Narratives of the 'Comfort Women' System Survivors

Individual Memories to Redress the Past and Change the Future

by Airina Fontanet Clarisso

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Supervisor: Helene Pristed Nielsen

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Abstract

During the WWII the Japanese Imperial Army forcibly mobilized an estimated of 80,000 to 200,000 women that were obliged to have sexual intercourse with Japanese soldiers. Most of these women came from Korea and Taiwan, which were colonies of Japan at the time. However, women from Japanese occupied territories like China, the Philippines, Malaysia or the Dutch Islands were also affected. Most of these women died while being captive because of the harshness of the conditions they were exposed to. However, the women that survived this gross human rights violation remained silent for more than half a century. In 1991 Kim Hak-Soon spoke up for the first time. Other survivors raised their voices and started a redress movement that pursues a reparative approach to justice. Among their demands, they require a sincere formal apology by the Japanese government, monetary restitution by the Japanese government and the addition of their testimonies into the Japanese school curriculum, so history textbooks reflect their stories and awareness is created.

The purpose of this study has been that of creating awareness of the 'comfort women' issue in other parts of the world, so that other societies get access to such stories that otherwise may have probably remained silent. At the same time, it has been a goal to question and contest such narratives to underline possible involuntary hidden information.

This research used narrative analysis as a method to identify themes throughout the whole narratives of the survivors' recounting of their traumatic pasts and their suggestions of a possible redress. In the case of the narratives relating to the Japanese people and the Japanese government, the focus has been placed in the whole narrative instead of a concrete theme. The data used for this study is secondary, that is preexisting material in the forms of interviews, documentaries and reports.

The results allow for a better understanding of their narratives and demonstrate that the survivors' suffering comes not only from their traumatic experiences but also from their own societies' beliefs on rape. Moreover, it also concludes that pursuing reparative justice is what better fits the survivors' demands. At the same time, such approach to justice would ultimately help to change the national collective memory of Japan about the WWII, though such aim is far from being reached.

Keywords: *comfort women, narratives, wartime sex slavery, collective memory, reparative justice, redress, intersectionality*

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Introduction

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." – Elie Wiesel

After the WWII, many were the casualties. Many survived too but some of them did not speak of the horrors experienced. Some experiences were 'buried'. After more than half a century later, some silent voices finally gathered the courage to speak up about their traumatic pasts and demanded justice. These voices are known as 'comfort women'. 'Comfort women' – a euphemistic translation from *jugun ianfu* in Japanese– were women that were forced into sexual slavery during the WWII by the Japanese Imperial Army (Lynch, 2009 p.151). These women were to provide sexual services to the Japanese troops all along the battlefields in Asia and the Pacific Islands (Lynch, 2009 p.151). The women, who at that time were just girls, were abducted or 'recruited' with deceptive promises of work (Wolfe, 2013 p.231). The majority of the 'comfort women' came from Korea (Chosŏn), which was a colony from Japan at the time, though many women from other nationalities like Filipinas, Dutch, Chinese, Taiwanese, Malaysian, Burmese were also affected (Wolfe, 2013 p.231). Since the first survivor, Kim Hak-Soon, spoke up in 1991, more survivors joined her and raised their voices. That generated a redress movement that demands a public formal apology by the Japanese government, monetary restitution and history textbooks in Japan to be changed and include the women's stories. Such demands have yet to be met.

War always brings violence, pain and sadness. Countless are the damages afflicted during such times. After a war is over there is a need to redress what and who has been wronged. But what happens when redress for the survivors is denied? The incapacity or unwillingness to provide it must always be challenged. But challenging a government can be an arduous job. There is a need to exert pressure to the Japanese government so that such redress finally occurs. Before I was an exchange student in Seoul, South Korea I was completely unaware of the existence of these women and what they experienced. The recurrent denial of these women's stories and the 'cancellation' of this segment of history

in Japan may have influenced in the lasck of familiarity with the topic and even the term 'comfort women'. By establishing transnational links, awareness will be raised, the stories of these women will be heard, and, in the way, they may find new allies. That is why, making the voices of these women heard in other regions than Asia is of vital importance. Understanding the suffering and justice demands of the women allows for a better comprehension of the whole 'comfort women' issue while at the same time I transmit their stories to other parts of the world while questioning them. This motivation has led me to the following problem formulation:

How do military sexual slavery survivors of the 'comfort women' system narrate their traumatic past and suggest its possible redress?

To such problem formulation I have consequently brought the following research questions:

1. *How do the survivors narrate their past before, while and after their 'captivity' time?*
2. *What kind of narratives do the survivors use when talking about the Japanese government and the Japanese people?*
3. *What kind of narratives are produced regarding the words 'apology' and/or 'reparations'/ 'compensation'?*

Historical Background

The comfort women system

The comfort women system is thought to have its beginnings during the war against Manchuria in 1932 where the Japanese military established the first 'comfort stations' (Yoshimi, 1993 p.81; Min, 2003 p.940; Soh, 1996 p.1227). After the Nanking massacre, in China – a mass rape and mass murder episode that occurred for six weeks, from 13th December 1937 until January 1938 – precipitated the formal set up of the comfort women system (Yoshimi, 1993 p.81; Min, 2003 p.940; Parker & Chew, 1999 p.95). The massive rapes caused a huge spread of venereal disease among Japanese soldiers, whom after returning home transmitted these diseases to Japanese population (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.95). Because of that, General Okabe Naosaburo ordered the establishment of a huge amount of 'comfort houses' in China so that venereal diseases could not be transmitted, and Japanese soldiers would not 'need' to recur to rape to 'satisfy' their sexual needs (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.95-96; Lynch, 2009 p.151).

After having established the system in China, the Japanese government decided to implement it in other locations under their control (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.96). The Japanese Imperial Army established facilities in China, Korea, Hong Kong, French Indochina, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, British Borneo, Dutch East Indies, Burma, the Pacific Islands of New Britain and Trobriand, and Okinawa (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.96; Min, 2003 p.940; Yoshimi, 1993 p.82).

Who were these comfort women?

The Japanese military stationed in China was to select individuals, not affiliated to the military, that would recruit comfort women in Japan and its colonies of Korea and Taiwan (Yoshimi, 1993 p.83). At the same time though, Japan had signed the "International Arrangement and Conventions for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children" in 1904, 1910 and 1921. Because of that, the chief of National Security Bureau of the Home Ministry, which was the one in charge of the police, issued a notice to each prefecture governor in 1938 explaining that the women that would be sent overseas from Japan to serve as comfort women had to be prostitutes over 21 years-old and the police could issue identification cards with the title of 'prostitute' (Yoshimi, 1993 p.83). Because of such convention, recruitment directly from Japan was severely

restricted. Nonetheless, colonies were excluded from such convention under a special clause – if they declare that such territories would be exempt in advance – (Yoshimi, 1993 p.83). Therefore, the majority of women 'recruited' to serve as comfort women came from Korea, Taiwan and other Japanese occupied territories (Yoshimi, 1993 p.83).

According to Yoshimi (1993, p.82) 'comfort women' placed in 'comfort stations' were Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian and Dutch women. The author states that Australian nurses were attempted to be forced to serve as comfort women. Yoshimi (1993, p.82) goes on and suggests that everywhere the Japanese military went, local women were forced to become sexual slaves.

An official number of women that were 'recruited' by the Japanese military is unknown as historical key papers documenting such numbers were destroyed by them (Min, 2003 p.940). Nonetheless, historians have estimated the number to be between 80,000 to 280,000/ 70,000 to 200,000 women, based on the ratios of soldiers that were to be followed per comfort women (Min, 2003 p.940; Soh, 1996 p.1227). Most of these women were 'recruited' following false promises of good employment possibilities or were simply kidnapped by the Japanese (Lynch, 2009 p.151).

There were three different types of 'comfort stations' for sex slaves: 1. The ones that were directly controlled and run by the Japanese military authorities; 2.The ones that were run by civilians but that were set up and administered by the Japanese military; 3. The ones that were private facilities, for the most part, but some priority was given to the Japanese military (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.96; Yoshimi, 1993 p.84). Even though these types of 'comfort stations' were different, the first and second type shared some characteristics: 1. The 'comfort stations' could only be used by Japanese soldiers and army civilian employees; 2. These 'comfort stations' were under full control of the Japanese military, which was the one in charge of establishing and administrating such 'stations' and at the same time 'recruiting' sex slaves; 3. These 'comfort stations' had to attain a permit from the military and allow the military to control them; 4. All the 'comfort stations' were given written regulations that were made by the Japanese military (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.96; Lee, 1993 p.9). Even though such regulations existed, its compliance varied greatly from 'comfort station' to 'comfort station'.

Daily life in 'comfort stations' as a 'comfort woman'

Life as a sex slave in 'comfort stations' has been described by survivors as very harsh. This harshness could be represented by the fact that most of the sex slaves 'stationed' in comfort houses died during captivity (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.96). Some of them were murdered in cold blood, while some other died because of wartime conditions (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97). Others died because of inappropriate medical care as some had to abort in very bad conditions or died due to different diseases like malaria or weakness provoked by near-starvation diets (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97). Most of them were often subjected to torture, beatings, burning and sometimes even stabbing (Min, 2003 p. 941). Moreover, when injured from beatings or others they were almost never treated, and thus many women died from broken bones or internal injuries (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97). Because of the harshness of their lives, a big amount of them committed suicide.

Their daily lives were disgraceful and degrading. Sex slaves had to be examined by the army doctors for venereal diseases regularly (Lee, 1993 p.14). Furthermore, they were forced to clean used condoms, and some were even ordered to clean their vaginas with an antiseptic solution each time they had intercourse with a soldier (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97; Lee, 1993 p.14). Even though the soldiers were to use condoms, many did not want to and, consequently, many 'comfort women' were infected with venereal diseases (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97; Lee, 1993 p.15).

After the war: returning home?

When the war ended, the Japanese abandoned the sex slaves, sometimes killing them, as some survivors and Japanese witnesses have reported (Min, 2003 p.941). Moreover, survivors that have decided to speak up have "serious continuing medical and psychological problems" as a consequence of having been a sex slave (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97). Most of the survivors have not been able or were unwilling to marry or have children because of their experiences (Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97; Min 2003, p.941; Lee, 1993 p.15). The majority of them do not have a family to support them and live with economic difficulty (Lee, 1993 p.15; Parker & Chew, 1999 p.97; Min, 2003 p.941).

Nowadays, the remaining survivors are getting old and most of them have already perished. It is believed that less than fifty military sex slave survivors remain alive (Constante, 2019).

The Japanese government position

The Japanese government position regarding the 'comfort women' issue has transitioned from a complete denial of accountability for the 'comfort women' system to forcibly acknowledging the direct involvement of the Japanese military in 'recruiting' comfort women and establishing and controlling 'comfort stations' (Soh, 2000; Hicks, 1999). In 1992, Yoshimi Yoshiaki, a professor of Chuo University, retrieved several documents directly incriminating the Japanese military's involvement on the system (Hicks, 1999 p.118; Yoshimi, 1993 p.81). The disclosure of such documents, among others, forced the Japanese government to apology: Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi apologized in "in terms so strong that an attempt at an English translation sounds too exaggerated to be convincing" (Hicks, 1999 p.118). In January 1992, Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi visited Seoul and apologized again to the South Korean president at the National Assembly (Hicks, 1999 p.118). However, the governments from South Korea and North Korea do not view this apology as an official government apology (Hicks, 1999 p.118).

Redressing historical injustice

After World War II, reparations were paid to European Jews as a mechanism to redress the wrongs committed towards this collective (Torpey, 2015 p.63). After such events, this idea of undoing the wrongs or trying to provide redress for survivors and victims has gained importance and has "come to be regarded as a crucial element of progress toward more satisfactory and more democratic political and social relationships" (Torpey, 2015 p.63). Along with the urging need to 'come to terms with the past', another trend has emerged: 'reparations'. Repairing what and whom has been wronged in the past by states and other entities (Torpey, 2015 p.63). But, 'reparations' in this context does not only equal monetary compensation for damages caused during a military conflict for example, as it used to be seen before (Torpey, 2015 p.63). Nowadays, 'reparations[1]' are regarded to be any kind of effort to try to redress gross human rights violations (Torpey, 2015 p.63).

[1] The term 'reparations' does not escape controversy and discussion among scholars, as it will be discussed below.

According to the UN's *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law* (2005), 'reparations' are considered to cover the following aspects:

- Restitution

  should, whenever possible, restore the victim to the original situation before the gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law occurred. Restitution includes, as appropriate: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one's place of residence, restoration of employment and return of property

- Compensation

  should be provided for any economically assessable damage, as appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation and the circumstances of each case, resulting from gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law, such as: Physical or mental harm; Lost opportunities, including employment, education and social benefits; Material damages and loss of earnings, including loss of earning potential; Moral damage; Costs required for legal or expert assistance, medicine and medical services, and psychological and social services.

- Rehabilitation "should include medical and psychological care as well as legal and social services"
- Satisfaction, which should include "An official declaration or a judicial decision restoring the dignity, the reputation and the rights of the victim and of persons closely connected with the victim"; "Public apology, including acknowledgement of the facts and acceptance of responsibility" or "Commemorations and tributes to the victim" among others
- Guarantees of non-repetition that will ensure the no-repetition of such events

Therefore, 'reparations' are seen not only as a redressing procedure that allows for psychological and physical healing but also may contribute in that together with monetary compensation[2].

What is historical redress and historical injustice?

When trying to find a definition of historical redress, one is confronted with the lack of such, as Amir (2011) states: "There is no standard term for the phenomenon referred to as historical redress, the politics of apology, redress of historical injustices, and reparations" (p.24). At the same time, a concrete definition of historical injustices does not exist either, as different scholars conceive the term differently. Amir (2011, p.24) cites Torpey's conception of historical injustices as a possible reference: "claims for mending past wrongs that are extremely varied running the gamut from specific rights abuses against individuals such as unjust imprisonment and torture to such diverse social systems as plantation slavery, apartheid and colonialism" (Torpey, 2004).

Defining historical injustice has become highly important as different campaigns seeking historical redress have arisen and become more important (Amir, 2011 p.26). Amir (2011), then suggests the usage of a relatively inclusive definition of the term historical injustice so that it encompasses the urging need of such redress campaigns.

On the other hand, according to Amir (2011, p.32), the disagreement over the definition of historical redress comes from "the substantive differences between the liberal and transformative notions of the human rights culture that developed in the latter part of the twentieth century". Therefore, one must ask whether it is enough to acknowledge certain events of the past as wrong and then compensate those that have been affected and suffered because of that, or if human rights culture should "usher in transformative change by way of redistribution and restructuring of society" (Amir, 2011 p.32). Much of the debate within historical redress comes from the term 'reparation', whether it is in singular or plural form. According to Amir (2011, p.32) "Reparation in its singular forms stands for the return of the *status quo ante* by means of restitution, compensation, and rehabilitation, all of which target the cessation of the injustices combined with assurances that they will not be repeated". On the other hand, when talking about 'reparations', in plural, it accounts for "compensation, mostly monetary, and are

[2] For more about reparations, see Transitional justice, Reparative justice section.

therefore characterized by backward-looking orientation" (Amir, 2011 p.33). Nonetheless, most of the campaigns seeking historical redress use the term 'reparations'.

Taking responsibility: the state as a perpetrator

For the purpose of this study, this section will be dedicated to the state as a perpetrator of gross human rights violations, as the Japanese government created a sexual enslavement system throughout all their occupied territories during World War II and is thus the responsible for such atrocities.

