system's legal management of prostitution and the human trafficking system with frequent abductions, fraud, and abuses were opposite sides of the same coin. Hayashi Hirofumi claims that the argument made on what sexual slavery is during Yoshimi Yoshiaki's lawsuit (for defamation against Sakurachi Fumiki, member of the Japanese House of Representatives who claimed that Yoshimi's book was "fabricated") instigated more research highlighting the Japanese military "comfort women" system as well as the pre-war Japanese state-licensed prostitution system as systems of sexual slavery. These include amicus briefs by Abe Kohki, who specializes in international law, and Onozawa Akane, who specializes in the Japanese state-licensed prostitution system, related research that poured out during 2014-2015, and a special issue titled "What is Sexual Slavery" in *The Report on Japan's War Responsibility* (quarterly published by the Center for Research and Documentation Japan's War Responsibility) in June 2015 (Hayashi, 2015).

Critics also challenged Ramseyer's portrayal of the Japanese military's recruitment of "comfort women," the role of managers and the relationship between them and the women, the establishment and management of Japanese military comfort stations (and the Japanese military "comfort women" system), and the nature of free contracts and the ability to quit. Academics across the United States, Australia, Japan, and South Korea noted the article's clear violation of research ethics and misleading claims. However, Ramseyer himself as well as Korean and Japanese denialists who attempted to "come to his rescue" reject such evaluations. They insist that Japanese military sexual slavery is not an established history in academia and Ramseyer's argument is valuable as a different theory. Ramseyer had even pronounced academic critiques of his paper as "acts of scholar-assassins" and "downright Stalinist."<sup>5</sup> Lee Woo-youn, a Korean history denialist who spoke at the same event, claimed that critics of Ramseyer are white people who are unaware of the history of Korea and Japan.

A year later, Ramseyer (2022) attempted to bring forth a counterargument through his

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<sup>4</sup> Fukui Yoshitaka (Professor of Graduate School of International Management, Aoyama Gakuin University, and board member of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea) is a well-known history denialist that Ramseyer thanked in the acknowledgments in his paper.

<sup>5</sup> This remark was made in a video message Ramseyer sent to a symposium titled "Emergency Symposium on the International Historical Controversy over Professor Ramseyer's Article," held on April 24, 2021, by Japanese far-right history denialist groups, International Research Institute of Controversial Histories and Nadeshiko Action.

paper “Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War: A Response to My Critics.” In the paper, he dismisses the works of critics who evaluated his argument, logic, and empirical and interpretative analysis of data as inadequate by academic standards. Ramseyer focuses on the critiques of Gordon and Eckert, Suk Gersen, Stanley et al., and Yoshimi. He chose to respond to Harvard colleagues, “young-ish professors” who he deemed “failed assassins” for their brutal, lengthy and organized criticism, and a Japanese male professor who is the “most prominent scholar in the field of Japanese military ‘comfort women’ system.” In doing so, he disregarded Tessa Morris-Suzuki, a professor of Japanese history at Australian National University, feminist researchers who have studied state-licensed prostitution, Japanese military “comfort women’s” issues over their lifetimes, and Korean researchers who criticized him. These oversights parallel the fact that Ramseyer fails to contend with issues of gender and colonialism in his papers.

In contrast, Korean history denialists who attempted to “save Ramseyer” were heavily cited in this paper. Most of them did not write academic texts that were peer-reviewed or recognized in academic spaces and are publicly notorious for their history of denialist activities and hate speech. Ramseyer is waging a selective war of history by engaging in the “circular citation” of these figures. Notably, this controversy did not emerge unexpectedly. Rather, it is embedded in the “history war” waged by Japanese far-right history denialists and its expansion to the United States, which is deemed the “main battlefield.” The controversy is also an extension of the “collaboration” between history denialists in Korea and Japan, triggered by *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* (Lee et al., 2019), which was published by Korean New Right history denialists. The reproduction of such cross-border collaboration between history denialists underlies the Ramseyer controversy.

“A Response to My Critics” is 65 pages long, but the line of counterargument Ramseyer sets up is rather simple. The article centers on voluntary contracts and the denial of forced conscription. Specifically, he denies forced mobilization and sexual slavery under the frames of “contractual structure at the wartime comfort stations” and “forcibly conscripted at gunpoint or hauled away against their will.”

Section 1 of this paper will critically examine his argument, logic, and empirical analysis grounded in the abovementioned two frames, which he presents as a “descriptive inquiry” rather than a “normative” one. I then scrutinize specific examples he empirically analyzed and critically evaluate U.S. military documents he presented as evidence, illuminating his selective appropriation, exaggerative interpretation, generalization errors, and distorted claims in Section 2. Lastly, in Section 3, I explore the influence of the “Anti-Japanese Tribalism” phenomenon in Korea on his counterargument, logic, and mechanism and illuminate his “circulation citation” method which transforms falsity into truth.

## Content of “A Response to My Critics” and Critique

### *The “Contractual structure at the wartime comfort stations” Frame*

According to Ramseyer, critics noted that contracts for “comfort women” did not exist or were not fair. He refutes this by declaring that contracts did exist and focuses on providing empirical evidence on “comfort women” engaging in “prostitution” work under an economic logic of contracts (such as contracts as a rational choice reflecting the intellect and resourcefulness of the women). While failing to provide an actual “comfort women” contract, Ramseyer uses standard forms of contracts in Japanese official documents as “historical evidence about the contract” to form the basis of his argument. He also emphasizes that the

Japanese government created the "comfort women regime" as an extension of the state-licensed prostitution system in Korea and Japan (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 12). As evidence for this, he presents the terms and conditions of a contract form attached to the document "Matters Concerning the Recruitment of Unlicensed Prostitutes (shakufu) for the Comfort Station Attached to the Army Stationed in Shanghai," sent by the Governor (Chief of prefectural police headquarters) of Ibaraki Prefecture (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 13-15).

Ramseyer is so preoccupied with the evidence of "comfort women" contracts that he overlooks the context and implications of the document. The document issued by the Governor of Ibaraki Prefecture stemmed from the document sent by the Governor of Gunma Prefecture on January 19, 1938. This document notes that agents showed documents (contract, permission note, debt acknowledgment form, and contractual conditions) and recruited women with the goal of "3,000 unlicensed prostitutes who can work at military comfort stations as commissioned by the Expeditionary Army in Shanghai." The document also indicated that "while it is unclear whether they were commissioned by the military, the agents are spreading rumors about matters that are contrary to good customs" and must be "strictly regulated" (Josei no tame no Ajia heiwa kokumin kikin, 1997a, p. 11-21). Cross-checks of other documents regarding recruitment issued between January to February 1938 illuminate the Japanese police authorities' perception of the recruitment of women for comfort stations and the context of the "unlicensed prostitute service contract." For example, according to a document sent by the Governor of Yamagata Prefecture on January 25, 1938, titled "Matters Concerning the Recruitment of Comfort Unlicensed Prostitutes for the North China Expeditionary Army," "2,500 unlicensed prostitutes were to be recruited to render services to the army soldiers" and agents recruited women between the ages of 16-30 and offered a two-year contract with advance payment ranging from 500 to 1,000 yen. The commission fee was 10 percent of the advance payment, which was paid by the military. The Police Office noted that these claims would have a negative impact on the morale of people on the home front and go against the spirit of preventing trafficking in women (kokumin kikin, 1997a, p. 23-24). A document sent by the Governor of Wakayama Prefecture on February 7 titled "Matters Concerning the Alleged Abduction of Women Exploiting the Current Situation" indicates that recruiters were "questioned because they were suspected of abduction" and confessed to their abduction methods (kokumin kikin, 1997a, p. 27-33). In other words, the contracts of women who were forced into military comfort stations can be understood in the context of human trafficking and abduction. According to Appendix III of "A Response to My Critics," Ramseyer also identified these documents but surprisingly focused solely on age, advance payment, and contractual period and presented select information out of context.

"Matters Concerning a Request to Facilitate the Inbound Travel of the 'Comfort Women' for the Imperial Japanese Army," a document sent on December 21, 1937, illustrates the extent of the Japanese military and government's involvement in the establishment of military comfort stations and the recruitment and supervision of "comfort women" beyond the contracts. The document notes that "research has been carried out by multiple relevant institutions regarding ways to comfort soldiers" and military comfort stations resembling official brothels (kashizashiki) were installed in various locations on the battlefield. The Consulate General in Shanghai, the Military Attaché's Office, and the Military Police divided responsibilities such as the provision of permission for operation, background checks on "comfort women" and their contracts, facilitation of their entry, transportation, construction of comfort stations, and STD exams. Private agents were sent to Japan for the recruitment of "comfort women," and the Consulate issued the agents' identification documents (kokumin kikin, 1997a, p. 36-44).

