Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors and Their Families:

The Complexity of Identity, Motherhood, and Intergenerational Implications

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Dedication

To Taiwanese comfort women survivors and their families for remembering the sorrow and resilience weaved into their lives

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Abstract

During World War II, the Imperial Japanese Army forced many girls and women from Taiwan, Korea, China, and other Asian countries to serve as sexual slaves to the soldiers. Although the exploitative system of "comfort women" was widespread, its effects on the survivors' identities throughout their lifetimes as well as its intergenerational effects on their families remain insufficiently explored in the existing literature. This doctoral dissertation aims to address this gap by analyzing how a complex interplay between early-life sexual trauma and certain structural factors influenced older Taiwanese comfort women survivors' multiple identities (i.e., as women, as sexual violence survivors, as older adults). Additionally, the study retraces the ramifications of sexual trauma on the second and third generations of these women's families, such as their experiences of mother–daughter relationships. To this end, an autobiographical reflection is utilized to study how Taiwanese comfort women survivors were supported by the NGOs and social worker activists, and analyzes how they were socially and politically positioned, at the local and international levels, in the comfort women redress movement. Additionally, a life-history analysis of two deceased Indigenous Truku comfort women is conducted, drawing on existing literature. Furthermore, in-depth, semi-structured interviews are conducted with ten family members of one Truku and three Han-Chinese comfort women (all deceased). Several important findings emerged from these interviews. First, the survivors' sexual trauma interplayed with multiple structural factors (i.e., colonialism, patriarchy, class exploitation, cultural and gender norms, local and global social-political factors), to shape their life trajectories. Second, family members recognized the survivors' intersectional roles (as women, as sexual violence survivors, as older adults, etc.) and generally empathized with survivors' sexual victimization, although the second generation expressed more ambivalence

compared to the third generation. Third, important contextual factors influenced family responses, including participant-survivor relationships, local and global activism campaigns, and changing societal gender norms. Fourth, although the second and third generations were profoundly affected by their (grand)mothers' experiences as comfort women, the family members demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of this challenging history. Based on these findings, the study advocates for increased attention and support for the descendants of comfort women, emphasizing the involvement of families in the recovery process of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivors. The dissertation concludes by proposing a culturally-driven, multilayered approach to support comfort women and other CRSV survivors and their families.

Résumé

Pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, l'Armée impériale japonaise forçait de nombreuses filles et femmes originaires de Taïwan, de Corée, de Chine et d'autres pays d'Asie, à servir d'esclaves sexuelles aux soldats. Bien que ce système de « femmes de réconfort » ait été largement répandu, ses conséquences sur les identités des survivantes tout au long de leurs vies ainsi que ses conséquences intergénérationnelles restent insuffisamment étudiées dans la littérature actuelle. Cette thèse de doctorat vise à combler cette lacune en analysant comment un traumatisme sexuel survenu en début de vie, ainsi que certains facteurs structurels, ont pu influencer les multiples facettes identitaires d'anciennes « femmes de réconforts » originaires de Taïwan et plus âgées que les autres (c.-à-d., en tant que femmes, survivantes de violences sexuelles, et femmes plus âgées). En outre, cette étude retrace les répercussions de ces traumatismes sexuels sur les deuxièmes et troisièmes générations descendantes de ces femmes, par exemple sur leurs expériences des relations mère-fille. Dans cette optique, une réflexion autobiographique est utilisée pour étudier comment les anciennes femmes de réconfort taiwanaises étaient positionnées, sur le plan social et politique, dans les mouvements—d'échelle locale et internationale—de réparation des femmes de réconfort, soutenus par des ONG et des travailleurs sociaux militants. De plus, une analyse de l'histoire de vie de deux femmes de réconfort autochtones Truku décédées est réalisée, en s'appuyant sur la littérature existante. De plus, des entretiens semi-structurés approfondis ont été menés avec dix membres de différentes familles : ceux d'une femme Truku et ceux de trois femmes Han (toutes décédées). Ces entretiens ont mené à plusieurs conclusions importantes. Tout d'abord, ces traumatismes sexuels ont eu une influence sur de multiples facteurs structurels de la vie de ces survivantes (c.-à-d., colonialisme, patriarcat, exploitation des classes, normes culturelles et de genre, facteurs