Addressing atrocities committed or sponsored by the state is indeed a tough road as there are several things to consider. According to Wolfe (2014),

> The state is not an independent actor whose goal it is to ensure that justice is done for its citizens, but instead, the perpetrator of the event. In addition, the domestic community—that is, the individuals within society who contributed either as perpetrators or as bystanders to the atrocity or injustice—may include a large percentage of individuals who hold criminal, political, moral, or metaphysical guilt for their actions (p.58)

Wolfe (2014) insists that responsibility for such past events is too broadly rooted within the whole society. She states that responsibility then could not only be accredited to

> legislators who authored discriminatory laws, but also to those who enforced the laws, who helped build camps, worked as guards, worked in transporting individuals, who supported the administration of the camp, who enriched themselves through buying property or possessions of those who were desperate to sell, and so forth (p.58)

It should be noted though, that the state still remains as the main perpetrator, and because of that, it must be the one held accountable. The accomplice society itself "can often be said to have furthered the victimization of the group by perpetrating minor offenses, aiding the state in its policies, or simply as bystanders allowing the state to do as it willed without political repercussions" (Wolfe, 2014 p.58-59).

Insofar a state has allowed gross human rights violations to take place and has actively contributed in its development, the state, together with its agents, must contribute to the redress and reparation of such past events (Wolfe, 2014 p.59). It is the state responsibility as it created the means in which such atrocities took place. In the case which concerns this study, the state did not have specific individuals in mind, but a collective or

group based "on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or a combination of factors" (Wolfe, 2014 p.59). Therefore, according to Wolfe (2014, p.59), because it was the state that held direct responsibility for the victimization of such collectives, it is the state – (or in the case of a new government, its successor –) which is the responsible entity to address if justice or political reconciliation are desired. Thus, if the state freely decides on admitting its wrongdoings, the mere acknowledgement might help bringing closure and allows the survivors to feel that such atrocities will never happen again (Wolfe, 2014 p.60). Nonetheless, such a scenario does not happen very often, and historical injustices then must be redressed throughout the means of historical redress campaigns.

What are historical redress campaigns?

Redress campaigns have mostly targeted governments and industrial corporations or have gone against "financial services industry allegedly facilitating exploitation and oppression through providing financial services to the perpetrators or for failing to honor banking and insurance agreements" (Amir, 2011 p.27-28). Redress campaigns' strategies vary and can have different discourses within it. Nonetheless, most campaigns of such typology normally focus on a single path because of its paradigmatic arguments (Amir, 2011 p.31). According to Wolfe (2014, p.57-58) redress and reparation movements use several strategies to achieve their goals. These strategies include: "achieving recognition for the atrocities or injustices inflicted upon the group, existing in a state of political reconciliation, and symbolically repairing the injustice or atrocity inflicted upon the group" (Wolfe, 2014 p.57-58).

According to Amir (2011, p.36) there are two different types of redress campaigns:

- The first type is that of a "a bivalent campaign in which an ethnocultural group both seeks redress and battles against misrecognition and socioeconomic inferiority". Examples of such campaigns could be the campaigns of Aborigines and African Canadians.
- The second type of campaign is comprised of "those cases that are pursued for the sole purpose of gaining public recognition" like the case of Japanese Canadians being interned. This type of case could be described as discrete, as the group is not marginalized as a collective and neither is socioeconomically discriminated against other collectives.

The Comfort Women Redress Movement

The Comfort Women Redress Movement could be classified as the first type of redress campaign proposed by Amir (2011). A characteristic to be noted of this redress movement is that "the associated social movement organizations were mobilized primarily by those outside of the victimized group, for instance organizational allies" (Wolfe, 2014 p.245). Moreover, the organizational allies have heavily influenced the survivors' decision of accepting or denying of reparations (Wolfe, 2014 p.245).

According to Wolfe (2014) the Comfort Women Redress movement is said to be a single Redress movement rather than plural. Even thought, NGOs that deal with this topic normally focus on "assisting survivors within their own country, they do not tend to lobby for a particular nationality, but for the victimized group in entirety" (p.248). However, according to Soh (2000) the Comfort Women redress movement has been quite heterogenous, as different countries and leading associations have taken different positions towards the Japanese government and their "willingness" to provide closure and redress to the survivors (p.123).

In August 14, 1991, the first Korean comfort women Kim Hak-Soon accepted to publicly explain her testimony and then bring her case into the justice system (Hicks, 1999 p.118). Other two former comfort women (who wanted to remain anonymous) joined her and filled a lawsuit in Japan in 1991 (Hicks, 1999 p.118). Six more comfort women decided to join the lawsuit later (Hicks, 1999 p.118). Dutch, Filipina, Malaysian and other survivors decided to filled lawsuits in the Tokyo District Court the following years, and joined the original case (Hicks, 1999 p.118).

After first minister Miyazawa apologized[3], organizational allies and the survivors themselves rejected it because they regarded it as being insincere, arguing that "a truly remorseful nation would give not only some form of reparation for the World War II atrocities, but also full disclosure of the event" (Wolfe, 2014 p.250). This, Wolfe (2014) argues, demonstrates a linkage between formal reparations and 'symbolic justice[4]': apologizing is not enough, "an apologetic stance must be assumed in which we see actions reinforcing the words uttered by politicians" (p.248).

[3] See the Japanese Government Position section

[4] Wolfe (2014, p.72) defines symbolic justice as "the myriad of actions focused on acknowledging and memorializing the past atrocities or injustices"

Wolfe (2014, p.248) states that after survivors filed a lawsuit, they, along with former perpetrators, have documented their testimonies in forms of memoirs, interviews, public hearings and tribunals. Furthermore, most of the survivors are currently working with NGOs and other allies so that justice can be attained (Wolfe, 2014 p.248). It is these documented testimonies, partly made available through NGO work and other allies, which form the backbone of data applied in this thesis. The nature of the data set, my methodological approach to it and my ideas about how to work with this data are further explained in the methodology chapter.

Literature review

The comfort women issue has been a controversial and broadly discussed topic since Kim Hak-Soon decided to speak up to denounce the atrocities that she together with other thousands of 'recruited' women had to suffer and take legal action. Because of the importance of making the issue international, many scholars and activists started writing their researches in English so that awareness about this issue could be raised across the borders of Asia. Nonetheless, a considerable amount of literature about the topic is written in Korean, Japanese or Chinese, and thus, cannot be discussed in this section because of the language barrier.

Much of the English research about the topic is within human rights. Some cover the legal consequences of such lawsuits and the controversial issue of formal apologies as in Brooks (1999) book titled *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The controversy over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice.* In this book a whole chapter is dedicated to 'Comfort Women', including an introduction and review of the topic, some testimonies, a review following the redress movement and some legal analysis of the lawsuits. On the other hand, McDougall (2013) contributes to the legal discussion of state responsibility of such crimes against humanity by focusing on the Korean case. Izumi (2011) argues that the lawsuits filled by survivors were a turning point for how apologies were politically regarded in Asia. Moreover, Henry (2013) focuses on how past issues like the 'comfort women' being brought into justice can bring more injustice and challenge the collective memory of the past at the same time. Park (2000) adds to the debate a gender perspective by examining the issues of masculine national identity and gendered violence when apologizing or not to the survivors and looks at how violent patriarchal assumptions are being perpetuated by denying such apologies.

Another aspect of interest about the comfort women issue has been the redress movement that followed after the survivors spoke up and their ongoing seek of closure and compensation. Hicks (1999) reviews how the comfort women redress movement started and how it unfolded until its publication. He also discusses the different positions that could be found within Japanese society regarding reparations for former 'comfort women'. On the other hand, Soh (1996) focuses on the Korean redress movement and tries to understand, through the lenses of an intersectional approach that includes the

categories of gender, class, ethnicity, sexual culture and the role of the state, the origins of the military 'comfort women' system and how it worked, at the same time that provides a focus on the ongoing debate of the issue. Kimura (2016) tries to explain the 'comfort women' system using an intersectional perspective with the categories of gender, race, class and colonialism. The same author depicts the importance of making the testimonies of survivors known as it is an empowering act and a healing process. Min (2003), also using an intersectional approach, tries to explain how colonial power, gender hierarchy and class played a role in the suffering of Korean survivors, before, while and after being a 'comfort woman'. She emphasizes the importance of looking at this intersection in order to understand their undergoing pain. Seo (2008), reviews the 'comfort women' redress movement and tries to explain why these women did not speak up for more than fifty years. The author states that nationalism has played a huge role in the feminist movement in South Korea, and in its relationship with Japan and thus it has impacted the way in which the 'comfort women' issue is viewed, and 'used' as a nationalistic tool. On the other hand, Mendoza (2011) contributes with a new perspective by including the experiences of Filipina comfort women and their narratives, which she argues have resulted in figures of 'eternal victimhood' that continue to perpetuate the sexist, racist and imperialist attitudes that made them victims of such system. On the other hand, the works of Qiu, Zhiliang and Lifei (2014) add a much-needed Chinese review and perspective in the English language of Chinese survivors and the methods of abduction used by the Japanese military.

Other scholars have preferred to focus on different aspects of the debate like Tanaka (2001) who addresses, from a Japanese perspective, the role the US occupation forces played in military controlled prostitution, this being enforced prostitution, and asks why the US did not provide help to Japanese comfort women, and rather continued with the system. Another interesting take on the issue is Pak's (2016) frame analysis on news reporting about the topic by four South Korean and Japanese Newspapers. This research demonstrated how the political milieu played a major role in how the newspapers portrayed the case, focusing more on the human stories when the Japanese-South Korean relations were friendly whereas morality and conflict were of interest when the relations were not favorable.

Finally, Park, Lee, Hand, Anderson and Schleitwiler (2016) take a different approach on the topic by looking at how early life trauma has impacted the life of former

comfort women. Moreover, they suggest the possible use of this data to try to understand victims of sexual abuse or trafficking.

Methodology

Choice of topic

The motivation behind this project came from when I was an exchange student in Seoul, South Korea and discovered the existence of such women and their past. I realized how little I knew about other non-western histories and how unknown those histories and stories are for westerners. Therefore, I believe that through this master thesis I might be able to raise awareness about the topic at the same time that I contribute to the ongoing 'comfort women' debate with my bit.

I decided to focus on the stories of these women, rather than looking at statistics or other sources of data, because by sharing their experiences and making them available to other readers, other societies that may have no knowledge of such crimes against humanity might be able to learn and maybe get involved in the issue.

Epistemological and ontological considerations

When faced with choosing the typology of my research, I considered that qualitative research was the option that fit my purpose the most. Qualitative research is a "research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data" (Bryman, 2012, p. 374). Since the focus of this research is analyzing the narratives of survivors of the 'comfort women' system, qualitative research was deemed the most suitable one.

I have used an iterative approach, since I did not know if the theories proposed would give me the means to understand my data. I decided to include some more theory after discussing with my supervisor because we thought that adding these theories would allow for a better understanding. At the same time, I also eliminated some theories that were previously suggested.

As regards as my epistemological stance, I decided to stand by interpretivism because it supports the view that:

> social reality has a meaning for human beings and therefore human action is meaningful - that is, it has a meaning for them and they act on the basis of the meanings that they attribute to their acts and to the acts of others (Bryman, 2012, p. 27)

Standing by interpretivism thus, seemed the best suited option as I am conducting a research that wants to understand the narratives that a group of women share about their traumatic past, and how this past has influenced their present life.

Regarding my ontological stance, I chose to stand by constructionism because I shared the belief that: "Instead of seeing culture as an external reality that acts on and constrains people, it can be taken to be an emergent reality in a continuous state of construction and reconstruction" (Bryman, 2012 p.34). Even though, these women's lives were impacted by cultural believes, at the same time these cultural believes are not inert objects that cannot be changed, on the contrary, culture and cultural believes are always being constructed and reconstructed. Because of such beliefs, I decided that having a constructionist approach would suit my research the best.

Considerations for the literature review

Literature reviews give a general overview of what has been written about a concrete topic. Lamont (2016) describes it as "a conceptual framework that will allow your reader to understand the research choices you have made" (p. 68).

To do my literature review I decided to conduct a narrative review of the literature published about my topic of interest. Bryman (2012) describes narrative review as "a more traditional approach that has advantages of flexibility, which can make it more appropriate for inductive research and qualitative research designs" (p.127). I decided to use this approach as it "may be more suitable for qualitative researchers whose research strategy is based on an interpretative epistemology" (p.111). The sources reviewed then demonstrate the wide interest in the topic by researches of different fields.

The literature reviewed was accessed through the AAU online library and other databases, like JSTOR, using keywords like 'comfort women', 'military sexual slavery' or 'comfort women redress'.

Justification for theories

Memory theory has been used as a mechanism to understand better the portrayal of the 'comfort women' issue in the countries affected. One of the demands of the 'Comfort Women' Redress Movement is that of acknowledging the wrongdoings committed in the past and changing the history schoolbooks so that this acknowledgement is made tangible in the Japanese society. Memory theory then has allowed me to better grasp the reason behind the demands of this collective group, while also understanding

the resistance of the Japanese government to 'formally', 'freely' and 'sincerely' apologize to the survivors.

For the purpose of this study, the various approaches to transitional justice are helpful in allowing a better understanding of the demands that the survivors of the comfort women system have voiced. A reparative approach has been the one chosen by this collective as it is the one that encapsulates better their cause, since all the 'real' perpetrators – as in the soldiers and other persons that raped these women – cannot be traced. Therefore, the survivors and their allies have decided to accuse the state as the perpetrator – as it is the entity that allowed and set up such system – and demand the Japanese state to be the one to address the matter and provide redress for the past wrongdoings. Thus, transitional justice and more concretely reparative justice has allowed me to understand the survivors' demands and the Japanese government position. At the same time, it has provided me with the means to grasp the context of the situation.

Finally, intersectionality was chosen because of the complexity of such topic. Intersectionality, as it will be explained in the theory section, is about recognizing that phenomena cannot be explained using just a single category. On the contrary, social phenomena needs to be explained as the intersection of multiple categories. If I wanted to understand the 'unwillingness' of the survivors to not speak up right after the events took place or to understand their justice demands according to their past and present sufferings, I needed a theory that would allow for such complexity. Thus, as per my understanding, the hardships experienced and their current demands cannot be explained just by looking at race-only, gender-only, or class-only causes. Therefore, intersectionality has provided me the means to understand such a complex issue.

Data collection

This study has used secondary data for the analysis instead of data collected by me. Secondary data could be described as

> In qualitative research secondary analysis is more narrowly conceptualized as a methodology for the study of non-naturalistic or artefactual data derived from previous studies, such as fieldnotes, observational records, and tapes and transcripts of interviews and focus groups (Heaton, 2004 p.5).

I decided to use several sources as I chose to use secondary data. I did so in order to have more than one perspective, as the documentaries and interviews could have already been biased.

For the purpose of this research then, I have used several sources that I will enumerate below.

Tiffany Hsiung

Tiffany Hsiung is a filmmaker established in Toronto. She has won several international awards for her work. She has focused on the stories of marginalized communities and groups (About, n.d.). Her most notable work is a documentary called The Apology (2016).

For this research I have used Tiffany Hsiung (2016)'s documentary The Apology, that follows the daily lives of three former comfort women from China, South Korea and the Philippines.

Korea Center for Investigative Journalism

The Korea Center for Investigative Journalism is a nonprofit and nonpartisan independent news outlet, as described in their website (About Us, n.d.). Their aim is "to empower citizens with accurate and comprehensive information on issues often under-reported or overlooked by mainstream media coverage, so as to help them hold those in power accountable" (About Us, n.d.). According to the organization (About Us, n.d.) the center was formed in 2012 by a reduced group of journalists that opposed Lee Myung-Bak's administration, arguing that it was oppressing their freedom of press and speech.