According to the communication between the Consulate General, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Home Affairs, relevant authorities were concerned about

international treaties on the trafficking of women and children and the movement for abolition of licensed prostitution in Japan in their recruitment of “comfort women.” In “Matters Concerning the Management of Women Traveling to China” issued by the head of the Home Ministry Police Affairs Bureau on February 18 and 23, 1938, emphasis is put on “not contravening international treaties on the trafficking of women” and “ensuring that trafficking, seizing, and abduction of women do not take place by investigating service contracts and other relevant issues (kokumin kikin, 1997a, p. 55-75).” According to “Matters Concerning the Recruitment of Female Workers for Military Comfort Stations,” sent by the Ministry of War to the Chief of Staff for the Occupation Forces in Northern and Central China, “caution is needed as there are cases where recruiters were arrested and investigated due to the methods they used that resemble kidnapping” and “the Expeditionary Army shall control future recruitment by selecting the recruiters in a careful manner and communicating the Military Police and the district police in the applicable region where the recruitment takes place” to not create any social issues (kokumin kikin, 1997b, p. 3-7).

The document mentions “caution” and “in a careful manner,” but does not state that recruiters who commit intimidation and kidnapping should be punished. Historian Nagai Kazu argued that documents from the Ministry of Home Affairs “authorized” the recruitment and transfer of “comfort women” and made it mandatory for agents to “conceal” the relationship between the military and comfort stations. Totsuka Etsuro also contended that the police authorities had in reality stipulated measures of impunity for abduction committed for transporting “comfort women” outside the empire, despite claiming to regulate such behaviors (Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2021a, p.14-16).<sup>6</sup>

In colonial Korea, as noted in the Kono statement, headquarters of the Japanese army stationed in Korea (Joseon) supervised the selection of agents for the recruitment of women, and police and local authorities in the regions where recruitment took place participated in this process. The “Implementation Study for the Over-All and Special Programs for Strategic Services Activities Based in China (May, 1945)”<sup>7</sup> by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services noted that many Korean women were sent to government-sponsored comfort stations and comfort stations in China and Manchuria or used as “comfort troops,” adding that the police have condoned the trafficking of Korean women (Seoul National University Institute for Social Development and Policy Research Chung Chin Sung Research Team, 2019, p. 397, 446). In addition, there was little possibility that the Japanese Governor-General of Korea (Joseon), which was directly involved in transferring funds for the mobilization of military “comfort women” through Keijo (Kyungsung) Bank, would punish the recruitment of military “comfort women” officially requested by the military.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Totsuka Etsuro indicated the conviction of the Japanese Supreme Court on March 5, 1937, as the cause of the decision (a case in which 10 Japanese living in Nagasaki, Japan, and Shanghai, China, conspired to kidnap 15 Japanese women and transfer them to the Shanghai Navy comfort station).

<sup>7</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 226, Entry UD 144, Box 29 in the U.S. NARA II.

<sup>8</sup> A ciphertext between the Japanese military and the Japanese colonial government of Korea proves this point. According to the code (S-11414), written on June 4, 1945, Japanese military stationed in Kalkan (now Zhangjikou, Hebei Province, China) sent 76,000 yen from Monggang Bank to Kyungsung Bank on May 5 for the conscription of “comfort women.” However, for whatever reason, the Japanese military requested this money back. Through a code (S-12382) on June 13, the Minister of Finance in the colonial government of Korea responded that the money cannot be returned due to regulations, but that efforts will be put to reach a resolution. On August 6, the colonial government of Korea sent a code (S-14807) indicating that the funds have been received from Japan, and funds equivalent to 10 times the amount remitted on May 1 are to be released in local deposited (Seoul National University Institute for Social Development and Policy Research Chung Chin Sung Research Team, 2019, p. 786-794). The original document is archived at the following location: RG 457, Entry A1 9032, Box 900, 901 in the U.S. NARA II.

Newspaper articles at the time mention the police regulating malicious agents who haul women from rural areas through abduction and fraud (see for example, Donga Ilbo, 1939). Japanese far-right history denialists use these articles as evidence of their claim that the police had regulated the kidnapping of "comfort women" as a criminal act. However, how would they explain the numerous military "comfort women" who were transported from Korea to regions outside of the Japanese Empire through coercion, abduction, and human trafficking? Ramseyer may argue that "comfort women" contracts were not made through abduction or coercion and that transportation of women would have taken place with necessary documents such as contracts and permission notes. However, trial records of the abduction of women for the Lingyuan comfort station in Manchuria, the Nagasaki incident, and the abduction case in Acheng, Manchuria, and media reports on the cases of Ha Yoon-myeong and Bae Jang-un, who were arrested for massive abduction crimes, demonstrate numerous cases of the abduction of "comfort women" for transportation outside the Japanese Empire. Park Jung-ae focuses on the activities of Murakami Tomio, manager of a Navy comfort station. He was sentenced to imprisonment for two years and six months by the Supreme Court on March 5, 1937, for crimes of abduction for transport outside the empire. However, he somehow started managing the Akebono comfort station in Shanghai from 1939 onwards, when he should have still been imprisoned, and the Japanese military continued to trust him. His background directly violated the instructions issued by the Ministry of War on March 4, 1938, but this did not present any issues (Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2021a, p. 23-24).

Ramseyer selectively appropriated and distorted not only Japanese official documents but also survivors' testimonies to argue that "comfort women" contracts exist. He cited Lee Woo-youn to narrowly define Hyun Byung-sook's testimony as an example of a "comfort woman" negotiating contractual conditions with a private agent. He wrote that Hyun went to an agent in Pakchon, North Pyongan Province, Korea, at age 16 and negotiated a 3-year contractual period and payment of 3,000 yen, for which she received parental consent and seal (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 9). Mixing Hyun's testimony and Lee's distorted commentary, Ramseyer wrote as if this scene entails a "comfort woman" contract. However, the recounted story took place in 1934, when Hyun went to Jinjou, Liaoning Province, Manchuria, at the introduction of the agent to work as a prostitute.

Hyun moved to an inn in Fengtian (Bongchun), Liaoning Province, Manchuria, where she seems to have met a military comfort station manager. She was sent to a comfort station in Bengbu, Anhui Province, following the Japanese military troops. This troop fought fierce battles across Anhui and Jiangxi Provinces, and Hyun vividly testified to the inescapable terrible situation at the time. Her testimonial describes situations where she was forced to suffer even though she cried in pain and her witnessing other "comfort women" survive on opium and commit suicide (The Korean Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery, 2003). However, Ramseyer and Lee did not mention any of these accounts. The international human rights regime understands women in such situations as victims of "[en]forced prostitution" victimized under "systemic rape" and "sexual slavery" based on continued coercion, but Lee and Ramseyer disregarded these understandings and narrowed the issue to that of "contract," focusing on the voluntary will of women and arguing that soldiers and citizens all had to endure difficult times. More specifically, they attended only to the reselling of the advance payment to the agent she met in Fengtian and situate the trafficking of Hyun (her body) under the frame of contracts without any critical awareness (Ramseyer, 2022). Lee (2021) maintained that while human trafficking is illegal, "miuri (身売り), selling women's bodies" was legal and the advance payment was a bond that needed to be returned to the agent. Ramseyer's perspective is no different from that of Lee.

Next, in response to the criticism that "comfort women" contracts were not just, Ramseyer (2022) argues that he is not making any normative claims "about whether the



contract is fair or just” (p. 3) and that women knew that agents or managers may be engaging in job fraud. For example, Ramseyer (2022) mentioned Yoshimi’s criticism that the contracts were “a form of human trafficking and not legitimate contracts in ordinary civil society,” and highlighted that his descriptive inquiry did not take any position on the legitimacy of the contract (p. 44). Ramseyer extracts “legitimate” from Yoshimi’s descriptions of the contracts being “not a legitimate contract” and conceptualizes this as a “normative” argument that is neither empirical, descriptive, nor in other words, academic. However, Yoshimi’s criticism pointed out that human trafficking cannot be disguised under contracts, and Ramseyer’s postulation of women’s voluntary will and rational choices as illustrating their intellect and resourcefulness does not reflect the reality.

