

June, 2020

From: FUJIOKA Nobukatsu, former professor, University of Tokyo
FUJIKI Shunichi, corporate owner and journalist
YAMAMOTO Yumiko, President of the Japanese Women for Justice and Peace

To: To whom it may concern

Subj: Urgent request for a ban to screen the film [Shusenjo - The Main Battleground of the Comfort Women Issue](#), directed by Mikine Dezaki

1. **Urgent Request**

We, the originators of this letter, sincerely request those who plan to screen the film to the public cancel the plan. We also cordially request those who have already screened it to the public shelve any plan to screen it again in future.

2. **Victims**

We are victims of the film directed and produced by Mikine Dezaki who presented himself in the guise of a student researcher. He was, in fact, a con artist. We have already filed suits in court against him for breach of good faith, fraud, and human rights violation.

There are five other victims: SAKURAI Yoshiko (journalist and President of the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals), Congressperson SUGITA Mio, KASE Hideaki (diplomatic analyst), Kent Gilbert (journalist and attorney-at-law in California), and Tony Marano (journalist).

3. **Background**

3.1. While he was taking on the Comfort Women issue as a postgraduate study at Sophia University, Dezaki individually contacted eight of us from May 2016 through February 2017 to request for our opinions on the issue. His request included videotaping each interview session.

3.2. Dezaki's explanation of the postgraduate study to each of us was similar in content. A request e-mailed to YAMAMOTO Yumiko is provided below:

“As a graduate student, I have an ethical obligation to present the people I interview

with respect and fairness.”

“This is an academic research. It must meet certain academic standards and expectations, which would prevent it from becoming a biased journalistic piece.”

“So, I will produce it with equitability and neutrality. I am going to submit it to the University as a graduation work.”

3.3. The gist of his explanation above consists of (1) performing the ethical obligation, (2) adhering to the academic standards, (3) producing a documentary that ensures equity and neutrality principles, and (4) submitting it as a postgraduate work to the university. All of us took his words literally.

3.4. Dezaki held videotaped interviews at a Sophia classroom and other places with the help of his postgraduate associates. He presented us his name cards printed with the university emblem. He also used the Sophia letterhead stationery. He then provided us with a letter of consent for videotaping the interview, on which we signed. All of us, for the sake of his endeavor, agreed to the interview without any charge even though some of us are renowned journalists.

4. **Production of a commercial film and its public release**

We heard nothing from Dezaki for about two years since the completion of the interviews. It was September 2018 when he sent us e-mail that the film *Shusenjo* he had directed and produced would be screened at the Pusan Film Festival in South Korea in October. He e-mailed us again in February 2019 that his film would be released in movie theaters in Japan from April. The public release of the film was the last thing we had in mind because we believed until then that he was committed to his postgraduate work.

5. **Some examples of his breach of good faith and fraud**

5.1. Dezaki entered the following in the film’s [Director’s Notes](#): “Being a male, Japanese-American director allowed me access to interview **Japanese nationalists, who regarded me as an unbiased, Japanese, rational male.**” He referred to us as nationalists in the film. He never addressed us as nationalists neither in the first e-mail requests for interview nor during each interview session. Nobukatsu Fujioka did not know until the film’s release Dezaki was an American of Japanese descent. All of us cooperated with him because he was engaged in a postgraduate work. His nationality was not any concern of us.

5.2. What we found out after the film release is that Dezaki had been committed to making the postgraduate work a commercial film from the beginning. While being a graduate student, he operated crowdfunding to fund his film-making venture. He did not undergo Sophia University's research ethics committee review. He manipulated interviews with us under a false pretense.

5.3. The film's scheme to disgrace us is overtly provocative. Shown in the film are our closeup clips with insulting tickers as if we are criminals in police lineup. The interview clips are so edited as to give each of us a bad impression. Dezaki intentionally and unilaterally called us the Rightists, Revisionists, Nationalists, Racists, Fascists, and Sexists.

5.4. None of the core values such as the ethical obligation, the academic standards, equity and neutrality, and a postgraduate work expressed in his interview requests are even hinted in the entire film.

6. Civil and criminal actions and the establishment of a university review board

6.1. We requested Dezaki and his film distributor not to release it in public venues. Because of their refusal of our request, we had to resort to legal procedures. Two counts in the civil action are Dezaki and his distributor breached good faith and intentionally caused damage upon us. Two counts in the criminal action are their copyright infringement and fraud. Hearings and trials are being held.

6.2. Because Professor NAKANO Koichi of Sophia University was in the position to supervise Dezaki's postgraduate work, we mailed the professor a letter to officially retract our consent to the videotaped clips. Despite his responsibility, Nakano ignored the letter and did not adhere to the research ethics provisions of the university. We demanded the university authorities to investigate Dezaki's work and Nakano's act of academic malfeasance. The university already launched a board to investigate the cases.

7. Counterarguments to Dezaki's claim of suppression of freedom of speech

7.1. Dezaki has been promoting a film tour not only in Japan but also in foreign countries. He as the film director personally addressed the audience each time that our civil and criminal actions are strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP),

i.e., we are attempting to suppress freedom of speech. We claim it is Dezaki who violated the principle because he had deceived us, cooperators of goodwill for his academic work. It is fair for the film to present pros and cons regarding the Comfort Women issue. The methods of presentation he employed in it are, by no means, equitable or neutral and, therefore, the film is not worth an academic research work in its essence.

7.2. Any further attempt to screen the film for public consumption will tarnish the prestige of Sophia University and bring about erosion of the academic research integrity. [The Academics' Alliance for Correcting Groundless Criticisms of Japan \(AACGCJ\)](#), with fifty-five academics in their joint names, already issued a statement to question the university's research ethics.

Scholars' Statement: We Question Sophia University's Academic Integrity regarding the Film "Shusenjo"

<https://bit.ly/3bkr1XL>

7.3. The film as mentioned earlier has been released not only at movie theaters in Japan but also in colleges and facilities in Europe and the U.S. COVID-19 has temporarily stopped Dezaki's venture for now. The film tour, once resumed, would become an unforgiven tool to brainwash the public at large as well as bona-fide researchers for truth, not to mention the breach of good faith imposed upon us. It is this film that blasphemes freedom of speech. The film should not be shown to the public.

References

JAPAN Forward Earl Kinmonth June 4, 2020

Court Battle Over Comfort Women Film Taints Japanese University's Research Ethics Record

<https://japan-forward.com/court-battle-over-comfort-women-film-taints-japanese-universitys-research-ethics-record/>

Japanese Women for Justice and Peace

Shusenjo— The Main Battleground of the Comfort Women Issue (film)

<http://nadesiko-action.org/?p=14416>

Japanese Women for Justice and Peace

About Unfair and Biased Film “SHUSENJYO : The Main Battleground of The Comfort Women”

<http://nadesiko-action.org/?p=13506>

Letter to Pope Francis dated November 20, 2019

<https://bit.ly/35a3F5m>

JAPAN Forward July 4, 2019

Youtuber Resorts to Misrepresentation in Making Documentary on Comfort Women Issue

<http://japan-forward.com/youtuber-resorts-to-misrepresentation-in-making-documentary-on-comfort-women-issue/>

Monthly Hanada Plus 2019.07.09

A Nasty Trick ‘The Main Battleground of The Comfort Women Issue’

<https://hanada-plus.jp/posts/2166>