For this research, I have chosen two of 'Team Witness' documentaries titled Sorrowful Homecoming (2016) – that shows several interviews with North Korean survivors – and My Wish (2016) – an interview with Kim Hak-Soon, the first survivor that spoke up –. Both documentaries are published by the Korea Center for Investigative Journalism.

Arirang TV

Arirang TV is an English-language TV channel located in South Korea. The TV channel is owned by the Korea International Broadcasting Foundation. It is financed by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism. The TV channel broadcasts in more than 100 countries around the world, and it aims to promote the country overseas (About Arirang, 2018).

For this research, I have chosen one documentary written and co-produced by Connyoung Jennifer Moon, who works for this TV channel, called “Comfort Women”: One Last Cry (2013). The documentary portrays several survivors from South Korea, China, the Philippines and Australia.

Direct testimonies collected in *War Victimization and Japan – International Public Hearing Report*

The *War Victimization and Japan – International Public Hearing Report* is a report that documents The International Public Hearing Concerning Post-War Compensation of Japan held in Tokyo on the 9th of December 1992. The conference touched several subjects related to ‘comfort women’. Six survivors from different countries explained their stories of being abducted, raped and tortured by Japanese soldiers (Seto, 1993 February 13).

For this study, I have used only the testimonies of survivors from China, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Dutch Islands and the Philippines shared in this report.

Asian Boss

Asian Boss is a news media company funded by Kei Ibaraki and Stephen Park. They use social media like YouTube or Facebook as their platform for sharing their content. They document news, social issues and cultural trends from Asia (Description, n.d.).

For this study, I have used the interview conducted by Stephen Park from ‘Asian Boss’ to the former ‘comfort woman’ Kim Bok-Dong.

Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is a big term that encompasses “a multitude of theoretical forms, unfolds in a variety of specific analytic practices and is grounded in diverse disciplines” (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.vii).

Alan Bryman (2012) describes narrative analysis as

> an approach to the elicitation and analysis of data that is sensitive to the sense of temporal sequence that people, as providers of accounts (often in the form of stories) about themselves or events by which they are affected, detect in their lives and surrounding episodes and inject into their accounts (p.582).

Daiute & Lightfoot (2004, p.viii) argue that one of narrative analysis' strengths is its "theoretical complexity and methodological diversity in narrative modes of inquiry". Moreover, the same authors state that narrative analysis is regarded to be flexible and systematic even though it aims for complexity.

Narrative analysis may use tools like "metaphors, linguistic devises like pronouns, or cultural conventions like time for insights about diversity within and across participants in their research, and thus create ways to explain phenomena without reducing them" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.viii).

Narrative analysis may rely on themes, which can be drawn from literary theory, and that allow one to explain "vicissitudes in the drama of interpreted lives, including time, truth, beauty, character, and conflict" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.x). At the same time, narratives can also be genres, which are ways, that have been culturally produced, of arranging experience and knowledge (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.x). Narratives can account for different amounts of time: they can relate to entire life stories, or just concrete periods of time (Bryman, 2012 p.585).

According to Daiute & Lightfoot (2004, p.x) feminist and critical psychological researchers normally use the term of narrative as "a coherent story line organized implicitly by some dominant force to characterize the values, practices, and controls inherent in groups determining who the heroes are, what life should be like, and what should be heralded or hidden".

It must be noted that narratives are to be regarded as specific discourse forms, that encapsulate cultural values and personal subjectivities (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.x). Narratives, though, are not just words, they are more than that. Narratives are "cultural meanings and interpretations that guide perception, thought, interaction, and action" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.x). Thus, narratives are ways of organizing life, "social relations, interpretations of the past, and plans for the future", and one's way of telling stories is influenced by how one perceives, remembers, and plans for possible future events (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004 p.xi).

My approach to narrative analysis

In this research, I have decided to use narrative analysis as my framework to analyze the data collected. I have decided to focus on the localization of themes throughout the whole narratives of the survivors. I have divided the analysis in three parts.

The first one focuses on the narrations of the 'before', 'while' and 'after' of their 'captivity' time. Here, the themes discovered have been given names of emotions due to the highly emotional content.

The second part of the analysis focuses on the narratives about the Japanese government and the Japanese people. Here, a division has been made since not all survivors shared the same opinions. Therefore, more than focusing on themes I have decided to focus on the two distinct narratives as a whole.

The third part of the analysis focuses on the narratives relating to the words 'apology' and 'compensation'/ 'reparations' from the Japanese government. Here, themes have been identified according to the survivors' whole narratives about the subject.

Justification for data analysis

I have decided to use narrative analysis on this research as my main goal was to provide a platform for the stories of these women to be heard in other parts of the world. Narrative analysis provided me with the means to do so, as it focuses on the stories people have to tell of past events.

It was very important to give primacy to the stories themselves, so the theories have not been explicitly used in the analysis chapter. The theories though are implicitly present in it as they have allowed for a better understanding of the survivors' experiences and demands. Thus, the analysis is about the individual memories of the survivors, that put together constitute a collective memory of the events.

However, this research does not only replicate the stories of these women but tries to interrogate the meaning behind such narratives. Therefore, I have intended to uncover the meaning behind their narrations of their traumatic pasts and how and why a possible redress is suggested. In order to do so, narrative analysis was then the most fitted and only option available.

Limitations

When being faced with the question of the typology of data that I could use for the purpose of this research I encountered several problematics. First, I wanted to research a complicated topic; secondly, producing my own data was difficult because of logistics – the place survivors lived and because of language barriers – and monetary and schedule issues – having to travel far away to collect data for field research, and the cost it

represents for a student that did not receive any funding, and only having a short amount of time to conduct this research –. Therefore, I decided to use secondary data for my analysis. I must acknowledge that by doing so, I am conscious of the possibility of such data to be already biased. Nonetheless, I believe that I may bring out some other dimensions of this data with my perspective.

Another issue to be taken into account is that of analyzing traumatic testimonies of survivors. It is indeed full of emotional content and therefore it could have made me lose some objectivity. Moreover, before conducting this research I already had some previous ideas about the topic, perhaps due to the fact of learning of such past events in South Korea. Therefore, I ideated this research partially with the desire of presenting these survivors stories to other societies and thus raising awareness about the topic.

One last point worth mentioning is the possible repercussion on my objectivity – myself being a woman who identifies as feminist –. However, I believe that as Woodiwiss (2017) points out

> The challenge for feminist researchers is therefore not simply to record the stories women tell, but to explore why and how people (women) might tell the stories they do, and what might constrain their possibilities for telling different stories, and ask what the implications are for telling particular stories. Indeed, I would go further and say that, as feminists, it is our responsibility to explore how and why some stories are told and not others, and why some stories can be and are heard and others silenced, or at times misrepresented (p.16).

Therefore, taking that into account, I have tried to question these women's voices at the same time that I have listened and heard them. Nonetheless, because of the emotionally loaded nature of such stories I may have lost some objectivity.

Theories

This section will be dedicated at the theories chosen for this research. First, individual and collective memory will be discussed. Secondly, transitional justice and several conceptual distinctions will be outlined. Finally, intersectionality will be looked at.

Individual and collective memory theories have been selected as the narratives analyzed are indeed individual memories that have come to be a collective memory. Transitional justice was deemed a fit choice as it provided the means to understand the justice demands of the survivors. Intersectionality was finally selected so that such a complex issue could be better explained and understood. The justification of such selection is further explained in the methodology chapter.

Individual and collective memory

The Oxford English dictionary describes memory as "The faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information". The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines it as "the power or process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned and retained especially through associative mechanisms" or "the store of things learned and retained from an organism's activity or experience as evidenced by modification of structure or behavior or by recall and recognition". Memory is being described as a process of recalling information previously learnt or experiences previously lived. Schwartz (2015 p.9) states that memory mostly reflects reality but there is a need to be cautious as distortions can arise due to its nature and the way it is constructed.

A distinction between individual memory and collective memory has to be made, as it is not the same. Anastasio, Ehrenberger and Watson (2012, p.8) define individual memory as something that "encompasses synaptic, neuronal, brain, and psychological levels" while collective memory is being described as encompassing "supra-individual levels: couple, family, community, nation, religion, and so forth". Schwartz (2015, p.10) describes individual memory as

> what individuals know, believe, and feel about themselves at earlier times of their lives. They do so by means of the brain's storage and recall systems, which mediate information from parents, family members, friends and acquaintances,

> diaries, photo albums, recordings, birthdays, anniversaries, as well as other social frames, including dates of significant political, economic, cultural, and social events by which individuals locate their own past within the wider world

Collective memory, on the other hand is described by Weedon & Jordan (2012, p.143) as

> narratives of past experience constituted by and on behalf of specific groups within which they find meaningful forms of identification that may empower. Collective memory and the institutions and practices that support it help to create, sustain and reproduce the ‘‘imagined communities’’ with which individuals identify and that give them a sense of history, place and belonging.

While Schwartz (2015, p.10) defines collective memory as

> the *distribution* throughout society of what individuals know, believe, and feel about the past, how they judge the past morally, how closely they identify with it, and how much they are inspired by it as a model for their conduct and identity.

Then Weedon & Jordan explain that collective memory is a broad term as its size and complexity can vary completely, as it can apply to whole nations, ethnic or religious groups, local communities or even families (2012, p.143-144). Anastasio, Ehrenberger & Watson add that “relationships occur at the same level of abstraction — namely groups of individuals — and frequently overlap, as is the case with most social memberships” (Anastasio, Ehrenberger & Watson, 2012 p.8).

Criticism of the term ‘collective memory’

According to Olick (2007, p.18), critics of collective memory have manifested that such a term is just a substitute for older terms like ‘political tradition’ or ‘myth’. Other critical scholars have found worrisome the usage of a term like ‘memory’, which is associated with individual thought, to a phenomenon that occurs at a collective-level (Olick, 2007 p.18). However, as Burke rightly points out “if we refuse to use such terms, we are in danger of failing to notice the different ways in which the ideas of individuals are influenced by the groups to which they belong” (Burke, 1989 p.98 in Olick, 2007 p.18).

Olick (2007) insists on the fact that using such terminology is not *per se* problematic here, but the meaning it entails: “the ways in which such labels structures – that is, both enables and constrains – our conceptual and empirical work” (p.18) may be

problematic, he contends. The author goes on and wonders what would the advantages be of using such terminology, that of collective memory, instead of 'commemoration', 'tradition' or 'myth' (p.18). A possible solution to such criticisms is to look at collective memory not as a sole term by itself but interrelated with history and commemoration, as Schwartz (2015) suggests.

Collective memory, history and commemoration: three concepts closely intertwined

Collective memory is indeed a complicated and puzzling concept. Schwartz (2015, p.10) states that collective memory must be understood together with history and commemoration.

History can be described as an objective viewpoint that allows one to evaluate the causes and consequences of events (Schwartz, 2015 p.10). Moreover, it is not influenced by certain groups as it is external and thus, it describes events independently of who is in power or whose opinions are regarded as more validated (Schwartz, 2015 p.10).

Collective memory, as described above, can be understood as not only a tool or framework that allows for interpretation of what it is being remembered by individuals, but more than that (Schwartz, 2015 p.11). It should be noted that collective memory, even though it is a distributive entity that can fluctuate and vary throughout time, "denies the possibility of fully shared conceptions of the past. The adjective "collective" is not synonymous with consensual. That every distribution also has a central tendency makes total dissensus equally impossible" (Schwartz, 2015 p.11). Schwartz (2015, p.11) argues that collective memory could be compared with public opinion to some extent, but collective memory, in contrast to public opinion, it is not only represented itself by "what individuals, in the aggregate, believe about past incidents and persons but also by multiple forms of *commemorative symbolism*".

Commemoration, contrary to history or collective memory, "distinguishes events and persons believed to be deserving of celebration from those deserving of being merely remembered" (Schwartz, 2015 p.11). Commemoration is achieved through the use of different vehicles (Schwartz, 2015 p.11-12):

- Commemorative writings: eulogies, poems, plays, etc.
- Commemorative music: anthems, hymns, songs of remembrance

- Icons, which are “signs resembling what they represent […] that commemorate the past by bringing it to visual presence”: paintings, statues, prints, photographs, motion picture films, television and online video.
- Monuments, which “are designed to elevate the public imagination by dramatic reference to grand events and their men.”: obelisks, antique temples, and other memorial structures
- Shrines, which allow the individual to get in contact with the sacred: birthplaces, residences, state buildings, military headquarters, battle sites, and sites of individual death
- ‘Naming’ patterns which make the past omnipresent by integrating it into “the identity of businesses, streets, cities, towns, counties, states, rivers, and mountains”
- Observances which allow to “maintain the memory of extraordinary events and persons and to preserve their essence within the collective consciousness”: periodic performance of anniversary, centennial, and holiday rites, perform the same functions

Once the concepts of history, commemoration and collective memory have been defined, their relationship can be explained. According to Schwartz (2015, p.12) history’s aim is to make the past rational while commemoration is employed to sanctify history. Moreover, history analyzes the past while commemoration uses history as a commitment. At the same time that history is described as a “system of “referential symbols” representing known facts and their sequence” while commemoration can be said to be “ a system of “condensation symbols” (Sapir 1930: 492–93) that simplifies events of the past and clarifies the moral sentiments they inspire” (Schwartz, 2015 p.12). Thus, history’s main goal is to question the world “by producing models of its permanence and change” while commemoration, similarly to ideology, wants to “promote commitment to the world by producing symbols of its shortcomings as well as achievements and values” (Schwartz, 2015 p.12). But how does collective memory relate to history and commemoration? Collective memory, then, can be said to be the product, vehicle and source of history and commemoration.

How does collective memory work?

Most collective memories cannot be traced back to an exact point, as they have existed for hundreds of years (Schwartz, 2015 p.12). However, some collective memories are not that old, and their starting point could be traced back to a certain degree.

Collective memories are normally transmitted orally generation from generation and are often retained even after the individuals who reported them as living memories have perished (Schwartz, 2015 p.13). Most of the times, as these memories are passed on from generation to generation, they suffer modifications, but normally their 'essence' does not change (Schwartz, 2015 p.13).

But what makes a collective memory a collective memory rather than just a forgotten individual memory? Schwartz (2015, p.13) states that for an individual memory of a past event to become a collective memory, there is a need for more than one single 'original' memory. What normally occurs is that several 'original' versions of a past event were told, and it is through all the versions and carriers of these original versions of the memory jointly that the 'meaning' of the memory is constructed (Schwartz, 2015 p.13). Schwartz (2015) states that "the more varied the narrative, the more accurately it is conveyed and remembered" and thus "such stories contain bits of information that are vague at the individual level but coherent in their assemblage" (p.13).

How are collective memories preserved?

According to Schwartz (2015, p.14) "coherence of historical description results not only from the obdurateness of the reality it represents but also because this reality inspires preservation and transmission". In opposition, "the perpetuation of material things—writings, recordings, and paintings stored in archives and museums or preserved on film—is necessary but insufficient for preservation, as many objects thus preserved are totally unknown or ignored" (Schwartz, 2015 p.14). To effectively preserve past events means maintaining "the past as a living thing", and to do such thing there is a need to have a "cognitive bridge connecting past and present" (Schwartz, 2015 p.15). Therefore, such past events must be able to resonate with the present conditions and be regarded as relevant (Schwartz, 2015 p.15).