### ***The “Forcibly conscripted at gunpoint or hauled away against their will” Frame***

Ramseyer emphasizes that his critics cling to the myth of women being forcibly conscripted at gunpoint but lack supporting evidence. He also posits that the testimonies of victims that could serve as evidence are not credible. While acknowledging that there may be cases of fraud by recruitment agents and abuse by managers, Ramseyer follows up with the logic that women demand a large advance payment to offset the risk of being deceived.

Ramseyer (2022) claims that the explanations of Gordon (2003) and Eckert (1996) are false as they relied on George Hicks (1994). According to Ramseyer, Hicks drew explicitly and extensively from Seiji Yoshida’s fabricated story, and Gordon and Eckert relied on the fabrications (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 11, 16).

It is true that Hata, a Japanese history denialist, criticized Yoshida’s description of the slave hunt of women on Jeju Island, and that Asahi Shimbun canceled 16 articles that cited Yoshida’s testimonies, which were determined to be false. It is important to point out, however, that history denialists deny not only forced mobilization based on direct violence such as physical force, intimidation, and coercion, but also enforced mobilization, which refers to systemic violence enacted by legal systems, government policies, and orders from military superiors that force people to follow or endure certain acts (Yang, 2021, p. 110-111).<sup>9</sup> Former Japanese Prime Minister Abe also tended to focus on the physical abduction of women from their homes. The falsehood of Yoshida’s testimony has become the overused base of history denialism on the Japanese military “comfort women” issue.

The activities and report of the third-party committee established by Asahi Shimbun on October 2, 2014, which was tasked with reevaluating the newspaper’s articles on the Japanese military “comfort women” issue, are notable in this regard. Seven experts, including former Chief of Appellate Court, professors, and journalists, wrote the report.<sup>10</sup> Hatano Sumio, professor emeritus of Tsukuba University, and Hayashi Kaori, professor at the University of Tokyo, evaluated that Yoshida’s testimony was not given much attention or authority. They also pointed out that since the Yoshida testimony was not adopted as evidence supporting the Kono Statement, calls for the withdrawal of the Kono statement based on the falsehood of Yoshida’s testimony were unfounded. They made it clear that the influence of Yoshida’s

<sup>9</sup> The International Criminal Court also differentiates between ‘forced’ and ‘enforced’ mobilization.

<sup>10</sup> The report is 110 pages long, with 53 pages of appendix materials related to international reports. The summary is 40 pages long. It covered the background of each report on the “comfort women” issue, details on the process of writing the August special report and follow-up measures, the cancellation of the opinion piece, and the impact in international community. Regarding the falsity of Yoshida’s testimony, the report pointed out that the article was published without adequate investigation, and that passive responses that decreased mentions of Yoshida’s testimonies were made even though the authenticity of the testimonies was raised within the company. Asahishinbunsha daisansha iinkai, *Houkokusho* (2014, December 22). <https://www.asahi.com/shimbun/3rd/3rd.html>

testimony was limited.

Ramseyer claimed that Yoshida's testimony had a great influence on the forcibly conscripted Korean "comfort women" narrative, but the impact was minimal in Korean media. A brief report was made on Yoshida's testimony on June 23, 1983 (Chosun Ilbo, 1983). The Korean version of his book was published in August 1989 (Yoshida, 1989), which was reported by a simple introductory news article. Yoshida's testimony was broadcasted more significantly in Korean media from November 1991 to 1992, after Kim Hak-soon's first public testimony. Yoshida's testimony was highlighted in Korean media when the first Wednesday Demonstration was held in January 1992.<sup>11</sup>

The start of the forcibly conscripted Korean "comfort women" narrative goes back even further. Forced mobilization is portrayed in Chosun Ilbo's articles shortly after Korea's independence in 1945 and the establishment of the South Korean government in 1948.<sup>12</sup> A Kyunghyang Shinmun opinion piece written by Song Kun-ho on August 14, 1963, indicated that customs of early marriage prevailed due to the "so-called conscription of women" and "taking away unmarried women to the battlefronts to force them to serve as comfort women." According to materials from the Japanese Governor-General of Korea (Police Bureau and Legal Bureau), court rulings, and media reports on the control of rumors during wartime, rumors related to the forced mobilization of Japanese military "comfort women" expanded significantly throughout the country from 1938 to 1941. This equates with the time when the Japanese military expanded the establishment of comfort stations. For instance, in 1938, widespread rumors included: "girls between 16 to 20 years of age and widows between 16 to 30 years of age were forcibly mobilized for the comfort of soldiers and sent to battlefields, where they cleaned and cooked during the day and forced to sex with soldiers at night" and "3,000 girls aged 15 to 16 in Japan were recruited and sent to battlefields, but more women are needed so 3,000 Korean women will be forcibly conscripted and sent to the battlefields. Girls should be married as soon as possible" (Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2021b, p. 16-17). On February 17, 1965, just before the signing of the Treaty on Basic Relations and Claims Agreement between Republic of Korea and Japan, Ku Sung-seo, President of the Association of the Descendants of the Independence Movement Martyrs, wrote an article in Kyunghyang Shinmun condemning the "abduction and conscription of unmarried women under the pretenses of Chongsindae (Teisintai, Women's Labor Corps) to make them serve as 'comfort women'" (Ku, 1965, p. 1). Similar, although not many, articles about Japanese military "comfort women" were published between the 1960s and the 1980s. Articles about "comfort women" movies and documentaries were reported in the 1970s, and articles covering the distortion of Japanese history textbooks and "comfort women" victim No Su-bok's search for family members in Korea were reported in the 1980s. As seen in these examples, the forcibly conscripted Korean "comfort women" narrative was built on multiple stories over time, rather than solely originating from Yoshida's testimony. Thus, Ramseyer's allegation that the forcibly conscripted Korean "comfort women" narrative was created due to Yoshida's testimony is not true.

Furthermore, in writing about the documentary film "Okinawa no Harumoni" by Yamatani Tetsuo, which was displayed on a screening tour in multiple Japanese cities during

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<sup>11</sup> Further investigation could be made on the impact that the introduction of Yoshida's testimony in the third series of Professor Yun Chung-ok's "Along the Footsteps of the 'Comfort Women'" had on Korean "comfort women" movement. However, Ramseyer's minimization of the forcibly conscripted Korean "comfort women" narrative solely as the after-effect of Yoshida's testimony is a distortion (Yun, 1990).

<sup>12</sup> "We are still in despair by the fact that our sisters, who were impoverished and uneducated during the Sino-Japanese war, were forced as Japanese military 'comfort women' by deceit." (Chosun Ilbo, 1946, p. 2). An article published right after the establishment of the South Korean government also mentions "comfort women" mobilization. (Chosun Ilbo, 1948, p. 2).

September 12-27, 1979, Ramseyer introduced it as “a Japanese Documentary about prostitutes (not coerced in Okinawa)” while it, in fact, contained testimony by a military “comfort woman” in Okinawa (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 20). Ramseyer does not seem to be aware of how the Korean media had introduced this film.

Some of ‘*teisintai*’ recruited by the Japanese military were Japanese women, but most of them had experienced sexually transmitted diseases from the state-licensed prostitution system. As such, Korean women who were ‘young, healthy, and unlikely to have sexually transmitted diseases’ were mobilized. Their numbers are roughly estimated to be around 70,000 to 200,000. Most of them were from poor rural areas and were conscripted, many under coercion, to places like China, Southeast Asia, Okinawa, etc. to forcibly serve until Japan’s defeat (Donga Ilbo, 1979, p. 5).

To summarize, Ramseyer’s claim that “the post war Korean newspapers did not discuss bayonet point dragooning under the Japanese occupation” is false and distorted (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 20).

Nevertheless, Ramseyer continues to evoke Yoshida’s testimony in his attempts to counter existing scholarly works. For instance, he argues that UN special rapporteur Radhika Coomaraswamy’s report “explicitly relied on Yoshida’s fictitious account” (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 17). He even quotes C. Sarah Soh (2008) to claim that “Yoshida’s work served as a crucial resource for international human rights activists and the United Nations as they constructed the paradigmatic comfort women story” (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 17). However, the Coomaraswamy report only cites Yoshida’s book once in a sentence in paragraph 29, and in paragraph 40, she introduces Hata’s rebuttal over several sentences. The prevailing evaluation of the Coomaraswamy report in academia lauds its comprehensive review of testimonies by soldiers and victim-survivors, researchers, governments, and civil organizations, despite the limited discovery of official documents at the time.

