

## Mr. Lee Wooyoun's Speech

Hello, I am Lee Wooyoun of Korean Naksungdae Institute of Economic Research.

Through the book we translated and published this time, Professor Ramseyer has clearly shown the contractual structure between comfort women and the comfort station. Comfort women's term of contract was one to two years. Advance money of several hundred to several thousand yen was to be paid to comfort women and money comfort women earned was shared between the comfort station and a comfort woman at the fixed rate (4 to 6 in most cases) and she repaid the advance money out of her earning. When she had completed the repayment of the advance money or the contract term was expired, she could leave the comfort station.

The sexual service labor contract differed from a general labor contract, which came from the peculiarity of the sexual service labor. For women who had to choose such socially derisive and disreputable labor, the promise made by the comfort station, guaranteeing high income had to be trustworthy. Therefore, the comfort station paid them a hefty advance money as a kind of incentive to work hard in their sexual service. When a comfort woman completed the repayment of her advance money, she could leave the comfort station even before the contract term expired.

To review the contract between a comfort woman and the comfort station, clearly, comfort women system was not something new that suddenly appeared out of the blue. In fact, the comfort women contract was the same with the one contracted in the licensed prostitution in the early half of the twentieth century, long before Japan entered the war in Asia and the Pacific. Many scholars have maintained that the comfort women system was the extension of the licensed prostitution. Professor Ramseyer established the theory that comfort women were licensed prostitutes on the solid logical basis after examining the behavior patterns of the comfort women and the comfort station (entrepreneur) in view of Game theory. By his work, the so-called "forcibly abducted comfort women theory" has lost its standing.

When the news came to South Korea in February 2021 that Professor Ramseyer's paper "Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War," presenting simple logic and concrete evidence, was to be publicized, a great fuss erupted once again as usual. A Harvard Professor despised our comfort women grandmothers, calling them prostitutes! It must have been the biggest tumult related to the comfort women issue since the one over Professor Lee Young-hoon (major co-author of *Anti-Japan Tribalism* in 2004).

In February 2021, broadcast of accusation and criticism against Professor Ramseyer's paper and himself never ceased for a month. Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS) incessantly aired related reporting for twenty-one times for a month since February 1. Other TV stations followed suit in one way or another. Public opinions were filled with accusation and criticism in unison. There were none of cool criticism nor discussion. Such violent repulsion was caused all because comfort women theories such as forced abduction, sex slaves and 200,000 victims control widely and strongly the Korean people's mind.

In dealing with the Japanese military comfort women issue, South Korea has much, much longer and more troublesome way to go than Japan. The situation is different from Japan's. It may take several more decades to have the truth about the comfort women issue established as the national consensus. In daring comparison, I would say that South Korea now is in the situation of Japan early in the 1990s. At that time, the Japanese society was confused by a liar named Yoshida Seiji and part of the mass media and forced into believing that comfort women were forcibly taken victims.

Compared with Japan early in the 1990s, we can find some hopeful factor in South Korea today. Currently, a trend to liquidate the comfort women deception is being formed among citizens and the developed study gives us a clearer picture of what comfort women were really like. This book we have translated and published is the very proof of it. This book is a powerful weapon in our logical and practical struggle to eliminate the comfort women deception.

After Professor Ramseyer posted his paper in the academic magazine, those who advocated the forcefully abducted comfort women theory asked the International Review of Law and Economics to withdraw the Ramseyer paper. If one does not agree to a paper, it is a common practice to post another paper refuting it. They did not do so, which reveals that they had a barbarian-like intention to silence their antagonist. To fight against such barbarity, our society shares the creed of freedom of academic study and speech. Their thoughtless demand, quite contrary to their intention, backfired and instead played a great role in bringing the present situation where Professor Ramseyer's papers were translated and published in both Japan and South Korea so that the Japanese people and the South Korean people may easily read them.

Today, in South Korea, the comfort women issue has become a graveyard of academic freedom, a sacred and impenetrable territory and a stage for brutal criticism. One cannot evade the risk of criminally punished if one denies the theories of forced abduction, sex slaves and 200,000 victims. Recently, Professor Choi Jon-sik of Kyung Hee University said during his class that "comfort women were people who engaged in prostitution following the Japanese military" and "they were not forcibly

taken but went there voluntarily.” He was punished by the university and criminally indicted on a charge of defaming comfort women. He was sent to the prosecution after having been investigated by the police.

In 2017, Professor Park Yu-ha of Sejong University denied the forced abduction of comfort women and referred to the relationship between comfort women and Japanese soldiers, using the expression “comradeship,” on which charge he was criminally indicted. In 2019, Professor Lew Seok-choon of Yonsei University, who co-authored this book with me, was criminally indicted after he had mentioned that comfort women are prostitutes while he discussed the issue with students during his class. Recently, the defendants of these two trials were fortunately declared not-guilty due to academic freedom. During the trial, Professor Lew Seok-choon submitted this book as evidential material to the court. Professor Choi Jon-sik is also to submit this book to the judicial department. This book, asserting academic freedom in the United States, will be equally a strong weapon for protecting academic freedom in South Korea as well, serving as evidential material for new and active discussion.

Although we did not have previous arrangement with each other, this book was parallelly translated into the respective languages and simultaneously published in Japan and South Korea. I now conclude my speech, telling you how happy and satisfied we are with this book of ours.