This is achieved through 'keying', which allows "this connection by aligning current events with happenings in the past, and by activating *frames* that shape the meaning of

these current events" (Schwartz, 2015 p.15). Consequently, 'keying' and 'framing' are what define collective memory's function by pairing the past with the present as

> 1) a model *of* society—reflecting its needs, interests, fears, and aspirations; and 2) a model *for* society—a template for thought, sentiment, morality, and conduct. Presupposing one another, these models constitute the frames into which individuals key their experience and so realize its meaning (Schwartz, 2015 p.15)

Finally, as mentioned above, individual experiences of the past do not only involve history, memory, and commemorations, which are the ones that frame it, but transmitting them from generation to generation is indeed a crucial feature (Schwartz, 2015 p.15). Collective memory, then, is a "path dependent" phenomena as it is not only affected by "its social contexts but also by previous representations of its contexts" (Schwartz, 2015 p.15). Moreover, once a memory has settled within a collective group, it is an arduous task trying to modify it, even more ignore it (Schwartz, 2015 p.15).

Transitional Justice

Right after or years after atrocities like genocide, torture, war and wartime sexual slavery and other gross human right violations have happened, there is a need to address such crimes. Do the perpetrators need to be punished? If so how? Who should be held accountable and why? How should the survivors be dealt with? What kind of 'rehabilitation' do they need after suffering such abuses and injuries? Do the survivors need to be acknowledged for their suffering? (Quinn, 2016 p.390). Transitional justice deals with the questions above.

First, transitional justice seeks to address gross human rights violations being committed (Quinn, 2016 p.390). Secondly, it is indeed an important tool in order to end the vicious cycle of impunity and punish the perpetrators and help then survivors attain redress (Quinn, 2016 p.390). Therefore, the purpose of transitional justice is to seek justice in order to achieve redress for survivors of gross human rights violations and mass violence, but it can also be seen as a mechanism to overcome past wrongdoings and construct a peaceful future (Lambourne, 2013 p.32). Thus, justice is deeply intertwined with reconciliation and peace. Thirdly, the means of pursuing transitional justice are more and more established, sanctioned or even funded by the international organizations such as the United Nations (Quinn, 2016 p.390). Transitional justice has become increasingly

important in the last few decades. It can be considered an umbrella term for different approaches that handle issues with the past after having experienced a violent conflict or authoritarian regimes (Buckley-Zistel, Braun, Koloma & Mieth, 2013 p.14). The term 'transitional justice' first appeared in the early 1990's and has grown into a big variety of mechanisms and institutions that allow for redress of past wrongs, seeking to restore the dignity of survivors and/or allow justice to be provided in times of political transition (Buckley-Zistel, Braun, Koloma & Mieth, 2013 p.14).

Because of the nature of transitional justice is to deal with past abuses, there are several ways to put it into practice, dealing with the perpetrators and/or the survivors differently. Below, I outline some main conceptual distinctions.

Retributive justice

Retributive justice could be described as the type of justice that is practiced in the 'North divide' (Quinn, 2016 p.391). That is, perpetrators being held accountable by means of prosecution, through court proceeding and sentencing, and punishment for the crimes that have been committed (Quinn, 2016 p.391). Within this type of transitional justice, there are two types of possible trials or tribunals: National or International. National trials are normally held under normal circumstances, i.e. when there is no political or military impediment that could stain its proceeding (Quinn, 2016 p.392). On the other hand, when such trials cannot be held because of political instability or because of the unwillingness of national justice to carry them out, international justice takes place (Quinn, 2016 p.393). Examples of this kind of tribunals could be the Nuremberg Trials or the Tokyo Tribunals that were held to deal with the crimes committed by the Nazis and the Japanese during WWII (Quinn. 2016 p.393). Other examples are the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) or the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). These kinds of tribunals were temporary and just used for a single purpose. Nonetheless, the International Criminal Court (ICC) was recently established as a permanent tribunal that deals with gross human right violations (Quinn, 2016 p.393). Other forms of international justice can be found in what is called universal jurisdiction, which "is claimed on the grounds that the crime committed is considered to be a crime against all, and therefore any state may claim criminal jurisdiction" (Quinn, 2016 p.393).

Restorative justice

As opposed to retributive justice, which is aimed at punishing perpetrators, restorative justice could be described as a 'healing process' for both the victims/survivors and the perpetrators. According to Quinn (2016, p.394) restorative justice "is about restoring both the victim and perpetrator of crimes back into harmony with the community". In contrast with retributive justice, survivors play a central role where, ideally, they are empowered by the whole process (Quinn, 2016 p.394). The means of achieving restorative justice are normally truth commissions and/or healing circles. Truth commissions are "bodies established to look at widespread human rights violations that took place during a specified period of time, on a temporary basis, by the state, often in conjunction with opposition forces and/or the involvement of the international community" (Quinn, 2016 p.394-295). Bearing in mind that truth commissions are never the same, they normally share the goal of looking into and questioning the past. The collection of data for such mechanism of justice is through questionnaires or sometimes public testimonies, that are later recorded into reports explaining what happened (Quinn, 2016 p.395). Restorative justice, in opposition to retributive justice, focuses more on the survivors' suffering, can result into an educative experience for the whole community, have more flexibility and can be adapted to different settings and needs, and are normally less expensive than setting up tribunals or conducting trials (Quinn, 2016 p.395). Some examples of such processes are *La Comisión Nacional para la Verdad y Reconciliación* (National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation) in Chile after General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship or the *Commission nationale de verité et de justice* (National Commission of Truth and Justice) in Haiti after Aristide came back to power (Quinn, 2016 p.396).

Transformative justice

Wendy Lambourne (2013, p.19) developed the concept of transformative justice thinking about how transitional justice could contribute to peacebuilding. She developed this model of justice after field research that was conducted in Cambodia in 1999, Rwanda in 1998 and 2005, East Timor in 2004 and Sierra Leone in 2006 (Lambourne, 2013 p.23).

The model would allow a more comprehensive view that incorporates what affected communities have to say when having to deal with the past and constructing peace and reconciliation for the future (Lambourne, 2013, p.19). The author further states that

> a model of transformative justice that requires rethinking our focus on 'transition' as an interim process that links the past and the future, to 'transformation' that implies long-term, sustainable processes embedded in society. It involves recognizing and addressing the multiple justice needs of the local population in a way that draws on the various cultural approaches that co-exist with the dominant Western worldview and practice.

Lambourne (2013) suggests an intertwining of both restorative and retributive justice that are interdependent and do not exclude each other (p.20). When looking at gross human rights violations it should be noted that

> the idea that informal customary law practices might be more appropriate as a transitional justice model […] is misleading and may be seen as imposing an unfair burden on survivors to accept restorative justice as sufficient when retributive justice would otherwise be expected. And vice versa, imposing primarily retributive legal justice mechanisms may also be seen as inadequate by failing to take into account local community needs for restorative justice and reconciliation. (Lambourne, 2013 p.20).

The author thus insists on the need of looking at the context before taking a decision. The aim should be to try to incorporate both retributive and restorative justice aspects to achieve accountability mechanisms. At the same time, the justice mechanisms need to provide good structures and relationships that can supply the support and respect for human rights and the rule of law in the future (Lambourne, 2013 p.21). These justice mechanisms, at the same time, should be able to incorporate legal, political, economic and psychosocial dimensions (Lambourne, 2013 p.22). By psychosocial dimension, the author implies the need to

> address the need for truth in terms of both knowledge and acknowledgement of the violation and its human and relational impact: knowledge of who was responsible, how it happened, where the bodies or remains are located, and acknowledgement of the loss, pain, hurt and suffering caused. Both knowledge and acknowledgment can contribute to a psychological process of healing and building of inner peace. Combining this inner transformation with relational transformation provides the foundation for reconciliation and a sense of psychosocial justice. Reconciliation is thus seen as a process of relationship-

building as part of conflict transformation, as well as an outcome that is part of the experience of sustainable peace (Lambourne, 2013 p.22).

Therefore, Lambourne states that a transformative justice model should include four aspects:

1. Accountability or legal justice: reconciling retributive and restorative justice (Lambourne, 2013 p.33)
2. Truth, knowledge and acknowledgement: it allows for healing (Lambourne, 2013 p.33)
3. Socioeconomic justice, as in "financial or material compensation, restitution or reparation for past violations or crimes" (Lambourne, 2013 p.28)
4. Political justice (Lambourne, 2013 p.33)

Reparative justice

Reparative justice differs from retributive, restorative or transformative justice in that its main concern is to repair the wrongdoings committed in the past so that the suffering and loss experienced by the victims and survivors could be remedied (Quinn, 2016 p.397). Therefore, reparative justice sees a need to "address the moral standing of victims of grave wrongs and to underscore the reparative responsibilities of political authorities who have failed to safeguard justice" (Walker, 2010 p.13-14). At the same time, that also offers "a model of reparative possibilities and responsibilities for other entities and institutions, such as corporations, universities, and churches, to make amends in both symbolic and material ways" (Walker, 2010 p.13-14). The means of achieving reparative justice can be through an apology and/or restitution. The first possibility is issuing an apology, as in the perpetrator/s saying sorry for what happened, or if time has passed and the perpetrator/s are not able to apologize, then a representative of the perpetrator/s could issue an apology in their behalf (Quinn, 2016 p.397). Apologies can be presented from simple personal apologies to a huge variety of gestures and measures including "official public apologies, the creation of memorials, the exhumation and reburial of human remains after atrocities, access to medical, social, or legal services, and attempts to uncover and make available to victims, their survivors, and their societies the truth about abuses" (Walker, 2010 p.19). Issuing an apology has many benefits:

1. Firstly, publicly acknowledgement by the perpetrator/s of their wrongdoings towards the victims and survivors has the power to help the survivor heal and move forward, letting go slowly of the painful past (Quinn, 2016 p.397).
2. Secondly, an apology can lessen up the feelings of being wronged in the past. It can help the survivors eventually get rid of the anger and hurt they feel (Quinn, 2016 p.397).
3. Thirdly, the survivors may feel a sense of vindication as they are recognized as being right (Quinn, 2016 p.397).
4. Fourthly, the survivors' trauma because of the past events may be diminished (Quinn, 2016 p.397).

It must be noted that just because an apology is issued, the feeling of being wronged will not magically disappear. Particularly, if the apology in question is perceived as insincere or if the survivors believe that the person apologizing is not entitled to do so (Quinn, 2016 p.397).

The second possibility is that of restitution, "a token paid in compensation for loss or injury" (Quinn, 2016 p.397). One must not equal restitution with the concept of compensation as no amount of money can never truly compensate a survivor for the pain, loss and suffering experienced and no wrongdoings can be undone by just money (Quinn, 2016, p.397; Walker, 2010 p.17). The UN (2005), describes restitution as "Restitution includes, as appropriate: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one's place of residence, restoration of employment and return of property". Nevertheless, restitution can be useful and sometimes necessary for different purposes as

> Insofar as reparative justice aims to relieve a victim of having unfairly to bear the consequences of wrongful harms and losses, the importance of material restitution, of compensation equivalent to losses or sufficient to their replacement, or of material resources that allow for victims to continue their lives and pursue their plans without undue burden is obvious. (Walker, 2010 p.17)

However, it must be taken into account that when restitution is provided not as such but as compensation, as a charitable deed, rather than as something that one is morally obliged to do because of their or their ancestors' wrongdoings to repair the survivors' sufferings,

it can be seen as insulting (Walker, 2010 p.17-18). It can appear as such because "it denies that what is offered is in fact due and that there is an obligation to provide it" (Walker, 2010 p.18).

Reparative justice is normally associated with material restitution, even though reparations should always "bear a certain set of meanings that are communicated between those who make amends and those who receive them" (Walker, 2010 p.14). Therefore, despite the strong associating of reparative justice with material restitution or compensation, there is a need to accompany this with a sincere apology, as by itself it does not suffice (Walker, 2010 p.14-15). The "moral vulnerability" experienced by the survivors, that have been "ignored, erased, or held in contempt when one lacks the standing to call others to an accounting of their responsibilities where one is unjustly treated" must be addressed (Walker, 2010 p.15). This moral vulnerability must be confronted, and it can be 'diminished' by material restitutions, if needed, but never stand-alone without an apology:

> Reparations must address the harms that wrongs create; but acts and awards of reparations must also acknowledge the wrongs themselves and the obligations of justice that flow from those wrongs. This means that reparations must always include a gesture of recognition of a wrong and acknowledgment of responsibility from those who have done wrong, or are responsible for its repair, to those who have been wronged. (Walker, 2010 p.18)

Intersectionality

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality should be regarded as a complex concept that it is very difficult to describe (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.2). Different scholars view intersectionality in different ways and therefore, describe it differently. Collins & Bridge describe it as

> A way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor. They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class,

> but by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves (Collins & Bridge, 2016 p.2)

McCall (2005, p.1771) prefers to refer to intersectionality as "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations". Yuval-Davis (2011, p.369) defines intersectionality as

> a development of feminist standpoint theory which claims, in somewhat different ways, that it is vital to account for the social positioning of the social agent and challenged 'the god-trick of seeing everything from nowhere' (Haraway 1991:189) as a cover and a legitimization of a hegemonic masculinist 'positivistic' positioning

While Crenshaw explains it as follows

> Intersectionality is what occurs when a woman from a minority group . . . tries to navigate the main crossing in the city. . . . The main highway is "racism road". One cross street can be Colonialism, then Patriarchy Street. . . . She has to deal not only with one form of oppression but with all forms, those named as road signs, which link together to make a double, a triple, multiple, a many layered blanket of oppression (Crenshaw cited in Yuval-Davis, 2010, p. 47-48).

The majority of theorists writing on intersectionality, thus, agree that it is an umbrella-term for the intersection of different categories that may explain different phenomena, not being exclusive but intertwined.

Where did the term 'intersectionality' originate?

Kimberlé Crenshaw was the first one who introduced the term of intersectionality to the research community while looking at Black women's oppression experiences regarding employment in the United States (Yuval-Davis, 2010 p.44). Crenshaw (1991) stated that "any real commitment towards eliminating racism and patriarchy could not ignore those located at the intersections of both–i.e. Black women" (p. 166). After that, she was invited to explain the concept in a special session dedicated to the subject in Geneva "during the preparatory session to the World Conference against Racism (WCAR) in September 2001 in Durban, South Africa" (Yuval-Davis, 2010 p.44).

However, Crenshaw is not the first person who used the concept of intersectionality (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.64, Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179). According to Collins & Bilge (2016, p.64-65), before Crenshaw gave intersectionality a name, the 1960's and 1970's were when core ideas of intersectionality were developed. During the 1970's, African-American women participating in social movements developed intersectional analyses throughout political pamphlets, poetry, essays, edited volumes, art, among other creative expressions (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.65; Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179). Examples of such works include 1970 volume *The Black Woman*, which was edited by black feminist author and essayist Toni Cade Bambara; Frances Deal's essay titled "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female" and published in 1969; or the Combahee River Collective's (CRC) "A Black Feminist" in 1977 (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.66-67).

African-American women not only participated in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements but also took positions of leadership within them. Because of that, they realized how important it was to test these ideas within political contexts, while they made use of what was learned from framing analyses of social inequality in social movements (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.65).

> African-American women understood that addressing the oppression they faced could not be solved by race-only, or class-only or gender-only or sexuality-only, frameworks. Thus early statements of intersectionality permeated black feminist intellectual production because other women of color developed similar sensibilities and because a social context of social movement activism provided venues for working on these ideas (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.65-66).

Therefore, even though Crenshaw's work is, indeed, very important for feminists theorizing on intersectionality, it cannot be considered the beginning point of it (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.80-81; Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179). However, by naming an emerging field that was full of complexities and differences, Crenshaw enabled the possibility to produce a coalition among those that study race, gender and class (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.80). Moreover, by naming this emerging field, it might have also allowed for a legitimate scholarly production of texts that could fit the academic world's norms (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.80). More importantly, she demonstrated how intersectionality could be used as an analytical tool, which marked a remarkable transitional moment for intersectionality studies (Collins & Bilge, 2016 p.83).