Ramseyer cites Joseph Yi (2018) to claim that “prevailing narrative of abductions is based on the oral testimonies of a small number of women (16 of 238 registered survivors in 1990s), associated with activist organizations,” but this is clearly a false claim. A statistical report on Japanese military “comfort women” testimonies published in 2001 conducted a survey of 192 out of 203 women who were registered to the Korean government as of December 2001. The poll consisted of 89 main questions and 250 sub-questions, excluding individual variants. According to this study, recruiters were identified as Korean private agents (64 cases), soldiers or military personnel (45 cases), policemen (45 cases), Japanese private agents (35 cases), and heads of village (17 cases), demonstrating that state agency had played a large role. Women were recruited through job fraud (98 cases), abduction (65 cases), and pressures by military or government (48 cases) (The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan War and Women’s Human Rights Center & Ministry of Gender Equality, 2001).

Historical denialists including Ramseyer completely ignore research on “comfort women” testimonies accumulated in Korea and Japan. Ramseyer forces the “forcibly conscripted” frame onto victim-survivors’ testimonies, claiming that the testimonies cannot qualify as objective evidence due to inconsistencies and lies. Hata and Soh made similar arguments, claiming that “Western scholars” have not verified the credibility of victims’ testimonies. Questioning the authenticity of testimonies for “inconsistencies” in victims’ memories or refusing to acknowledge testimonies as historical materials for their lack of “objective truth” represent a typical logic of denial. Denialists demand empirical evidence and documents proving victimization. This is a common pattern of revictimization by perpetrators of sexual violence and their sympathizers.

Ramseyer's argument shows that he and history denialists do not understand the academic methodology of oral history of victims' testimonies. Memories may be unclear, and information may be limited or absent given that the victimization happened a long ago. Testimonies are constructive and may not be consistent. What is clear, though, is that some Japanese military "comfort women" victim-survivors have started truth-seeking journeys as they turned experiences of suffering into memories and expressed them verbally and in writing through their efforts and the support of activists, experts, and citizens who listened to their voices. Rather than hastily defining changes in memories or words as lies, academic approaches to oral histories and testimonies should attempt to understand why and in what context such changes have taken place. Scholars can conduct cross-analyses with other victims' testimonies and relevant documents to complement the authenticity of the testimonies and uphold academic integrity. However, Ramseyer stigmatizes victims as "untrustworthy" and places them under political framing akin to McCarthyist mechanisms. Ramseyer selectively appropriates and distorts testimonies to benefit his argument in a way that dishonors the testifiers' intentions. Having appropriated Moon Ok-ju's testimony in his 2020 paper, Ramseyer (2022) similarly distorts Hyun Byung-sook's voice in his most recent "A Response to My Critics" paper.

### **Critique of Ramseyer's "Empirical Analysis for Denialism"**

Sociologist Stanley Cohen (2009) discussed three types of denial of state violence and state-enacted human rights violations. The first is literal denial, which denies the fact itself. To put it simply, this type would deny that the incident had taken place. The second is interpretive denial. This type interprets the incident in a different way to deny that it was state violence or a violation of human rights. The incident would be acknowledged as having happened, but it would be presented in a particular denialist interpretation. The third is implicatory denial, which denies the political, psychological, and moral implications of the incident. While the incident is understood as having taken place, it is not seen as a heartbreaking or urgent matter to be addressed. This denial dismisses the incident as inevitable or insignificant in comparison to other worse incidents. Implicatory denial at its extreme can be abrasive.

History denialism on the Japanese military "comfort women" issue started with literal denial and has more recently developed in a form that combines interpretive denial and implicatory denial. History denialists intentionally create distorted interpretations by selectively appropriating and manipulating sources. When such mechanisms become somewhat successful, the denialists proceed to strengthen implicatory denial. Ramseyer is accomplished in putting an academic façade to denial.

Jihyun Lim, who conceptualized "positivism for denial," points out that "the biggest paradox of denialism lies in the fact that those who have silenced historical evidence claim to be strict positivists" (Lim, 2019, p. 35). They call for the presentation of evidence because they are convinced that there is none. To history denialists, positivism is a mechanism that "is evoked to create an intentional impression that victims' memories are inaccurate, politically distorted, or manipulated" (Lim, 2019, p. 35) rather than to uphold facts.

History denialists including Ramseyer list various statistics as evidence, putting on the pretense of empirical scholarship and arguing that their claims are true. However, they omit certain sources and arbitrarily interpret other sources to advance their arguments, thus distorting the truth. Careful consideration is needed when discussing "basic facts" based on statistics. Figures should be understood and analyzed in the context of who examines and defines data and how data is categorized. For example, statistics produced under specific reasons for the Japanese colonial government should be critically used with cross-analysis of comparable data. History denialists ignore such contexts and selectively omit unfavorable statistics, distorting the reality. They use teleological errors and generalization errors to support their intended argument (Kang, 2020, p. 73).

In interpreting official documents, history denialists select sentences and words that support their cause rather than critically examining the background and context of the document. They exaggerate, generalize, and even distort selected content for their purpose. “Empirical analysis,” which history denialists underscore ever so often, should not be conducted in their ways. To properly analyze documents, it is necessary to understand and analyze the contexts of the document such as the author, the organization where the author worked, the document’s purpose, whether the awareness and understanding reflected in the document were limited to the author or shared by the organization, the potential use of the document, and whether the document was utilized. Only then can the value and validity of the information described in the document and the authenticity of its contents be evaluated (Kang, 2020, p. 135-136). Ramseyer’s positivism for denial is far from such an academic methodology.

I will now examine Ramseyer’s mechanism of positivism for denial in his reading of official documents. Reexamining U.S. military documents that Ramseyer presented as evidence, I will illuminate his mechanisms of selective appropriation, overinterpretation, generalization, and distorted claims.

***Composite Report on Three Korean Navy Civilians - list no.78 dated 28 Mar 45, RE “Special Questions on Koreans” (National Institute of Korean History, 2021, p. 692-696)***<sup>13</sup>

Ramseyer (2022) argues based on answer 18 of this Composite Report that in April 1945, “three Korean prisoners of war indirectly made the same point about the inevitability of contemporaneous corroboration of any dragooning” (p. 20). The answer noted that “All Korean prostitutes were volunteers or had been sold by their parents into prostitution. ... direct conscription of women by the Japanese would be an outrage that the old and young alike would not tolerate. Men would rise up in a rage, killing Japanese no matter what consequence they might suffer” (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 20-21).

To evaluate this answer, we need to analyze the contexts of the creation of “Special Questions on Koreans”<sup>14</sup> (Chung, 2018a, p. 455-465), the content of question 18, and information on the U.S. interrogation officer who wrote the Composite Report and the original responses of the three Korean prisoners of war.<sup>15</sup>

The U.S. Military established a Joint Intelligence Center (hereinafter JIC) for the Navy and Army on May 15, 1942, and interrogated Korean prisoners at Camp Honolulu in Hawaii, then Camp Angel Island and Camp Tracy in California, after which they were sent to Camp McCoy in Wisconsin. Noting that “a special interest in Korea and in Koreans has been activated recently,” JIC instructs the classification of prisoners based on their willingness to “possibly volunteer to collaborate with U.S. Forces” and the interrogation of thirty special interrogation questions to these prisoners. The special questions cover Korean labor conscription by Imperial Japan (Questions 3, 5, 6), food production and distribution (Questions 7, 8, 10), and Japanese military conscription and the issue of so-called “volunteer system” (Questions 12, 13, 14, 15). Question 18 asks whether the Korean prisoners knew of Japan’s recruitment of Korean

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<sup>13</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 165, Entry P 179D, Box 767 in the U.S. NARA II.

<sup>14</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 165, Entry NM 84 177, Box 908 in the U.S. NARA II.

<sup>15</sup> This document has been found and unveiled to the world by myself and the Research Team led by Professor Chung Chin-sung of Seoul National University, and Professor Asano Toyomi of Waseda University. A media report covering the discovery of these documents was aired on KBS News on February 27, 2015, and The Mainichi published relevant articles on June 10, 2016.

"comfort women":

18. Do Koreans generally know about the recruitment of Korean girls by the Japanese Army to serve as prostitutes? What is the attitude of the average Korean toward this program? Does P/W know of any disturbances or friction which has grown out of this program?

Ramseyer cites what Lt. Wilson has summarized from the answers of three Korean NAVI civilians, LEE Bok-Do, PAIK Song-Kun, and KANG Ki-Han. A cross-check of each individual's interrogation report is necessary to evaluate the reliability of answers given by the three prisoners on the recruitment of "comfort women." LEE Bok-Do was born in South Gyeongsang Province, Korea in 1925 and left Korea after finishing elementary school to attend middle school in Osaka for five years. He was traveling around Karafuto and Honshu since 1940 and was drafted in April 1944. He was assigned to the Naval Construction Unit and was captured on August 4, 1944, at Tinian Island. Given this background information, he may not have known the specific details of the recruitment and transfer of Korean "comfort women."