Criticism and contra-criticism

Intersectionality, because of its complexity, has not escaped from criticism. First of all, intersectionality has received some criticism because it is said to divide and weaken political and social groups because it privileges differences rather than similarities (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179). The critics of intersectionality believe that by separating people into categories will, at the end, split people too much and will result into leaving them without allies that could support them (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179).

Schwartz-DuPre (2012, p.178-179) states that there are two different types of criticism. On the one hand, the first strand of criticism suggests that there should be more categorization, while the second one would like to completely remove the categorization (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.178-179).

The first strand of criticism argues that "each social position is relegated to its own axis, there will be no effective group coalescence" (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.179). On the other hand, the second strand would like to go in the opposite direction as they insist that "a consideration of intersections does not go far enough, because it maintains and may even reinforce identity politics" and thus refute categories at all (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.179).

Post-structuralists have tried to move beyond these strands of criticism defending the maintenance of political categories of identity, at the same time that it should be recognized that "identity is neither stable nor foundational" (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.179). Moreover, by doing so, followers of that idea can endorse the common aspects while taking notice that their categorical agenda has its limits (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.179). Thus, "the antifoundational group viewpoint considers context, recognizing that hierarchies, positions of privilege, and oppression may be more politicized in some environments than in others" (Schwartz-DuPre, 2012 p.179).

Intersectionality: a complex term

Complex, complexity, and complexities are words that can usually appear in essays and scholarly works that discuss intersectionality. McCall (2005) suggests three ways to define the complexity of intersectionality, and thus move beyond the criticisms mentioned above. These different ways of 'doing' intersectionality are defined by looking

at how one understands and uses categories in one's analysis to discover how complex intersectionality can be related to in social life (McCall, 2005 p. 1773).

The first category is that of 'anticategorical complexity', which is based on "a methodology that deconstructs analytical categories. Social life is considered too irreducibly complex […] to make fixed categories anything but simplifying social fictions that produce inequalities in the process of producing differences" (McCall, 2005, p. 1773). An anticategorical approach then rejects categories whatsoever and tries to deconstruct them. This rejection comes from the fact that scholars working in this approach view social life as too irreducibly complex. Thus, it cannot be reduced to fixed categories as it would simplify the social phenomena that produce inequality.

Secondly, 'intercategorical complexity' demands scholars to provisionally "adopt existing analytical categories to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions" (McCall, 2005 p.1773). An intercategorical approach then accepts categories, though maintaining a critical stance, thus giving them an ambivalent status. Its name comes from scholars using this approach, who normally use it to focus on particular social groups at neglected points of intersection.

Finally, 'intracategorical complexity' can be explained as being at the center of the other two approaches. The 'intracategorical complexity' focuses on scrutinizing specific social groups and how their inequalities intersect (McCall, 2005 p.1773). If using an intracategorical approach, scholars must provisionally adopt existing analytical categories in order to record relationships of inequality among social groups. Thus, it uses categories like e.g. gender or race, strategically, recognizing that such categories are not static and can be altered.

Analysis

Talking about a traumatic past can be an arduous effort for survivors. Nonetheless, it can also become a way for the survivors to come into terms with this past by sharing their story with others and slowly starting to let go and forgiving the perpetrators but also themselves. However, this process does not depend solely on the survivor, there is a need to acknowledge the survivor's suffering and pain and sincerely apology for the past wrongdoings. This chapter will explore how survivors of the 'comfort women' system have coped with their traumatic past and what a possible apology would signify to them. I will do so by analyzing the different documentaries, interviews and written testimonies listed in the methodology chapter.

This chapter, then, will be divided in three sections, corresponding to the three research questions previously mentioned. The first section will discuss the themes found throughout the whole narratives of their past. The second section will continue with the themes localized relating to the Japanese government, Japanese people and Japan. Finally, the third section will discuss the narratives produced regarding the words 'Apology' and 'Compensation'/'Reparations'. The three sections will be then tied together and debated in the discussion chapter.

Narratives of the past

Throughout the whole narratives of the survivors, I have identified several themes that will be divided according to the development of their past. First, it will be discussed how the survivors portray their past before the traumatic experience. Secondly, the themes discovered in the narratives of their 'captivity' time will be discussed. Finally, the portrayal of the aftermath of their 'captivity' will be analyzed.

Because of the highly emotional content of the recounting of their traumatic past, I have decided to give the themes identified names of emotions. I have gathered each of the themes in chronological order following the headings 'Before the Storm', 'The Storm is Here' and 'After the Storm comes the Calm?', which refer to the 'before', 'while' and 'after' their captivity time in 'comfort stations'.

Before the storm

Innocence

A recurring theme found in most of the narratives related to their time before 'becoming' a 'comfort woman' is that of 'innocence'. Most of the survivors have emphasized how innocent and child-like they were when they were abducted or 'recruited' as sex slaves. The following are some examples:

> Gyeong-Saeng Lee: "I was only 12, I was still a baby in my mom's arms. I did not know anything about sex and sex slave's life […] He was forcing himself on a little girl, of course her bottom parts were all torn apart and destroyed […] after he abused me sexually to fill his needs, he sent his soldiers to a 12-year-old girl" (Team Witness, 2016b 18:26-18:40; 18:50-18:55; 19:17-19:26)

Young-Sook Kim: "I did not know what 'play' meant at age 13. I knew nothing" (Team Witness, 2016b 23:42-23:46).

Adela Barroquillo: "I was so weak; I couldn't take it. I was only 14 years old" (Hsiung, 2016 39:53-40:02).

Kim Bok-Dong: "I was definitely the youngest one there. […] That's right. I was 14 in Western age, which is 15 in Korean age" […] "I was too young to realize that something was wrong. […] I had no idea what was coming" (Asian Boss, 2018 3:05-3:14; 3:30-3:40)

With these statements, the survivors want to make the listener aware of their young age and immaturity, and thus their innocence. All of them recount their first sexual experience as something brutal, violent and most of the times bloody.

It is indeed a very young age, when these women, some still children, were kidnapped or 'recruited'. Maybe their intention in emphasizing their 'innocence' is that of merely reinforcing the evilness of such acts. However, given the importance that innocence and 'purity' has in Asian societies, one could argue that it might also conceal another meaning. The fact that some of them continually state how innocent and 'pure' they were, sometimes equaling it to 'lack of knowledge', might be their way of reassuring society. They may have wanted to demonstrate how their 'purity' was indeed 'stolen' against their will, insinuating that if such events did not occur, they would have continued to be innocent and 'pure' as per the Confucian tradition. According to Sun (2008) Confucian tradition dictates that ""virtuous women" were expected to: take on the roles of

wife and mother but have no right to take part in social activities, obey her husband and should not get ahead of her husband economically or socially, show filial piety to parents and in-laws by producing a son for the succession of the family, and prepare herself for excellent performance in household activities" (p.6). Thus, as they were not able to fulfill these expectations because of their 'past', the survivors put a strong emphasis on being innocent and 'pure', to reinforce the idea that they would have remain so if the traumatic events did not occur.

Humbleness

Another recurring theme identified in the narratives of the survivors is that of 'humbleness'. Humbleness, here, refers to the fact that some survivors shared their class status or background as a possible cause of their abduction or 'recruitment'. Some of the survivors that illustrate the usage of this theme can be seen below:

Song-Ok Lee: "As I was such a humble person and so scared, I didn't know what was happening then […] I was only a naïve young girl from a village then" (Team Witness, 2016b 30:14-30:19; 32:02-32:06).

> Kim Yong-Sil: When I was 13 years old, because we were poverty-stricken, my father sent me to live with my aunt in Hoeryong. I went to Hoeryong but my aunt was gone. Therefore, I went begging from one place to another and worked as a housemaid for others to eke out a bare living. One day when I was 18 years old, a Japanese man in a suit approached me and asked me to go with him, promising me a lucrative job. Judging it would be better than begging, in spite of my ignorance of the job, I followed him to a place where dozen girls were already gathered (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.56).

Song-Ok Lee refers to her background, as well as her young age, to emphasize her – once again – innocence and 'purity'. As mentioned before, this could imply a need to emphasize her stolen 'purity' and youth. Here, it can be seen how the intersection of class and gender play a vital role in Kim Yong-Sil's narrative. Kim Yong-Sil, narrates how being under such harsh circumstances made her decide to follow someone who promised a good salary, despite not knowing anything of the job. She attributes it to her 'innocence' and 'humbleness', thus class seems a vital factor for her 'recruitment'.

Cao Hei Mao: “I can’t read. I never went to school. Only boys were allowed to go, not girls. If they let us go to school then, I would be able to read” […] “You see, there were six of us sisters. My mom and I stayed home to tend the fields” (Hsiung, 2016 33:31-33”47; 56:11-56:18).

On the other hand, Cao Hei Mao uses her background to excuse herself on not being able to read. In this case, though, it is not a matter of class only but also gender. If she was born a male, she may have not had to experience such horrible events just because of her being a young local woman.

It must be noted that most of the times where ‘humbleness’ is used, the theme of ‘innocence’ is closely tied in together, as it can be seen in Song-Ok Lee’s example.

The storm is here

Violence

Because of the nature of the past events narrated by the survivors, violence was indeed identified as a recurrent theme. It must be noted that various forms of violence, of different degrees, are contemplated within this theme.

First of all, most of the survivors described their ‘captivity’ time as being from ‘somehow violent’ to ‘extremely violent’, some referring to it as torture.

> Wan Ai-Hua: One day, while one soldier was raping me, another one pulled up my arms and held them down next to my ears while a third began to pull hair out of my armpits and then from my private parts. I was in so much pain that I lost my senses again and again. After they pulled out most of the hair, they started yelling at me as they beat and kicked me. This torture did not stop until my ribs and some of my pelvic bones were broken and I lay motionless, almost unconscious. (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.70)

> Kim Young-Sook: Then he grabbed and forced me down. I screamed for my mom and begged him. How can I win against a grown man? I resisted and he grabbed and forced me down. His penis could not penetrate. Then he took out a pocketknife and started to cut my body apart. I fainted so I don’t know but he probably succeeded in what he intended to do (Team Witness, 2016b 23:48-24:28).

It should be taken into consideration that in the majority of the narratives related to violence, there is always a degree of 'disobedience' or 'resistance' by the survivors, which they considered was what triggered the violent reactions of the perpetrators.

Thus, the degree of violence experienced, according to the survivors, was due to the degree of 'compliance'/'obedience' of the women. Therefore, the bigger the resistance to comply, the harder the violence experienced, as Kang Soon-Ae or Jeong Ok-Sun narrate:

Kang Soon-Ae: When they thought I was not obedient enough, they slashed me with a sword at my right eye, beneath my forehead, the back of my neck and on my head. Even now, the scars from these wounds remain (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.24).

> Jeong Ok-Sun: The police officer got on top of me first, so I started to scream hard. That's when he stuffed a rug in my mouth and as I resisted, he punched me in the eye. See this eye? He punched me so hard that I could not see with this eye for 3 years. […] As I yelled and resisted, they stripped me down to panties and burned my genital area (with an iron bar). They burned me for disobedience and burned me again for screaming (Team Witness, 2016b 5:30-5:53; 6:42-6:55).

Being 'obedient' then would have made being a 'comfort woman' less 'painful', as Lee Sang-Ok narrates:

Lee Sang-Ok: And they beat me… (crying) I was beaten, they beat me on Sundays saying I didn't follow their orders. It wasn't one or two blows. When the beating started, they slapped my face and pulled my hair so I lost consciousness. (Team Witness, 2016b 31:39-32:01)

Nonetheless, there is no 'real proof' that by being 'obedient' such a harsh degree of violence could have been avoided.

Pain

Being a 'comfort woman' was indeed a very violent experience for the survivors. Apart from the violence afflicted to their bodies, the reality of having to mentally cope with such conditions deeply affected them.

Because of the nature of being a 'comfort woman' was to provide sex to Japanese soldiers, and despite the attempts of Japanese authorities to avoid pregnancies by providing

condoms or 'shots', some of them became pregnant. Cao Hei Mao explains how she had to deal with such an unwanted pregnancy:

> Cao Hei Mao: Whenever they wanted a girl, they just entered her room. It was frightening. {pause} I gave birth to two children. One girl and one boy. I had to strangle the baby. It was conceived at the comfort station. When the baby died, it impacted me deeply. I was impregnated by the Japanese soldiers. I almost died giving birth. Can you imagine? {pause} I was so scared I gave birth in the field. At the comfort station I would often scream in pain. I had the baby in my way home. I had to throw it away. I was damaged so badly. I could never bear any more children (Hsiung, 2016 57:25-58:37).

Pregnancies were not well received in 'comfort stations' as Cao Hei Mao explained. Moreover, the survivors themselves felt 'dirty' and 'shameful' of carrying a baby conceived in such conditions. Therefore, as Cao Hei Mao narrated, she ended the lives of both babies herself, which deeply impacted her.

Some of the women recounted their urge to commit suicide so that they could avoid being raped time after time, as it can be seen in Kim Bok-Dong's narration:

> Kim Bok-Dong: We were like. 'How can we live like this?' 'We're much better off death'. We tried to figure out how to commit suicide. I heard people could die from drinking a lot of alcohol […] I decided to use that money to kill myself. (Asian Boss, 2018 5:11-5:22; 5:40-5:42).

This preference of dying before living could also be interpreted as the mechanism chosen to end their 'dishonorable' selves. Being raped may still be considered by some as something one should be ashamed of[5]. In some societies, when a woman is raped, she is thought to bring dishonor to her family (Samanta, 2014 p.164). This could have been one of the causes of such a decision to attempt suicide.

Fear

Fear has also been identified to be a recurrent theme in the narratives of the survivors. As mentioned under the theme of 'Violence', the degree of such was comparable to the degree of compliance to the orders given by Japanese soldiers or the

[5] According to Lonsway & Fitzgerald (1994, p.134) "Rape myths are attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women"

people in charge of the 'comfort stations'. Most of the women expressed their fear of receiving such treatment and therefore decided to 'comply' without resistance.

Kim Yong-Sil: One day a girl named 'Tokiko' spoke Korean. After that, an officer gathered us in the yard to teach us a lesson by cutting her neck with a sword. Horror-stricken we fled with a cry of terror (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.57).

However, some narrated their resistance, as previously mentioned, even though they were scared:

> Kang Soon-Ae: One of the women stabbed an officer but [he] did not die. They build a mound to bury her up to her neck. They gathered all of us and made us watch as she was beheaded. (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.24).
>
> Jeanne O'Herne: Every time the Japanese raped me I tried to fight them off. Never once did any Japanese man rape me without a violent struggle and a fight. Often they threatened to kill me and often they severely beat me (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.66).

Jeanne O'Herne's narration shows a strong will to state that despite the fear, she always offered resistance. By doing so, she may intend to defend her 'honor', and underscore that what happened was indeed against her will.

Overall, experiencing fear has been narrated by most of the survivors. It must be noted then that the theme of fear is closely related to the theme of violence and, sometimes the theme of pain.

After the storm comes the calm?

Suffering

After the end of the WWII, the survivors of the 'comfort women' system that were alive returned to their countries or remained in the country where they were 'stationed'. Most of them narrated the harshness of returning home and reuniting, in the case it happened, with their families. The theme of suffering could be divided into two different subthemes: loneliness and lack of normality, and silence. Another subtheme of suffering, that of shame, will be documented below.

Loneliness and lack of normality were spotted in the stories of several survivors when narrating their life after the war. The majority of them attribute their loneliness and lack of normality to not being able to have a family of their own, with kids. Examples of such narratives can be seen here:

Song-Ok Lee: “Who would have chosen to live their life without having children? Don’t you have a son or a daughter? I have lived alone without any children” {crying} (Team Witness, 2016b 33:22-33:40)

> Gil Won-Ok: “For over 70 years, I have not lived like a normal person […] And until today, I haven’t lived a day of peace. Always in darkness, suffering in pain, because I couldn’t commit suicide, I’m here today […] I don’t want to be reborn as something else. I want to be reborn as a human. Reborn as a woman. I want to be someone’s precious daughter. Married into a precious family and have my own family. How wonderful that would be”. (Hsiung, 2016 26:29-26”36; 29:08-29:24; 1:13:58-1:14:18)

Kim Hak-Soon: They ruined my life completely. They made me live alone, until this day… In tears… My whole life. (Team Witness, 2016a 5:37-5:49)

It should be noted that a big number of the ‘comfort women’ system survivors became barren after the conditions they were exposed to. Because of that, some of them decided to adopt a child, like in the case of Cao Hei Mao or Gil Won-Ok, despite having difficulties to provide for themselves.

On the other hand, those who did marry have narrated how their past experience of continually being raped affected them in not being able to lead a ‘normal’ life in all aspects. This can be seen in Jeanne O’Herne testimony:

> Jeanne O’Herne: Even after almost 50 years, I still experience the feeling of total fear going through my body and through my limbs, burning me up. It comes to me at the oddest moments in that I wake up with nightmares and even feel it even when just lying in bed at night. But worst of all, I felt this fear every time my husband made love to me. I have never been able to enjoy intercourse as a consequence of what the Japanese did to me (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.64).

The subtheme of loneliness and lack of normality could also be seen as a product of expectations regarding women within Asian societies, especially North and South Korean. According to Sechiyama (2013) "Traditional Korean views on women's virtue and a special mode of life that the best women should lead continue to have influence up to the present day. There has been no decisive break with the past. With motherhood positioned as the core role for women, the old ways of allocating power and social roles remained strong throughout the period of modernization and remain strong to this day" (p.149). Marriage and motherhood, then, are still considered the main goal in a woman's life in Asian countries like North Korea, South Korea or China.

Silence was identified as a subtheme of suffering. Most of the survivors narrated how they 'had' to remain silent and could not share the traumatic past events. Having to remain silent could be a consequence of living in a society where rape is still considered a dishonoring and shameful thing. This possible explanation can be seen in the following example:

> Adela Reyes Barroquillo: My only regret is, is that I did not tell my husband. If I told everything it might've caused trouble or separation, or a broken home, so I thought I'd better keep it. […] Jeffery, Jeffery {crying} I want to tell you everything. Soon I will be with you. I didn't tell you because I was scared that you would leave me. (Hsiung, 2016;1:15:16-1:16:01; 1:16:15-1:16:37)

Here, it can be seen how troubled Adela Reyes Barroquillo felt for not being able to tell her husband, when he was alive, what happened to her. 'Silencing' her traumatic experience for herself only so that she would not be 'repudiated' from society.

On the other hand, Kim Hak-Soon narrated how she 'had' to remain silent because she was scared of possible repercussions:

> Kim Hak-Soon: When I was young, I could not say what I wanted to say because I was so afraid, I would get killed (by the Japanese). (Team Witness, 2016a 3:15-3:23)

It should be noted that Kim Hak-Soon was the first survivor that spoke up and gave a public testimony of being a former 'comfort woman' in 1991. Her narration, here, then differs from most of the other survivors' narratives about silence. She attributes her silence to being scared for her life if she was to speak up. Her narrative could also be understood as that of a South Korean citizen who witnessed the atrocities committed not

only to women but also Korean people in general when Chosŏn[6] was a Japanese colony. She might attribute her silence to the Japanese instead of her own society's views on rape – the survivor being still blamed for the endured trauma –. Therefore, it may contain some traces of a nationalistic discourse and anti-Japanese feelings. Nonetheless, she does recognize in another instance that her silence was also due to her feeling ashamed of her past:

Kim Hak-Soon: But when I was younger, I felt so shameful. Who wouldn't feel shameful? To be taken by the Japanese army, to become a 'comfort woman' and to not live a normal life…(Team Witness, 2016a 7:04-7:16).

Shame

One of the main themes identified is that of 'shame'. Almost all the survivors have narrated the shamefulness of the past events they experienced. Even nowadays, rape is still considered by some societies and individuals as something one should be ashamed of (Bhuptani, 2017 p.2; Moor & Farchi, 2011 p.448-449). The testimonies narrated by these women demonstrate how being ashamed of their past and themselves was a key factor to their suffering:

> Adela Reyes Barroquillo: (Interviewer: So with your family today you still have to pretend nothing happened.) Yes. But they heard all about it, that these Lola's Kampaneras are claiming for compensation. (Interviewer: But they don't know that you are…) And they want justice. They don't know that I am one. They expect me that I am only helping the organization. (Interviewer: Will you ever tell your children?) Never. I am never telling anyone. They would be ashamed of me. They would be ashamed of me, I know. (Interviewer: You know...) They will, yes. (Hsiung, 2016 20:30-21:18)

Adela Reyes Barroquillo's narration demonstrates how social stigmas of rape have deeply contributed to her feeling ashamed of her past and herself. Her unwillingness to share her traumatic experience with her family or anyone else is indeed striking.

Shame has also been identified in the narrations of Gil Won-Ok and Kim Young-Sil, who state that marrying was off their limits because they were 'damaged' and ashamed of their past:

[6]Chosŏn: the name given to the kingdom in the Korean peninsula before the separation of North and South Korea.

Gil Won-Ok: I couldn't get married, but not by choice (Hsiung, 2016 44:46-44:57)

> Kim Yong-Sil: From that time, I have lived a life of shunning people out of fear of revealing my disgraceful past. I decided not to marry because I was so ashamed of my past. Throughout my life I have suffered a deep-rooted bitterness (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.58).

Moreover, Jeanne O'Herne's narration depicts her struggles of accepting her traumatic past and the consequences it had for her present and future, and how 'incomplete' she felt:

Jeanne O'Herne: During that time the Japanese abused and humiliated me. They ruined my young life and stripped me of everything. They had taken everything away from me, my self-esteem, my dignity, my freedom, my possessions, my family (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.67).

Two more testimonies narrate how shameful their societies regard rape to be. Wan Ai-Hua and a Taiwanese woman, who wanted to remain anonymous, explain how they were indeed 'repudiated' because of what happened to them:

Wan Ai-Hua: My adopted family and villagers called me dirty and didn't want to have me around. So I moved out of the village and to Tai Yuan, where I lived alone in a small rented house (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.71).

> Taiwanese woman: Almost no one knows my miserable experience, except those who went to Timor Island with me. […] The humiliation, the shame, the bitterness and the unforgettable experiences have followed me all my life. I have not been accepted by other people in society and all I received was 300 Japanese dollars as a severance pay (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.80).

Shame is, then, present in almost every single narrative of the 'comfort women' system survivors reviewed in this research. However, only one survivor differs in this homogenous narrative of shame. Rosa Maria Luna Henson believes that the traumatic events they experienced should not be something to be ashamed of. She encourages other

survivors to speak up so that these stories can become something empowering rather than diminishing.

> Rosa Maria Luna Henson: I hope other comfort women will also come out in the open. They should not be ashamed. In the first place, what happened to us is not of our own doing. We are lucky enough that we are still alive today so that we can come out and tell people what happened. If possible, our experiences should not be repeated in the world (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.46).

Anger

Anger was another theme identified in their narratives after their 'captivity' time. Most of the survivors, especially North and South Korean survivors, demonstrate their anger and hatred towards the Japanese soldiers that committed such atrocities – Anger and hatred will be further discussed in the next section corresponding to the second research question: What kind of narratives do the survivors use when talking about the Japanese government and the Japanese people?–.

Some narratives related to 'anger' account for why the survivors were not able to speak up sooner – mainly because they feared the 'consequences' of doing so–. Examples of such 'anger' narratives can be seen in Kim Yong-Sil and Kang Soon-Ae's:

> Kim Yong-Sil: After long and deep thought, I made up my mind to bring to light the atrocities committed by the Japanese army. Without a husband or child, I have nothing to fear and I could not close my eyes, even in death, without exposing my heart-breaking rancor (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.59).

> Kang Soon-Ae: Before my husband died, I refused to speak up, feeling dreadfully ashamed of having my past exposed to the public. But now that my husband has died, and as resentment grows such that even my only living younger brother avoids me because of his hatred toward my having been a comfort woman, it is my firm determination to restore my honor before an abominable society (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.25).

Both attribute their familiar circumstances – not having one or having lost part of it – as a key factor. Kim Yong-Sil believes this to be a way of easing her rancor while Kang

Soon-Ae is determined to restore her 'honor'. It could be interpreted, then, as a mechanism to cope with their suffering, and a possible way of redressing it.

'Possible violence' has been identified as another way of conveying anger. Jeong Ok-Sun and Park Yong-Sim's narratives are a good example of such:

> Jeong Ok-Sun: I wonder if the (Japanese army) guards who raped us are still alive, or have they all died? Would there be any still alive? (Interviewer: Maybe some are still alive, right?) Yes. Bastards! I want to skin them alive. Just look at my body, how can I not be furious? […] Japs tortured me. I got all sorts of horrible tortures. They trampled on my youth… ruined my life… my whole life… left no hope for future (crying) (Team Witness, 2016b 4:08-4:35; 15:49-16:07).

Park Yong-Sim: Whenever I think of this, I have a fit of anger to beat him to death. Again, my anger will not go away even if I could beat him to death (Team Witness, 2016b 8:03-8:08).

Both survivors resort to 'possible violence' in order to convey their anger to the interviewer (who is a male Japanese journalist). It might be, then, their coping mechanism to alleviate their suffering and anger.

On the other hand, another kind of anger has been identified, that of 'anger' towards what most of the survivors call 'lies'. Some survivors have demonstrated their anger towards people who have doubted their stories to be true, especially Japanese people. Gwak Geum-Ryeo's narrative can be used as an example:

> Gwak Geum-Ryeo: Why would we, 15 or 16 years old want to give our bodies and youth to Japanese army for money? Who would we want to give our bodies and youth to them for money? That is an absolute lie. We did not receive any money, not even one small coin, but only got beaten up. (Team Witness, 2016b 16:41-17:02)

The theme of anger has been identified mainly in North and South Korean women. This anger is mainly due to them feeling like their youth was stolen, them remaining silence and the negation of their stories. It must be noted that, because of the nature of the data analyzed, some survivors may share or not the same opinions, but it is not registered. Thus, it is indeed unclear whether the category of ethnicity could be used to explain this theme.

Responsibility

Finally, responsibility was the last theme identified. It should be noted that this theme cannot be found as abundantly as 'shame', 'innocence' or 'anger'. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that some survivors strongly feel a duty towards other 'silent voices', to share their stories and redress the past wrongdoings of the Japanese Imperial Army. Some of these examples can be seen in the narratives of Kim Hak-Soon, Maria Rosa Luna Henson, Kim Bok-Dong and Gil Won-Ok.

> Kim Hak-Soon: For crying out loud! How could I live without saying a word? So that's why I decided to share my story before I die. Even if it meant risking my life. There may be no one else but me to tell this story. That's why (Team Witness, 2016a 3:29-3:45)

Kim Hak-Soon, as mentioned before, was the first survivor that spoke about her past as a former 'comfort woman'. Here, her strong will of ending more than fifty years of silence can be seen.

Maria Rosa Luna Henson, the first Filipina survivor to speak up, felt that it was her duty to share her story so that gross human right violations like the ones her and other survivors experienced did not repeat again:

> Maria Rosa Luna Henson: I have been lucky enough to have come out of my experience alive. I believe I have a duty to all the women victims who died at the hands of the Japanese during the war to tell the whole world of what happened to women during World War II. I want to remind the whole world that we need to stand together to stop wars from happening again. Let not our bitter, painful and traumatic experiences be repeated. For the sake of the women, children and all people, let us live in peace (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.38).

Kim Bok-Dong and Gil Won-Ok's narration share the same kind of 'responsibility' with Maria Rosa Luna Henson, as they state that such war crimes like wartime sex slavery should not occur again:

Kim Bok-Dong: So I decided that no matter what, we should live to tell what happened (Asian Boss, 2018 7:12-7:20).

Gil Won-Ok: We were born humans but haven't been able to live like normal humans. I will keep talking until the day I die […] This should never happen again to the next

generation. And we should never suffer this again (Hsiung, 2016 3:51-3:59; 54:25-54:32).

This willingness of redressing the wrongdoings of the past has been translated in a redress movement that seeks a reparative approach – which will be discussed further in the discussion chapter–. All the survivors mentioned in here, have been or are currently still key members of the Comfort Women Redress movement, and this might explain why such responsibility is shared in their testimonies.

Final observations

Overall, the themes discussed in this section have been identified following a chronological order relating to their 'before', 'while' and 'after' captivity time in 'comfort stations'.

The most prominent theme identified in the 'before' section has been that of 'innocence'. The survivors demonstrated a will to emphasize their innocence and 'purity' before they were abducted or 'recruited'.

The largest theme identified in the "while" section has been 'violence' and 'pain'. The survivors narrated the violence they experienced while being captive in the 'comfort stations'. Because of this, they narrated the psychological pain they experienced and expressed, in some cases, their preference to attempt suicide rather than living in such conditions.

Finally, the most prominent theme of the section 'after' is that of 'suffering'. All the survivors narrated how deeply the past events impacted them. 'Shame' was discovered to be the most salient theme overall. I will further expand on the motives of such suffering in the discussion chapter.

Narratives relating to the Japanese government and Japanese people

After having identified the main themes in the survivors' narratives about their lives and feelings about it, it was clear that some of them were related to their personal views of the Japanese government and/or Japanese people. As previously discussed in the theme of 'anger', some of this anger and hatred was directed to the Japanese government and/or Japanese people. However, it is important to note that not all survivors share the same opinions, and that some disagreement exists. This issue will be discussed below.

The Japanese government: responsible for all the evil?

Most of the survivors have, to different degrees, shown some kind of 'anger' towards the Japanese government and the Japanese military, which was controlled by them. As mentioned beforehand, some of this 'anger' comes from the fact that the Japanese government has tried, in the past, to deny the existence of the 'comfort women' system by eluding its responsibility in setting it up and controlling it. This 'anger' also comes from the unwillingness of the Japanese government to issue a formal apology – which will be discussed in the next section –. An example of such narrative, that of 'denial', can be seen in Kim Bok-Dong's words:

Kim Bok-Dong: The evidence is all there but they try to hide it. If the Japanese government keeps claiming that it never happened, what am I supposed to say? (Asian Boss, 2018 13:03-13:13).

Kim Bok-Dong's narration encompasses this feeling of 'anger' between the survivors as their stories are being questioned and/or denied. By not acknowledging them and their stories, what the Japanese government is doing is that of contributing to their suffering and their anger. This can be seen in Gil Won-Ok's narration of such comments:

Gil Won-Ok: The Japanese Prime Minister (at that time, Shinzō Abe) has been bashing us, making false comments. I want those comments to stop, and I want the Japanese to speak the truth. (Hsiung, 2016 9:23-9:40).

By demanding the Japanese to speak the truth, Gil Won-Ok is indeed, asking for an acknowledgement of their suffering and recognizing the responsibility of the past wrongdoings. Wan Ai-Hua points out that only the Japanese government can provide the means for such redress to occur:

Wan Ai-Hua: I understand that the Japanese government is reluctant to teach the historical facts to Japanese children. That is another objective of my visit to Japan (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.71).