The individual interrogation reports of PAIK Song-Kun and KANG Ki-Han have not been uncovered thus far. The special questions may have been asked to roughly 100 Korean prisoners. KIM Ki-Yon's interrogation report is one of the sources that has been found. Kim was born in North Jeolla Province, Korea in 1920 and lived his entire life as an uneducated farmer in Sunchang County before being conscripted. He provided answers to other parts of the list of special questions, but not to the question on "comfort women." Even if Korean prisoners of war resided within Korea before being conscripted, they may not have been precisely aware of the Japanese military "comfort women" system if they did not know of acquaintances who were forcibly mobilized. As illustrated earlier, the Japanese Government General of Korea attempted to block information regarding the recruitment of military "comfort women" by controlling rumors. A "comfort woman" victim who had been to a military comfort station in Nanjing was punished for spreading rumors in September 1939, when in fact she had recounted her actual sufferings (Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2021b, p. 16-19).

Regardless of the prisoners' answers, U.S. military intelligence organizations such as the Allied Translator and Interpretation Section (ATIS), Office of War Information (OWI), Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and Southeast Asia Translation and Interrogation Center (SEATIC) gradually came to understand the realities of the military "comfort women" system through interrogations and acquired sources. From 1944 onwards, they attempted to use the issue in waging psychological warfare against Japan. They hoped to draw anger among Koreans living in Japan, Korea, Manchuria, and China and instigate unrest and rebellion. The U.S. military expected to find relevant information in the answers of Korean soldiers. In Manchuria and China, psychological warfare against Japan on the "comfort women" issue was executed through the distribution of leaflets and broadcasting on underground radios. A report written by the U.S. OSS in May 1945 to present information and suggestions for psychological warfare in China and Korea include the following information under the titles "Degradation under Japanese Rule" and "Koreans as Targets of Morale Operations":

The Korean resent the government-sponsored brothels and the fact that large numbers of Korean girls are sent to brothels in Manchuria and China or are used as 'comfort troops.' The Police connive in this trade in Korean girls."

"Resentment against extensive use of Korean girls as 'comfort troops' (Seoul National University Institute for Social Development and Policy Research Chung Chin Sung Research Team, 2019, p. 397, 446).

In summary, the U.S. government and military were aware of the forced conscription of Korean “comfort women” and planned to use this as the subject of psychological warfare to infuriate the Koreans.

*Amenities in the Japanese Armed Force - Research Report no.120 (National Institute of Korean History, 2017, p. 352-393)*<sup>16</sup>

Ramseyer uses this U.S. military research report as evidence of “comfort women” contracts. He cites sentences from the “b. Burma” category that discusses the contractual terms of 22 Korean “comfort women” at Kyoei comfort station who were transported with the 114<sup>th</sup> regiment of the 18<sup>th</sup> Division in the Japanese army, moving along Goungoo → Meiktila → Maymyo → Myitkyina. The terms included advance payments of 300-1,000 yen, ages between 19-31, provided with 50% of total income, free passage, free food, and free medical treatment.

Notably, Ramseyer does not cite the following facts: “The passage and medical treatment were provided by the Army authorities, the food was purchased by the brothel owner with the assistance of the Army supply depots. The owners made other profits by selling clothing, necessities, and luxuries to the girls at exorbitant charges” (National Institute of Korean History, 2017, p. 375). Most importantly, he intentionally ignores the following crucial information:

When a girl is able to repay the sum of money paid to her family, plus interest, she should be provided with a free return passage to Korea, and then considered free. **But owing to war conditions, no one of prisoner of war’s group had so far been allowed to leave;** although in June 1943, 15 Army Headquarters had arranged to return home those girls who were free from debt, and **one girl who fulfilled these conditions and wished to return was easily persuaded to remain** (National Institute of Korean History, 2017, p. 375) [Emphasis added by the author]

The same point is explicitly discussed in Yoshimi Yoshiaki’s criticism (Yoshimi, 2022, p. 14). Yoshimi, though, cites “South-East Asia Translation and Interrogation Center Psychological Warfare Interrogation Bulletin No. 2 (hereinafter SEATIC Bulletin no.2)” as his evidence (SEATIC, 1944). This is because the section on Burma in Amenities Research Report no.120 replicates “9. A Japanese Army Brothel in the forward area” on SEATIC Bulletin no.2 word-by-word. Ramseyer uses “Japanese Prisoner of War Interrogation Report No.49” (hereinafter Yorichi Report) (OWI Psychological Warfare Team, 1944, as cited in National Institute of Korean History, 2021, p. 508-514), written by Alex Yorichi, member of U.S. OWI Psychological Warfare Ledo Team, to counter Yoshimi’s critique. Citing the source, Ramseyer suggests that the army ordered women who paid their debts to return home in 1943 and some women were allowed to return to Korea. This, however, is not true. The Yorichi Report was written on October 1, 1944, based on interrogations with twenty Korean “comfort women” who were at Kyoei comfort station, and the SEATIC Bulletin no.2 report was written later on November 30, 1944, based on interrogations of the comfort station manager Kitamura and his wife. The managers knew more accurately about whether “comfort women” in Burma were able to freely exit.

The U.S. OWI Psychological Warfare team and the Allied Forces SEATIC linked their activities at Southeast Asia Theater. SEATIC itself was an intelligence organization created in

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<sup>16</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 554, Entry 143(A1), Box 479 and RG 165, Entry 79, Box 342 in the U.S. NARA II.

cooperation with the British Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center (India) and the Nisei U.S. military intelligence soldiers. SEATIC Bulletin no.2 could refer to consolidated reports produced by CSDIC(I) on the "comfort women" issue. Above all, this research report could be produced through joint interrogation with the OWI Psychological Warfare team. In addition to information about "a Japanese Army Brothel in the forward area," the report includes detailed information on Colonel Maruyama, who led the 114<sup>th</sup> regiment where the Kyoei comfort station was assigned. SEATIC Bulletin no.2 and Yorichi Report should be cross-checked and comprehensively analyzed as SEATIC Bulletin no.2 includes specific information that the Yorichi Report did not include, and the two reports differ in some respects. The fact that the Yorichi Report reflects Alex Yorichi's awareness and prejudices and is written in an intentionally sensationalized manner<sup>17</sup> gives strength to the necessity of the comparative analysis.

In this context, it is telling that Amenities Research Report no.120 includes SEATIC Bulletin no.2, rather than the Yorichi Report, as the source about comfort stations in Burma. Amenities Research Report no.120 was first written on February 16, 1945, and revised and resubmitted on November 15, after the war ended. The report was one of the most significant written by the Allied Translation and Interpretation Section and was reported to Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). The February and the November editions differ in their writings on comfort stations. The November edition includes more extensive descriptions of comfort stations and acquired documents from the Japanese military demonstrating the provisions for the establishment and operation of comfort stations are attached as an appendix. According to Kim Deuk-jung and Hwang Byung-joo, who discovered the February edition, detailed information on the status quo of the Japanese military was needed as fierce battles continued, and the February edition was authored to compile information for various military strategies, including psychological warfare. This led to the creation and distribution of propaganda leaflets on the "comfort women" issue by the Allied Forces. On the contrary, the November edition was written after the war ended to provide the necessary information on post-war processes. Kim and Hwang discuss the significance of the November edition as a source to prepare for war criminal trials by the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Forces. The publication of the November edition and the Nuremberg Trials took place at similar times. As well known, the Tokyo Tribunal (International Military Tribunal for the Far East) only addressed crimes against peace, and the Japanese military "comfort women" issue as a crime against humanity was mostly excluded. Only some materials about navy comfort station in Borneo, west of the Dutch East Indies, and recruitment of "comfort women" to serve in an army comfort station in Guilin, China, were submitted. The only instance where the military "comfort women" issue was addressed during the tribunal was in Batavia, Dutch East Indies. This pertains to the case of Semarang, for which prosecution and trial took place because white women were forced as Japanese military "comfort women." Details of the case were relatively comprehensively revealed. Racism and colonialism, alongside the start of the post-Cold War, intertwined in the judicial resolution of the sufferings of "comfort women."

The following U.S. military documents I examine were not used or cited by Ramseyer but demonstrate how "comfort women" were forcibly taken to the battlefields and abandoned.