What Wan Ai-Hua points out is the need to change the school history books so that they reflect an acknowledgement of the past wrongdoings. At the same time that it provides the knowledge to avoid such atrocities to happen again. This narrative then is a vital point in the Comfort Women Redress Movement: the need to change the Japanese people's collective memory so that their individual memories integrate in it.

Japanese people: who to blame?

When the survivors refer to Japanese people, different narratives have been identified. There are mainly two distinct narratives: 'anger' and 'hatred' towards the Japanese people and the ones who believe the Japanese people to be 'blameless'.

When looking at those survivors that expressed 'anger' and some of them 'hatred' towards Japanese people, I have identified what could be somewhat a 'nationalistic discourse' of colonized vs. colonizers. This somewhat 'nationalistic discourse' of those who were once colonized often takes the form of 'victimization'[7]. This can be seen in the narrative of Kim Hak-Soon, for example:

> Kim Hak-Soon: On the evening of August 14, I opened my mouth in front of all the reporters from the news media. I was so furious. I wanted all the Korean women to open their eyes and face the truth. Look at Japan. We have suffered so much in the hands of Japanese people. (Team Witness, 2016a 2:39-2:58).

A 'victimization' narrative, to a lower degree, can also be seen in the testimony of Kim Yong-Sil:

Kim Yong-Sil: I tell the world about the barbarous and heinous atrocities committed by the Japanese and appeal to all the fair-minded people of the world to help me vent my grudge (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.59).

By using the word Japanese, and not the Japanese army, she may intent to blame the whole Japanese nationality for her suffering.

Moreover, colonization is also brought up by several Korean survivors, like Kim Bok-Dong in her narration of her past:

> Kim Bok-Dong: It was during the time that all young Korean men were conscripted into the Japanese military. Because we were under Japanese rule, they could do whatever they wanted with us. When World War II started, they even pulled the male students out of school to fight as 'student soldiers' for Japan. Unfortunately, the boys were not the only ones taken away. They were also recruiting Korean girls by force (Asian Boss, 2018 1:19-1:45).

[7] See Soh (2000, p.128-129) Human Rights and the" Comfort Women" for further information.

In her narration, she recounts how Korean people suffered under the hands of the Japanese. Nonetheless, her narration does not contain the same degree of 'victimization' as in Kim Hak-Soon's one. 'Victimization' is then particularly visible in the testimony of Kim Hak-Soon, but less so in the others.

Looking at how Korean survivors feel about colonization, it is important to understand their narratives about Japanese people. While Kim Hak-Soon believes that Japanese people are the ones to blame and responds to the nationality with some degree of 'hatred', Kim Bok-Dong's narrative differs from Kim Hak-Soon's in where she puts the blame:

Kim Bok-Dong: They say, 'hate the sin not the sinner'. This isn't something (Prime Minister) Abe did. It's what the former emperor did. (Asian Boss, 2018 16:19-16:22)

Therefore, Kim Bok-Dong's position fits the label mentioned previously of 'blameless', as she does believe that there is indeed a need for redress, but Japanese people are not the ones to blame for what happened to her, and that hate should not be directed towards this nationality.

Those survivors that do not put the blame on the Japanese nationality as being the responsible for their suffering, together with those who do blame the whole collective group for different reasons, have narrated the need to make the whole Japanese population aware of the atrocities committed during their Imperialistic past, as Wan Ai-Hua narrates:

Wan Ai-Hua: I would like the young people of Japan to know about the tragedy and how much damage the Japanese army brought to the Chinese people in the past (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.71).

This narrative is collected in one of the key points in their demands of reparations to the Japanese government, which will be discussed next.

Final observations

The themes identified in this section have been drawn from the narratives of the survivors about the Japanese government and the Japanese people.

The narratives regarding the Japanese government have been identified to contain mainly 'anger' towards it. It was mostly Korean women that expressed such 'anger'. This 'anger' came from the Japanese government's reiterated negation of the survivors'

traumatic stories. The Japanese government attitude towards the women's stories has contributed to their suffering by not acknowledging it.

Regarding the Japanese people, I have identified two different salient opinions. The first one being that of 'anger' and different degrees of 'hatred' towards the collective. As mentioned, such 'anger' and 'hatred' could be accentuated because of the past colonization of the women's countries in the hands of the Japanese. On the other hand, the second opinion is that of the Japanese people being 'blameless'. The whole collective cannot be blame for what their ancestors did. Nonetheless, the survivors that correspond to this opinion have manifested the necessity of 'teaching' the whole collective their stories of pain and suffering so that Japanese collective memory includes them.

Narratives of 'Apology' and 'Reparations'/'Compensation'

The Survivors' narratives concerning the Japanese government and the Japanese people identified, have shown how heterogenous such narratives can be. Despite this, most of the survivors decided to speak up because they wanted redress for their suffering. Thus, and in spite of the motives, most of the survivors have called for the need to repair the past wrongdoings committed by the Japanese Imperial Army.

The narratives that have been identified will be classified in terms of the words 'Apology' and 'Compensation'/'Reparations'. It should be noted that these words are always tied together with the Japanese government, and therefore should be understood as 'Apology from the Japanese government' and 'Compensation/Reparations from the Japanese government'.

Apology: the importance of apologizing

The words 'apology' and 'apologizing' have been used in almost all the testimonies reviewed in this research. Most of them demand an apology as they consider it to be a responsibility that needs to be taken on by the Japanese government. The 'responsibility' theme can be seen in Gil Won Ok's and a Taiwanese woman's opinions:

Gil Won-Ok: So what we need…is history books to educate students so that this doesn't happen in the future (Hsiung, 2016 29:50-30:00)

Taiwanese woman: For all other women with similar experiences as myself, I protest against this brutal crime and against the Japanese government. I request that the Japanese government return to us our dignity as human beings as well as apologize to and

compensate us for the crimes they committed (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.80).

Others appeal to such 'responsibility' as something human to do. If an apology is not issued, it is then considered 'inhuman' for some survivors, like Kim Hak-Soon states:

> Kim Hak-Soon: I don't think the Japanese are human beings. Are they human? How can they be human? They invaded and trampled on so many lives in different countries and now they are pretending as if nothing happened. What's his name, Hashimoto, the current prime minister of Japan? He is a really bad person. Very bad. (Team Witness, 2016a 14:22-14:47).

Here, Kim Hak-Soon is dehumanizing Japanese people, especially the Prime Minister, because of their unwillingness to issue an apology. She believes it is their moral responsibility as human beings after committing different gross human right violations all over Asia.

The survivors insist on the importance of receiving an apology as it will help to atone their sufferings and provide some healing, as Gil Won-Ok and Kim Bok-Dong narrate respectively:

Gil Won-Ok: Will the wound go away if you apologize? No. The scars will remain, but my heart can heal. I am waiting for that day (Hsiung, 2016 26:38-26:54)

Kim Bok-Dong: (Interviewer: So, if Japan admits to wrongdoing, do you have the heart to forgive?) I do. They say 'Hate the sin, not the sinner' (Asian Boss, 2018 16:02-16:13).

There is, then, a will to accept an apology by most of the survivors. However, it must be noted that such an apology must be considered by the survivors 'sincere', as Kim Bok-Dong, Kim Yong-Sil and Kim Hak-Soon state:

> Kim Bok-Dong: What I want is… an apology from Japan for having dragged us away and making us suffer. I want a formal apology. They should say, 'what we did was completely wrong, and we'll correct our history textbooks'. And say to us 'we sincerely apologize'. If they wrote that kind of formal apology, then we can forgive them (Asian Boss, 2018 14:16-14:43)
>
> Kim Yong-Sil: How can we pardon their crimes? But the Japanese authorities are still reluctant to frankly admit and apologize for the barbarous crimes committed against our women by the Japanese imperialists. They ought to acknowledge such

> crimes, conduct a thorough investigation, clearly reveal the truth, apologize for the Japanese imperialists, make appropriate compensation and pledge not to repeat such crimes (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.59).

Kim Hak-Soon: I will not die before it is finished, I will live until I'm 110 or even 120 and that's why I am keep fighting for my health right now to [see] and hear their sincere apology (Team Witness, 2016a 19:22-19:44)

The repetitive usage of the word 'sincere' or other synonyms should be understood as a key element if such an apology is to be issued with the intention of being accepted.

Another recurring theme identified relating to the 'apology' word is that of 'agency'. Most of the survivors agree on whose responsibility it is of apologize. A sincere apology, then, must come from the Japanese government itself, not from other collectives or individuals, to be accepted, as it can be seen in the narrative of Wan Ai-Hua:

> Wan Ai-Hua: Why did they have to destroy me like that? I hate the Japanese army so much that I could almost die from hatred. The Japanese army committed those horrible atrocities because their government approved of their behavior. The Japanese government is responsible for the acts of the Japanese army. […] I demand that the Japanese government acknowledge their guilt and apologize to us in public (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.71).

Therefore, according to the survivors, a formal apology coming directly from the Japanese government is the only kind of apology that will be accepted. Only one survivor in this research differs in the 'agency' theme:

> Kim Hak-Soon: I don't need any other person. People in Japan call him an emperor, but I call him the Japanese king because he is the king of Japan, so I call him the Japanese king. I think the Japanese king should apologize for starting the war and that, he must apologize. I don't need apologies from anyone else from Japan, but from the only one person, the king of Japan. An apology from anyone else doesn't mean anything. Don't you agree? (Team Witness, 2016a 18:24-18:54)

Kim Hak-Soon narrates how only an apology from the Japanese emperor himself can be accepted by her. Kim Hak-Soon's resolution to only accept an apology if it comes from the emperor might signify that she acknowledges him to be the highest authority in Japan,

as it is stated in the Japanese constitution[8], and therefore the only one that has the authority to apologize.

However, such an apology, that fulfills all these requirements, has yet to be issued by the Japanese government. Because of this issue, the survivors have manifested some 'helplessness'. This 'helplessness' can be seen in the narratives of Gil Won-Ok, Soon Dak, Kim Bok-Dong and Ha Sang-Suk:

Gil Won-Ok: If they are not going to apologize, they should at least stop bashing us […] If we all die who are they going to apologize to? Do it when we are alive (Hsiung, 2016 9:40-9:47; 31:04-31:14)

Soon Dak: They're never going to pay. (Young woman: Really?) If they were going to, they would have done it already. They want us to suffer. They just want us to continue suffering. They should hurry up! (Hsiung, 2016 43:37-43:52)

Kim Bok-Dong: And I thought things could get resolved if I just told the truth. But it still hasn't been resolved to this day […] But I am 92 now. There is no resolution in sight. (Asian Boss, 2018 12:29-12:38; 15:54-16:00)

Ha Sang-Suk: I've told my story more than 100 times. More than 100 times. What's the point? What has changed? Nothing has changed. Nothing. (Arirang TV, 2013 30:36-30:46)

As these survivors' narrations point out, the feeling of 'helplessness' comes from an apology that has been dragged out for a very long time. As time goes by, more survivors keep perishing because of old age. If an apology is to be issued, it should come, like Gil Won-Ok states, before all the remaining survivors are dead.

Some of them have even expressed some sort of 'regret' to have spoken up since a resolution of the conflict is yet to be seen. Kim Bok-Dong words it like this:

Kim Bok-Dong: Regrets? Of course, I have. Had I known this issue would drag out for so long, I wouldn't have come forward. If no one knew, then I could've just lived quietly. (Asian Boss, 2018 15:02-15:18)

[8] Article I of the Japanese constitution has the following description of its Emperor: "the Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the People, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power" (Japanese constitution, 1946).

Apologizing to the survivors is considered vital by themselves if they are to start 'healing', as Jeanne O'Herne points out:

Jeanne O'Herne: I won't do heal, and healing, the healing can only come if I can say you know that I can forgive, then the healing must start. And this is a very hard thing for them to do (Arirang TV, 2013 45:28-45:40)

However, the redress they are seeking does not only involve a sincere formal apology by the Japanese government. Reparations should also be paid for the whole redress process to be complete.

Compensation/Reparations: money as atonement for the crimes?

The words 'compensation' and 'reparations' have been used several times by a large number of the survivors. Most of them demand monetary reparations or compensation to help 'ease' their sufferings. This monetary restitution has to be understood not just as a mere 'token' of appreciation but as a way to redeem the sufferings that the survivor has had to endure because of such past events.

Most of the survivors narrate how no money can undo their suffering and the wrongdoings committed in the past, as Kim Bok-Dong insists:

Kim Bok-Dong: This is not about the money. They keep trying to make this issue go away. And we are the ones who are constantly fighting so that it doesn't happen. It's history! (Asian Boss, 2018 14:45-14:57)

Nonetheless, it can help alleviate the survivors' suffering by for instance paying the bills for medical care the survivors have to receive because of the endured past violence and torture, psychological care for a traumatic past, or help others in need, etc.

Once again, the theme of 'agency' has been discovered in the narratives of the survivors regarding 'compensation'/'reparations'. Most of the survivors state that only money coming directly from the Japanese government should be accepted. Such narratives can be seen in Kim Yong-Sil, Wan Ai-Hua, a Taiwanese woman or Kim Bok-Dong:

> Kim Yong-Sil: How can we pardon their crimes? But the Japanese authorities are still reluctant to frankly admit and apologize for the barbarous crimes committed against our women by the Japanese imperialists. They ought to acknowledge such crimes, conduct a thorough investigation, clearly reveal the truth, apologize for

> the Japanese imperialists, make appropriate compensation and pledge not to repeat such crimes (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.59).

Wan Ai-Hua: I also demand that the Japanese government compensate for the damage and loss that we suffered physically, mentally and financially (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.71).

> Taiwanese woman: For all the other women with similar experiences as myself, I protest against this brutal crime and against the Japanese government. I request that the Japanese government return to us our dignity as human beings as well as apologize to and compensate us for the crimes they committed (International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation of Japan. & Kokusai Kochokai Jikko Iinkai, 1993 p.80).

Kim Bok-Dong: If I ever get money from the Japanese government, with that money, I was going to pay for the education of the students that can't afford to do so, so they can study (Asian Boss, 2018 15:32-15:50).

In Kim Bok-Dong's case, she does not explicitly state that she will only accept money from the Japanese government, however, because of her role in the 'Comfort Women' Redress Movement, it can be said that when she said "money from the Japanese government", she is indeed referring to only accepting money if it comes only from the Japanese government.

It should be noted that when such 'agency' is not fulfilled, 'compensation'/'reparations' are felt as 'insincere' by the survivors. This insincerity can become insulting if the 'compensation'/'reparations' do not come from the Japanese government, and may, thus, be seen as 'alimony', as Kim Hak-Soon narrates:

> Kim Hak-Soon: They are trying to diffuse the issue by paying a token money. We are demanding the Japanese government's apology and reparations. But they are refusing to apologize and saying they cannot make reparations. Instead some women's organization will give us two million yens or so that they have raised in Japan as consolation funds. That's what Uske Keiko (a leader of a Japanese private organization) has proposed. We cannot agree to this. Never. Why should we take

> consolation money? For what? No, it cannot be, ever. They need to make proper apologies and aboveboard reparations. (Team Witness, 2016a 10:50-11:38)

Final observations

This section has dealt with the survivors' narratives regarding the words 'apology' and 'compensation'/'reparations' by the Japanese government. Overall, the survivors seem to share the same opinions about the approach to take, that being reparative justice.

First of all, the survivors have appealed to responsibility as a main factor of issuing an apology. When an apology is negated, some survivors have dehumanized the Japanese government and stated that such behavior contributed to their suffering. Moreover, an apology will only be accepted if it fulfills certain conditions: must be sincere and must come from the Japanese government itself. Only if these conditions are met, they will accept it and it may help them 'heal'. Nonetheless, the survivors have also expressed 'helplessness' as such apology is yet to be issue, and most of them have already perish while waiting.