***Korean and Japanese Prisoner of War in Kunming, China 1945.4.28. (Seoul National University Institute for Social Development and Policy Research Chung***

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<sup>17</sup> Karl Yoneda, a colleague at the Ledo Team, said "Even the commanding headquarter officers were asking to read the report. A lot of people commented that if the report were to be published, it would be a bestseller and Yorichi would be rich" (Yoneda, 1989, p. 109-110).



*Chin Sung Research Team, 2019, p. 38-57*) 18

This report was written on April 28, 1944, after OSS interrogated Korean “comfort women” who were detained in the prisoner of war compounds installed in Yunnan K’un Hwa Middle School. 23 “comfort women” were captured as prisoners of U.S.-China Allied Forces, including 10 who survived from Sungshan, Yunnan Province, China, and 13 who survived from Tengchung, Yunnan Province, China. Alongside Major Joseph E. Spencer, Captain Robert C. Matthews Jr., and Susumu E. Kazahaya, Koreans who were dispatched to OSS – Dr. Choi S.W., Kim Woo-jeon (Adjutant to General Kim Hak-kyu of the Korean Liberation Army), and Jung Yoon-sung – participated in the interrogation. The report documents that “all of the 23 women became ‘comfort girls’, apparently under compulsion and misrepresentation.” 15 of them were recruited through fraudulent advertisements in Korean newspapers seeking women to work in Japanese factories in Singapore and left Korea in July 1943. At least 300 women who were sent on the dispatch to Southeast Asia with them were similarly recruited through fraud. The document presents a list of personal information, including departure date from Korea, hometown, name, and age of the Korean “comfort women” who became prisoners of war. Notably, the list includes the names of Park Young-shim and Yoon Kyung-ae. Park confirmed and testified that the pregnant “comfort woman” in a picture was herself during the 2000 International Women’s War Crimes Tribunal on Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery held in Tokyo in December 2000. Yoon was confirmed as residing in North Korea as of 2003. Had the other 23 women returned to Korea and their hometowns? It is well known that Kim Woo-jeon sent them to the Korean independence army in Chongqing. To women at the time, “returning” was not to be taken for granted. Women who thought that “their bodies have been soiled” could not return home. Even upon returning to Korea, some lived in an unfamiliar place, unable to return home. Even if they had returned home as Park Young-shim did, they had to hide their “comfort women” past.

Park Young-shim and Yoon Kyung-ae were taken as prisoners of war by the Allied Forces, but they survived on the verge of death. A still picture,<sup>19</sup> known as a “pregnant comfort woman,” captured this moment. In 2017 and 2020, two footage films that could be compared to the picture and testimonies of victim-survivors Park and Yoon were found and released.<sup>20</sup>

In Sungshan and Tengchung, so-called “lockdown” battles took place under orders to defend and die together. “Comfort women” and other civilians were killed, and their bodies were left in masses. Some were killed due to attacks by the U.S. and China Allied Forces, but “comfort women” massacres by Japanese military also took place. In Sungshan, Private C. H. Hatfield, a photographer in the U.S. military 164th Signal Photo Company Det B captured the scenes and Private F.D. Manwarren captured still pictures in Tengchung. Several relevant documents from the U.S. and China Allied Forces, such as G-2 daily reports and G-3 daily diaries, were discovered along with a footage film filmed by a video cameraman. I will briefly introduce “G-3 Daily Diary Sept. 15, 1944.”<sup>21</sup> A report by the Chinese 54<sup>th</sup> Army made on 18:55, September 14, which was recorded in the operation diary of September 15, stated that

<sup>18</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 226, Entry A1 154, Box 185 in the U.S. NARA II.

<sup>19</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 111-SC 230147(CBI-44-29969) in the U.S. NARA II.

<sup>20</sup> The discovery of U.S. footage film (RG 111-ADC-9706) and the release of 18 second video clips by Kang Sung hyun and Chung Chin Sung Research Team on July 5, 2017, were broadcasted by the Washington and other global media outlets (Taylor, 2017). On May 28, a footage film featuring Park Young-shim and others being captured by the U.S.-China Allied Forces in Sungshan trench was released by KBS Documentary Insight Team of Korea.

<sup>21</sup> The original document is archived at the following location: RG 493, Entry UD-UP 513, Box 7 in the U.S. NARA II.

"night of the 13th the Japs shot 30 Korean girls in the city," the night before the fall of Tengchung (Chung, 2018b, p. 169). The death of "comfort women" was mentioned several times in information and operation diaries before this date, but the operation diary of September 15 is notable in specifying the subject and method of the massacre (see Kang, 2019).

## **The Influence of Korean New Right's "Anti-Japanese Tribalism" and Post-truth "Circular Citation"**

### ***The Transnational Expansion and Influence of Anti-Japanese Tribalism***

To contextualize Ramseyer's arguments in the rising network of global history denialism on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue, I turn to *Anti-Japanese Tribalism*, a book representing history denialist views similar to that of Ramseyer. *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* was published in Korea in July 2019, and the Japanese version was published in November of that year. With more than 100,000 copies sold in Korea and 400,000 copies sold in Japan over two months, the book started as a "right-wing bestseller" phenomenon. However, the popularity quickly made its way into waging history wars with the help of new media technology such as YouTube. As these outlets are quickly and widely viewed and transnationally subscribed, the network of history denialism in Korea, Japan, and the United States has expanded extensively. Perhaps due to new media technology and the influence of online platforms, the network seems more dramatic than the solidarity between international denialists of the Holocaust.

The term "Anti-Japanese Tribalism" was coined by the book's authors, Lee Young-hoon et al. (2019), to claim that Koreans are bound by a culture of lies, naked materialism and shamanism and express tribal hostility towards neighboring Japan. The authors of *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* reject being positioned as victims of war and colonialism and fully assimilate themselves into the Japanese imperialists' perpetrator gaze. They believe that pro-Japan is equated with patriotism, pro-U.S., anti-North Korea, and anti-China.

The *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* phenomenon is a large-scale backlash organized by Korean and Japanese history denialists. In May 2020, history denialism and hatred of the Korean Council and Japanese military "comfort woman" victim Lee Yong-soo spread widely. A sequel to *Anti-Japanese Tribalism*, titled *Fight Against Anti-Japanese Tribalism*, was published in commemoration of the May 16<sup>th</sup> military coup in which Park Chung-hee had taken authoritarian control over Korea. The intentional organizing of the New Right and history denialists extended to attacks against the Korean Council and its former representative Yoon Mee-hyang. Alt-right media that reported fake news on this incident as well as right-wing newspaper articles reenacted the language, logic, and mechanism of *Anti-Japanese Tribalism*. Korean media reports demonstrated a level of understanding at par with *Anti-Japanese Tribalism*, which claimed that "to fulfill their ambitions and keep their jobs, the Korean Council" "disregarded the stories of individuals," staged protests while positioning "comfort women" as "the holy women of the nation," and "reigned as authoritative power that no one could dare standing against" (Lee et al., 2019, p. 337-338). These articles were published in Japan in the Japanese edition of Korean newspapers. The far-right Japanese media who relied on these articles extended the issue beyond Yoon Mee-hyang, the Korean Council, and Lee Yong-soo and broadcasted them as factual evidence to justify denial and hatred against the 30-year movement on the Japanese military "comfort women" issue. Korean right-wing media, in turn, copied these reports in the form of opinion pieces written by foreign correspondents in Japan. As a result, fake news full of denial and hatred were broadcasted as truth.

Ramseyer indicated his McCarthyist awareness in the "Comfort Women and Professors" (2019) paper, where he wrote that the "anti-Japanese" campaign of the Korean Council and Yoon Mee-hyang is rumored to have deep "North Korea" connections. This

awareness continues into “A Response for My Critics,” in which he mentions allegations of donation fraud against Yoon Mee-hyang (the trial is ongoing) based on the 2020 controversy (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 22). He even insists that “Yi Yong-su[Lee Yong-soo] publicly accused Yoon Mee-hyang” and Yoon took revenge by exposing Lee for “having fabricated her entire life history” as a “comfort woman” (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 18). Ramseyer’s arguments on the Korean Council and Yoon Mee-hyang are filled with factual errors and distortions based on exaggerated sources as well as circular citations and references to fake sources in Korea and Japan. More seriously, his basic qualities as a researcher are called to question for his use of Yoon’s exposure to support the “Lee Yong-soo is a fake ‘comfort woman’” theory. He cites Japanese far-right media *Yukan Fuji* and *Gekkan Hanada purasu*’s decontextualized distortions of Yoon Mee-hyang’s Facebook post. Instead of cross-checking the full text of Yoon’s post, he selectively appropriates parts of Yoon’s post out of context and asserts that “most scholars in the field had long-since concluded” that Lee Yong-soo’s testimony is inconsistent and untrustworthy (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 18). Yoon’s depiction of the first time Yoon and Lee Yong-soo talked on the phone is, in fact, a well-known story among researchers and activists in the Japanese military “comfort women” movement. When Lee called the “comfort women” hotline to report and said, “I’m not a victim, but my friend is,” she did not mean that she is not a victim. Rather, her remark demonstrates how difficult it had been for a victim to come forward in 1992, and Yoon had mentioned it to demonstrate that intent. However, history denialists like Ramseyer selectively appropriate an activist’s words to attack the authenticity of the “comfort women” victim-survivors’ testimonies. Such attempts are repeatedly being made. On April 6, 2022, Kim Byung-hun, a Korean history denialist that Ramseyer had lauded, filed a complaint against Lee Yong-soo for “faking her testimony” even though she was “not a real victim.” His complaint, which asked for “a severe punishment if the charge against the accused is proven to be true,” cannot be understood simply as an issue of academic freedom. His behavior is no different from sexual violence perpetrators accusing the victim of making false allegations.

### History Denialists’ Organizing and ‘Saving Ramseyer’

On January 1, 2020, Anti-Japanese Statue Truth Investigation Committee (hereinafter Anti-Japanese Statue Committee), a group led by Korean history denialists, held their fourth protest against the “comfort women” statue in front of the Statue of Peace in Gwanghwamun, Seoul, South Korea. A famous photo of Hwang Ui-won, CEO of MediaWatch and Co-representative at the Anti-Japanese Statue Committee, and Lee Woo-young symbolizes the nature of this protest. Standing next to Lee, Hwang holds a small poster that says “Remove Comfort Women Statue! Stop Wednesday Demonstrations!” and a Korean flag on one hand and a Japanese flag on the other. Their protest marked the emergence of New Right history denialists and new media. These denialists disseminate hatred against the Japanese military “comfort women” as a way to evoke Pro-Japanese and Pro-American sentiments and oppose the Moon Jae-in administration, North Korea, and China.<sup>22</sup> This was the first time since Korea’s independence on August 15, 1945 that groups which claim being pro-Japan as patriotic have appeared in media, schools and universities, and on the streets. As historical denialists’ attacks on May 2020 were reproduced not only by new media but also legacy media sources, historical denialism and hatred on the “comfort women” issue became no longer an exception. While their claims may be accepted mostly by teenagers and people in their 60s or older who subscribe to far-right YouTube channels, for these groups historical denialism and misogyny are methods of mobilizing far-right politics and even a “trendy” thing to do.

On May 12, 2020, the Anti-Japanese Statue Committee held the 23<sup>rd</sup> protest against the

<sup>22</sup> The denialists believe that Moon Jae-in administration’s policies on Japan are rooted in anti-Japanese historical awareness of the Korean pro-democracy forces.

"comfort women" statue and held a press conference in front of the Statue of Peace. Notably, an organization named "Action for Comfort Women Redress" joined them. History denialists including Lee Woo-youn, Hwang Ui-won, and Kim Byung-hun, Representative of the Korean History Textbook Research Institute and National Action for Eradication of Comfort Women Law, said: "the Korean Ministry of Gender and Family Affairs and the Korean Council, which had exposed shameful 'comfort women' history, violated human rights and are inexcusable." The denialists who have been insulting and defaming victim-survivors mentioned the "human rights" of victims, as seen in the name of the organization that joined the press conference. Their malicious abuse of Japanese military "comfort women" victims is deplorable.

History denialists' attempts to "save Ramseyer" when the "Ramseyer incident" surfaced in 2021 illustrate the transnational sphere of history denialism. Maintaining close connections to Japanese history denialists such as Nishioka Tsutomu, the Anti-Japanese Statue Committee and authors of *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* announced a co-statement in support of Ramseyer on February 9, 2021. The statement argues that Ramseyer's paper has been recognized for its originality and approved for publication through peer-review at an international journal, but a non-academic external force has disrupted academic discussion, which is a non-scholarly behavior that resembles the Cultural Revolution (Jung et al., 2021). Hwang Ui-won sent an email to Harvard Law School faculty members on February 14, arguing that Ramseyer's "academic conscience" should be protected. The email pressured professors to boycott a testimonial event organized by Harvard Asian Pacific American Law Students Association and claimed that the event was a "show" featuring "fake comfort woman" Lee Yong-soo (Kim, 2021). On February 18, Joseph Yi and Joe Philips (2021) published an opinion piece supporting Ramseyer on *The Diplomat*. They claimed in this article that "the few academics that openly dispute the 'comfort women' abduction narrative are too often harassed by activists, investigated by their universities, and prosecuted by the government," which seems to have had a large impact on Ramseyer.

In "A Response to My Critics," Ramseyer (2022) cites Joseph Yi in claiming that when scholars such as Park Yu-ha and a Sunchon National University professor (Song Dae-yup) "try to challenge the taboo, the costs are astonishingly high" (p. 5). He adds Lew Seok-choon to this list. However, while the three cases may appear similar in making it to courts after complaints were filed for false accusations and defamation, Song and Lew, unlike Park, were found guilty of verbal sexual harassment in the classroom. As such, portraying them as fighters for academic freedom and freedom of expression is too much of a stretch. Specifically, Song's employment contract with Sunchon National University was terminated not just for lecturing false information on the Japanese military "comfort women" issue, but because of the inappropriate sexual harassment remarks he made to students several times. Song, who did not accept the university's decision, filed a lawsuit to cancel the termination. The Gwangju District Court rejected Song's lawsuit, and the Supreme Court sentenced him to six months in prison for defamation based on false allegations and for "emotional violence he inflicted on students by making inappropriate remarks during his lectures."<sup>23</sup> In Lew's case, both civil and criminal trials were conducted. I turn to the civil trial for which a judgment has been reached. The civil trial started after Lew filed a lawsuit against his university to cancel his placement on a one-month suspension. The Seoul Administrative Court ruled in favor of the defendant, not because of Lew's remark that "comfort women were prostitutes" but because of his response to a student's counterargument, in which he said, "why don't you try [serving as a prostitute

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<sup>23</sup> While Ramseyer writes that Song "lectured to his class that some Koreans 'probably' volunteered to be comfort women," Song actually made the following remarks several times to students: "the victims knew for the most part. The women who were taken were fervent about Japan and they all followed the military because they had enjoyable talents," "Women in their 20s are like soccer balls – if they stay in their place more than 20 people will come by [to have sex with the women]," "cunt" (Jang, 2019).

yourself] if you are so curious?” was sexual harassment.<sup>24</sup> The cases of Song and Lew raise questions on why history denialist remarks on “comfort women” lead to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and compel us to question the misogynist perspectives underlying the idea that “comfort women are prostitutes.”

Although Hwang Ui-Won is not a scholar like Lee Woo-youn and Joseph Yi, his activities are interesting enough to warrant further probing. For quite some time, he had written articles defaming and insulting victim-survivors including Lee Yong-soo at MediaWatch under the pen name of Shin Gyu-yang. It was thus not difficult to predict that he would take the streets and journalism in his efforts to “save Ramseyer” as CEO of MediaWatch and Co-representative of the Anti-Japanese Statue Committee. MediaWatch, which has printed many articles by Nishioka Tsutomu and advertisements from Japanese far-right magazines, publishes and distributes history denialist books. In April 2021, Hwang’s MediaWatch published Nishioka’s book on “comfort women,”<sup>25</sup> which was translated by Lee Woo-youn, as part of its “saving Ramseyer” attempts. Hwang Ui-won, along with Lee Woo-youn, were named co-winners of the 8<sup>th</sup> Japan Research Award given by the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (led by Sakurai Yoshiko). Notably, Japanese Prime Minister Suga and Hagiuda Koichi, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, sent their congratulations to Hwang under the name of “Liberal Democratic Party president” and “Liberal Democratic Party House of Representatives member,” respectively. They wanted to praise Hwang for his actions worthy of the Japan Research Award, which aims to “increase true friends of Japan in the international community.”