Regarding the words 'compensation'/'reparations', the survivors have emphasized how money cannot undo the Japanese Imperial Army's past wrongdoings. However, such money could help alleviate their suffering by receiving medical care, psychological help, procuring a decent living-space, etc. Nonetheless, reparatory money will only be accepted if it comes directly from the Japanese government, being 'agency' a vital issue here. If such monetary reparations do not come from the Japanese government, the survivors will not accept it as they see it 'insincere'. This insincerity can be perceived as insulting, and such monetary reparations can be seen then as 'alimony'.

Discussion

The 'Comfort Women' issue continues to generate debate in the scholarly field, as can be seen in the literature review chapter, as well as in the 'activist' world. Many are the voices of women who were not able to tell their stories. However, those voices that finally gathered the courage to speak have not been welcome by everyone, especially some sectors of the Japanese society and the successive Japanese governments. In this section, I argue that to a large extent the survivors' suffering originates from their own societies. I will try to demonstrate that the values and morals about rape have deeply contributed to the survivors' suffering. By understanding their suffering then, I will move on and try to explain why the survivors have adopted a reparative approach, which they believe is the best fitted option for their justice calls. Finally, I will try to explain how such an approach will benefit their desire of changing the challenging Japanese collective memory about the WWII.

Departing from Min's (2003) research about the intersections of gender, class, and colonial power in Korean survivors' suffering, I expand on it through my research on the narratives of survivors of the 'comfort women' system. I do so by looking at not only the voices of Korean women but also Chinese, Filipina, and, to a lesser extent, Dutch women.

Geographic location contributed to the survivors' suffering, as some scholars (Yoshimi, 1993 p.82-8, Min, 2003 p.939) point out, since the women who were abducted or 'recruited' where from Chosŏn or Taiwan, which at that time were colonies of Japan. Thus, geographic location and colonial power are deeply intertwined in this example. Geographic location also played a role in where those women were abducted or 'recruited' in other cases like China, Philippines or the Dutch Islands, where the Japanese had occupied those territories all-around South-East Asia and the Pacific. But geographic location also played a vital role after the 'captivity' time with their own societies' cultural beliefs about rape. Min (2003) states that the suffering the Korean survivors experienced comes/came not only from their traumatic experiences but also from their own society, in this case Korea. After concluding my research on the narratives of the survivors about their 'before', 'while' and 'after' of their captivity, I have identified 'shame', 'silence' and 'loneliness' as key points to understand the survivors' suffering. 'Shame' can be explained as a consequence of a society that regards rape as a dishonor, as Samanta (2014, p.164) states. According to Moor & Farchi (2011) the "type of social attitudes that

surround the victim can play a significant role in providing the point of reference from which she might attempt to make sense of her experience" (p.450). Thus, if the survivor lives in a society where blame is most likely to be placed on her, it is most probably that the attempt of making sense of her experience, may result into intense self-faulting (Moor & Farchi, 2011 p.450). Therefore, as the survivor is "searching for an explanation for the unexplainable, she may turn to readily available cultural beliefs about rape victims' culpability and identify her own conduct as the cause for her victimization" (Moor & Farchi, 2011 p.450). Thus, 'shame', being a cultural belief associated with rape survivors, was adopted by the majority of the survivors in this research. 'Silence' and 'loneliness' are then just consequences of being ashamed. Indeed, the feeling of 'shame' was due to a patriarchal society that puts the blame of rape on survivors and condemns them to live a painful silent, most of the times lonely, existence (Soh, 1996 p.1230). Thus, gender and geographical location – socio-cultural environment of the country – could be used to explain the suffering experienced after their 'captivity'. However, that is not to say that what these women experienced during their 'captivity' time is not one of the main reasons of their suffering, or that class did not play an important role, as the targeted girls were mainly from agricultural and impoverished families.

Therefore, class also played a vital role in the 'recruitment' or abduction of 'comfort women' (Soh, 1996 p.1230). The Japanese targeted girls that were mainly from low class from the rural areas (Soh, 1996 p.1230) but, as in the case of Jeanne O'Herne from the Dutch Islands, who was from a middle-high class, geographic location played a bigger role. Class also played a role after the women's 'captivity' since the majority of them, coming from low class families, had received little or no education, and this could have been one of the causes of not seeking redress sooner (Soh, 1996 p.1230). Using a single category to determine where the suffering experienced by the survivors and victims come/came from, is not explanatory enough. As my analysis in the first section brings out, it is indeed in the intersection of gender, geographic location, class and colonial power where their sufferings can be better comprehended.

Understanding that the survivors' suffering cannot be explained by a single category but from different intertwined ones, has allowed me to better grasp their justice claims. Even though their suffering is not a consequence of a single past event, their claims do not reflect the suffering afflicted by their own societies. That is so as the survivors feel that their 'after suffering' would not have happened if they did not

experience such traumatic past events. Therefore, their justice claims have focused on the Japanese society, especially towards the Japanese government, which they hold accountable for their 'captivity' time. Their approach seeks to "address the moral standing of victims of grave wrongs and to underscore the reparative responsibilities of political authorities who have failed to safeguard justice" (Walker, 2010 p.13-14).

As shown in my analysis, section two, a reparative approach to justice seems to best fit the claims made by the women. Retributive justice cannot be applied in this case as individual prosecution of the perpetrators would be challenging, since most of them have already perished or their identities are unknown. Moreover, it was the Japanese state which controlled the Japanese Imperial Army, and therefore the survivors would have to sue the Japanese government as whole – some of them did, but such mechanism did not provide a solution for the case –. Restorative justice, in the form of trials, could have been an alternative but that would have also meant that the Japanese government acknowledged the survivors' sufferings, which is something that has not officially happened yet. Transformative justice would have involved a mixture between retributive and restorative justice, but as mentioned before, such an approach is challenging as no legal accountability has been held by the Japanese government and an official acknowledgement of the survivors' stories has not occurred. Therefore, the 'comfort women' redress movement has been established following a reparative approach. The calls for justice from survivors of the 'comfort women' system include the following points (Johnston, 2016):

1. A formal public apology by the Japanese government to all the women that suffered because of the Japanese Imperial Army
2. A just monetary restitution for the survivors
3. The 'comfort women' issue must be included in the curriculum of Japanese schools

The women's narratives about reparative justice, as outlined in section two of the analysis above, seem to indicate that what is most valued is a sincere and heart-felt apology from the Japanese government. An apology is given the most importance as it can help the survivors heal and move forward, lessen the feelings of being wronged in the past – those of anger and pain –, and bring a sense of vindication as they are acknowledged, and their trauma may be diminished (Quin, 2016 p.397). These arguments can be seen in the narratives of the survivors when asked about 'apologies'. However, as Dudden (2008)

points out, an apology from the Japanese authorities must be received as 'sincere' if the survivors are to accept it, which is highly difficult:

> how could a survivor of one of Japan's slave labor camps believe the Japanese government's words when a not insignificant number of its democratically elected politicians and highly paid pundits routinely make speeches and publish wildly popular books denigrating the survivors' claims or look soberly into TV cameras and say they are making it all up? If anything, such voices are only amplifying in Japan these days (p.34).

This constant denial then could be a reason why such insistence in a heartfelt and sincere apology is put on by the survivors. Furthermore, the fact that such an apology must be official, and public demonstrates the strong will of the survivors to be acknowledged. Acknowledgement that is yet to occur.

Monetary restitution is also a thorny issue when the rightful 'agency' is not fulfilled, as it is also deemed 'insincere'. Walker (2010) states that it must be taken into account that when restitution is provided not as such but as compensation, as a charitable deed, rather than as something that one is morally obliged to do, it can be seen as insulting (p.17-18), which can be seen in the narrative of Kim Hak-Soon. She strongly states that she, and other survivors, would never accept that kind of money because it's 'alimony' and does not seem 'official' and 'sincere'.

The third point in their demands is that of including their stories in the national curriculum, so that history textbooks incorporate the 'comfort women' issue and kids learn about it at school. By doing so, the 'comfort women' redress movement seeks to incorporate individual memories of the survivors into the Japanese collective memory. This redress movement has already achieved what Schwartz (2015) calls several 'original' versions of the past events – the testimonies of the survivors –, which thus leave room for the creation of a collective memory about the issue in Japan. What remains now is for these 'original' versions to be incorporated in the desired collective memory of Japan. However, as Schwartz (2015) points out, changing collective memories that have already been established can be indeed an arduous and challenging task. Dudden (2008, p.35) states that in the case of Japan, the collective memory of the WWII differs from the German collective memory in that German public education has incorporated traumatic individual memories of the death camps and "collapsed expansionist nightmares" whereas in Japan "news of war time atrocities that Japanese committed seemed to appear

out of nowhere for most, raising new questions about the meaning of history itself". Moreover, Japanese writers and social critics seemed to focus mainly on the consequences of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Dudden, 2008 p.36). Furthermore, a social taboo existed that did not allow for discussion an education about the gross human rights violations that Japanese soldiers and colonialists had carried out under the emperor's name (Dudden, 2008 p.36). Thus, the "Japanese ruminated on the wastelands of Hiroshima and Tokyo at the cost of confronting Japan's devastation of large parts and populations of Asia" (Dudden, 2008 p.36). Because of that, the Japanese collective memory of the WWII has been shaped to only portray Japan as a 'victim' of atomic bombs and the repercussions of losing a war. Changing such a collective memory of being a 'victim' to include that of 'perpetrator' is indeed a challenge for the 'comfort women' redress movement. If such narratives of the past do not change, reparative justice seems far from achieved. In the meanwhile, time is of vital importance – many survivors have already perished – but redress and change must be attained for healing and forgiveness to begin before it is too late.

Conclusion

Seventy-four years have passed since the end of the World War II. Twenty-eight years have passed since 1991, when Kim Hak-Soon spoke up for the first time about the 'comfort women' system and demanded justice. After that, more survivors joined Kim Hak-Soon's justice call. These calls for justice have transformed in the Comfort Women Redress Movement that seeks a reparative approach to justice. The survivors' demands are clear: a formal public apology, monetary restitution and incorporating the survivors' stories in Japanese history textbooks.

This research has sought to understand the suffering of the survivors, so that their justice demands can be better comprehended. In order to do so, narrative analysis has been chosen as it allows for the survivors' voices to be heard and listened.

The first part of the analysis was focused on the women's narratives about their 'before', 'while' and 'after' their 'captivity' time. 'Innocence' was found to be the most prominent theme in the 'before' section. The survivors emphasized their innocence and 'purity' before they were 'recruited'. A possible explanation of such narratives could be the importance attributed to women of being innocent and 'pure' in Asian societies, where women's roles are still believed to be that of daughter, wife and mother. The largest theme identified in the 'while' section has been 'violence' and 'pain'. The narrations of the survivors reflected the violence experienced while being captive in the 'comfort stations'. Because of the harshness of such experiences, psychological pain was predominant. This psychological pain was sometimes translated in suicide or attempts of committing it. Most survivors expressed how shameful and horrible such experience was and thus death was a better option for them. Finally, the largest theme identified in the 'after' section was 'suffering'. The narrations of the survivors stated how deeply hurt they felt and still keep feeling. Overall, 'shame' was discovered to be the theme that is the most prominent one, alongside with 'loneliness' and 'silence'. The survivors' feelings of shame, I have argued, come from the pressure that their own societies exert on rape survivors. Asian societies are still very patriarchal, and women's roles are deeply defined as mothers and wives. Moreover, rape continues to be mainly seen as the survivor's fault and thus being raped constitutes something one should be ashamed of. The survivors were silent for more than fifty years, and consequently the feeling of 'shame' did not allow them to lead a 'normal' life. Most expressed their bitterness about not being able to have children or get married,

as they were perceived – by the society but also by themselves – as 'impure' and 'pariah'. Therefore, and notwithstanding the great impact that the past events exerts/exerted in the survivors, feeling ashamed of their past has deeply impacted their lives and should also be seen as a cause of their suffering.

The second part of the analysis focused in the narratives of the survivors about the Japanese government and the Japanese people. The narratives about the Japanese government were identified to contain mainly 'anger'. It should be noted that this 'anger' came from mostly Korean women. The survivors that expressed 'anger' towards the Japanese government was due to the reiterated negation of their testimonies, which provoked a deeper feeling of being wronged. Thus, the Japanese government attitude towards the survivors has contributed to their suffering, as it has not been acknowledged.

As regards to the narratives related to Japanese people, two different opinions have been identified. The first one is 'anger' and different degrees of 'hatred' towards this collective. A possible explanation to such feelings could be found in the past colonization in these women's countries by the Japanese. The second opinion is that of the Japanese people being 'blameless'. The survivors argue that the whole collective cannot be blamed for what their ancestors did. However, the survivors that can be classified in this opinion have manifested the necessity of 'teaching' the whole collective their stories, so that the Japanese collective memory about the WWII includes them.

The third part of the analysis has focused on the survivors' narratives about the words 'apology' and 'compensation'/'reparations' by the Japanese government. The survivors seem to agree in the approach to take: reparative justice. Such an approach has been taken as other forms of transitional justice do not fit as well with their demands.

The narratives of 'apology' identified are about 'responsibility', 'agency', 'sincerity' and 'helplessness'. The survivors stated that apologizing must be done because it is the Japanese responsibility. When an apology is negated, some survivors have dehumanized the Japanese government and stated that such behavior contributed to their suffering. Furthermore, such an apology will only be accepted if it fulfills certain conditions, be sincere and come from the Japanese government itself. If it fulfills such criteria, then it will be accepted, and it may help the 'healing' process. A feeling of 'helplessness' has also been identified as such apology is yet to be issued, and most of the survivors have already perished.

As regards to the narratives corresponding to 'compensation'/'reparations', two main themes have been identified: 'agency' and 'insincerity'. The women have emphasized how money cannot undo the past wrongdoings but could help alleviate their suffering by receiving medical care, psychological help, procuring a decent living-space, etc. However, monetary restitution will only be accepted if it comes directly from the Japanese government, similarly to the apology-seeking process. Thus if 'agency' is not fulfilled, the survivors will not accept monetary restitution as they see it 'insincere'. If such is the case, the insincerity can be perceived as insulting, as if it was 'alimony'.

By analyzing the narratives of traumatic pasts of survivors of the 'comfort women' system and how these women suggest its possible redress, this study has contributed in the general debate of the 'comfort women' issue in acknowledging the voices of the survivors. Such acknowledgement can provide an opportunity to connect with some narratives that may have been unheard in other parts of the world. Moreover, by giving these voices importance, it allows for a better understanding of their justice claims. Nevertheless, such justice claims have yet to be meet, as a formal apology from the Japanese government has not been issued and monetary restitution by the Japanese government has not been given. The survivors third demand has also not been done. Targeting the history textbooks in Japan is by no means a coincidence, as the aim behind it is to include the survivors' stories into the national collective memory of Japan. However, such goal seems indeed a challenge as the national collective memory of Japan about the WWII is already well-established.

After having concluded this study, further questions have arisen for future research. A possibility could be examining the narratives of the Japanese government regarding the 'comfort women' issue. Furthermore, it could be compared with the results obtained in this research to try to identify where the disagreement lies, which would lead to question why such disagreement exists and what could be the causes of it. On the other hand, my research could be expanded by conducting interviews with the remaining survivors to compare the narratives resulting, whether such narratives have changed or have remained the same. This would lead to question what has or not changed for such narratives to mutate or remain the same. Furthermore, it could also be studied by conducting a discourse analysis research whether the setting and interviewer for such interviews has impacted the narratives of the survivors or not.

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