While the Anti-Japanese Statue Committee promotes history denialism in the streets, the Rhee Syng-man Academy and Rhee Syng-man TV (a YouTube channel) led by Lee Young-hoon and Joo Ik-jong are educational media platforms that serve as basecamps for history denialism (See Table 1). Rhee Syng-man Academy launched Rhee Syng-man TV on June 15, 2018, and created lecture series such as “Fighting Anti-Japanese Tribalism” and “Truth of the Japanese military ‘comfort women’ issue.” Some of these lectures have recorded 1 million views and garnered the channel more than 100,000 subscribers. The book *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* was published based on the lectures. Rhee Syng-man TV added eleven Korean and Japanese lectures between February 10 to March 13, 2021, to the “Fighting Anti-Japanese Tribalism” series to address the “Ramseyer incident.” A lecture uploaded on March 2, 2022, explains Ramseyer’s “A Response to My Critics” paper.

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<sup>24</sup> The Court ruled that Lew explained before and after this remark that “comfort women” were prostitutes and continued to reference “prostitution” when answering students’ questions. He did not make any references to research activities. Ryu’s remark is interpreted to have the intent of saying, “why don’t you try serving as a prostitute if you are so curious?” which can evoke sexual humiliation and disgust for the general public and thus an act of sexual harassment (Shin, 2022).

<sup>25</sup> The original Japanese version of the book is titled *yoku wakaruru ianfu mondai* [“Comfort Women” Issue Explained] (2007).

**Table 1. List of YouTube Videos on the “Fighting Anti-Japanese Tribalism” Playlist of Rhee Syng-man TV as of June 12, 2022. (Rhee Syng-man TV, 2021)**

Date	Lecture Title	Lecturer	Views*
2021 .2.10	A proper read of Harvard Professor’s “comfort women” paper	Joo Ik-jong	10,749
2021 .2.12	ハーバード大教授の慰安婦論文を正しく読む (Japanese version of video above)	Joo Ik-jong	20,694
2021 .2.19	Evidence of “comfort women” contracts	Joo Ik-jong	11,723
2021 .2.20	'慰安婦契約'の証拠 (Japanese version of video above)	Joo Ik-jong	12,155
2021 .2.28	Voluntary contracts in Japan, forced conscriptions in Korea?	Joo Ik-jong	5,651
2021 .2.28	日本では自発的契約だったが、朝鮮では強制連行か? (Japanese version of video above)	Joo Ik-jong	15,332
2021 .3.7	A look at renowned American professors’ critique of Ramseyer	Joo Ik-jong	10,426
2021 .3.9	有名なアメリカの教授達のラムザイヤーの批判を見てみると... (Japanese version of video above)	Joo Ik-jong	21,817
2021 .3.12	A look at a “conscientious” Japanese scholar’s critique of Ramseyer	Joo Ik-jong	6,642
2021 .3.13	吉見義明教授のラムザイヤー批判を見てみると -慰安婦性奴隷論者の知的破綻 (Japanese version of video above)	Joo Ik-jong	30,593
2022 .3.2	One year after Professor Ramseyer’s paper – the status quo of “comfort women” discussions	Joo Ik-jong	6,768

It is not difficult to refute the arguments and logic related to Anti-Japanese Tribalism that are being re-ignited in attempts to “save Ramseyer.” The denialists insist that they are speaking of “basic facts,” but they selectively use sources, intentionally misinterpret them, and omit and distort information. The challenge lies in the expansion of history denialism and hatred as a wave that cannot be dismissed in the new media world of the post-truth era and divided politics. Artificial intelligence in new media channels such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, hyperlink technology, and accessible platforms enable the expansion of transnational networking in Korea, Japan, and the United States. Thus, to respond to history denialism in the coming ages, we need to not only critically examine denialists’ arguments, logic, and mechanisms, but also analyze the context and background of the “Ramseyer incident” and “Anti-Japanese Tribalism” phenomenon. These phenomena and incidents will continue if we do not move beyond analyzing “academic integrity” to directly target the transnational network of hatred and history denialism in Korea, Japan, and the U.S.

### **In Lieu of a Conclusion: Ramseyer’s Response and Circular Citation of Post-truth**

Ramseyer believes that left-wing scholars in the U.S. and “pro-North” nationalists in Korea who are obsessed with anti-Japanese campaigns are harassing him and the journal editors

with numerous petitions and critiques by activists, students, feminists, economics, and historians. Therefore, he defines “the hostility against my article,” seen in the critiques against his work that were not properly published in academic journals (except Lee, Saito & Todres (2021)), as a suppression of academic freedom (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 6). Ramseyer also cites Yi and Phillips in arguing that courageous scholars in Korea who support him “are too often harassed by activists, investigated by their universities, and prosecuted by the government” (Yi and Phillips, 2021, as cited in Ramseyer, 2022, p. 6) Noting the withdrawal of Lee Woo-youn’s article in *The Diplomat*, he argues that “the censorship on this topic by American scholars in the humanities” is also severe (Ramseyer, 2022, p. 6).

Such perception prevails in a video he sent to MediaWatch TV, YouTube channel of a Korean New Right media outlet, titled “For Koreans Fighting to Protect Academic Freedom and Free Speech” (MediaWatchTV, 2022). In this video, he thanks Koreans, especially Hwang and Lee, for their fight to safeguard academic freedom, freedom of the press, and freedom of expression. According to Ramseyer, most American university members who criticized him held overly narrow views when it comes to the “comfort women” question and were determined to punish him for putting forth an unorthodox argument. He declares that the intolerance of the modern U.S. university community is completely incompatible with the liberal democratic society we want to live in. He then positions himself as a warrior fighting to safeguard academic freedom and freedom of expression. He mentions that he learned about Korean scholars who helped him through Nishioka Tsutomu and names each of them to express his gratitude.

Among the 31 Koreans he named, a rather generous count of scholars in the list reaches seven: Lee Woo-youn, Kim Byung-hun, Lee Young-hoon, Lew Seok-choon, Joo Ik-jong, Jung An-gi, and Joseph Yi. Six out of seven authors of *Anti-Japanese Tribalism* were recognized in Ramseyer’s list of people he wants to thank. Lee Woo-youn, Lee Young-hoon, and Joo Ik-jong were also heavily cited in “A Response to My Critics” (Ramseyer, 2022). The other 23 people on the list were journalists, YouTubers, lawyers, and presidents of New Right organizations. Many had made it to Korean news outlets for their severe history denialist remarks and hate speech, but to Ramseyer, they must have been precious because these people signed a statement supporting him. His praise of the list of Koreans as “brilliant and courageous” people who are “dedicated to principled research” and have courageously spoken up despite serious personal risks should be understood in the abovementioned contexts. This video demonstrates his mechanism of circular citations that transforms falsity into truth and the reality of “saving Ramseyer” attempted by history denialist networks in Korea, Japan, and the U.S.

This paper has only delved into a smaller part of the larger network of history denialism. Ramseyer’s networks mentioned in his paper acknowledgments and his post-truth circular citation mechanism cannot be understood without placing Japanese history denialists at the center. This paper only mentioned Fukui Yoshitaka and Nishioka Tsutomu, but the arguments and activities of people Ramseyer often mention in his acknowledgments, such as Jason Morgan of Reitaku University in Japan, Kimura Matsuhiko at Aoyama Gakuin University, and Miwa Yoshiro of Tokyo university, need to be highlighted as well. Specifically, attention should be paid to the Historical Research Laboratory (transitioned to “Historical Research Project” in 2021) housed within the Institute of Moralogy<sup>26</sup> at Reitaku University (which is funded by the Moralogy Foundation), a center for Japanese history denialism where Nishioka and Morgan are affiliated. The lab’s historical research project activities are announced through *Historical Awareness Studies*, a journal published by the Historical Awareness Research Committee. Historical Awareness Research Committee and Historical Research Laboratory at

<sup>26</sup> According to news reports by MBC News in Korea, the Institute of Moralogy, led by Mototaka Hiroike, and the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, led by Yoshiko Sakurai, are closely interconnected (Park, 2021).

the Institute of Moralogy, both known as major history denialist organizations, were established at a similar time. Among the projects that the Historical Research Laboratory, led by Nishioka, engaged in was the Japanese Civilization Research Forum, which was chaired by Nishioka and comprised of Ramseyer, Morgan, and Kevin M. Doak, a professor and Nippon Foundation Endowed Chair in Japanese Studies in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Georgetown University (Ko, 2021). The activities in this forum illuminate its location within Japan and U.S. history denialist networks. Further research on Japanese-U.S. history denialist networks and the attempts to "save Ramseyer" is needed to situate Ramseyer's papers in the larger contexts of exacerbating history denialism.

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