sociopolitiques locaux et mondiaux). Deuxièmement, les membres de la famille ont reconnu les rôles intersectionnels des survivantes (en tant que femmes, survivantes de violences sexuelles, adultes plus âgées, etc.) et ont généralement exprimé de l'empathie en ce qui concerne les violences sexuelles vécues par celles-ci, bien que la deuxième génération ait exprimé davantage d'ambivalence comparée à la troisième. Troisièmement, d'importants facteurs contextuels ont influencé les réactions familiales, notamment les relations entre les participants et les survivantes, les campagnes d'activisme locales et mondiales et l'évolution des normes sociétales en matière de genre. Quatrièmement, bien que les deuxièmes et troisièmes générations aient été profondément affectées par les expériences de leurs (grands-)mères « femmes de réconfort », les membres de la famille ont fait preuve d'un courage remarquable face à ces évènements difficiles. En se basant sur ces résultats, l'étude préconise une attention et un soutien accrus pour les descendants de ces femmes, en insistant sur l'implication familiale dans le processus de rétablissement des survivantes de violences sexuelles liées aux conflits (Conflict-related Sexual Violence, ou CRSV en anglais). La thèse se termine par la proposition d'une approche culturelle à plusieurs niveaux pour soutenir les femmes et autres survivantes de violences sexuelles liées aux conflits, ainsi que leurs familles.

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In 2018, after two decades as a social worker, I embarked on a journey toward a Ph.D. in social work. In retrospect, the past five-year journey would not have been possible without the generous support of the many people I have in my life.

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Contribution to Original Knowledge

My overarching aims for this dissertation have been to produce a more nuanced understanding of the intergenerational impacts of sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors and their descendants, as well as to draw broader implications for the issues faced by conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivors and their families in general.

On the theoretical level, I employed the life-course perspective and the concept of intersectionality to situate the survivors—who belonged to different ethnicities—within their unique structural contexts and to analyze the interplay of sexual trauma with the multiple identities they had along their respective life trajectories. By applying a comprehensive framework integrating micro- and macro-levels of analysis to this study, I hope to contribute to the methodology for studying early-life sexual trauma in older CRSV survivors.

On the empirical level, this dissertation is the first study in which the lived experiences of comfort women survivors' second and third-generation descendants are explored in detail. Tellingly, I discovered that the sexual trauma inflicted by the comfort women system significantly impacted not only the lives of the survivors, but also those of their children and grandchildren. Consequently, I highlight the importance of assessing and understanding the perspectives of comfort women survivors' families, so as to remedy the current lack of services and policies destined to them in most of the affected countries. Moreover, I underscore the valuable experiences of survivors' families who have been involved in the comfort women redress movement, and I call for involving families in survivors' activism and healing activities to support their recovery and resilience in the wake of CRSV. Taken together, all these findings generate promising implications for research, policy, and practice concerning CRSV survivors and their families.

Outline of the Dissertation

My doctoral dissertation, entitled *Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors and Their Families: The Complexity of Identity, Motherhood, and Intergenerational Implications* is in a manuscript-based format. It contains seven chapters, including four journal-format manuscripts of which I am the sole or primary author and which I have submitted or in preparation for publication as articles in peer-reviewed journals. The outline of the dissertation is as follows.

Chapter 1 serves as the general introduction, in which I provide the background of my interest in the research topics of the dissertation. I stress the importance of understanding the impact of early-life conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) on comfort women survivors and their families. I also highlight the significance of this study for filling the current research gap on these topics, while formulating the study's research problem, research questions, and methodology.

Chapter 2 is a literature review, divided into two key sections. In the first section, I review literature relevant to the context of the study's research problem, including (a) the background of the Taiwanese comfort women issue, (b) existing studies and lacunae regarding the impact of CRSV on older women and their families, and (c) CRSV survivors' identity formation. Subsequently, in the second section of the literature review, I articulate the theoretical framework of this dissertation, notably the concept of intersectionality and the life-course perspective.

In Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, I variously explore how comfort women survivors and their family members navigate their multiple identities, in light of my research findings about the impacts of early sexual trauma on these survivors as well as on subsequent generations. A

substantial portion of the literature review, methodologies, findings, and discussion are elaborated upon in each of these chapters.

In Chapter 3, I discuss how survivors' identities were portrayed in the public discourses in Taiwan that influenced how people understand and perceive comfort women survivors. This manuscript provides a literature review of the leading public discourses of Nationalism and Women's Rights in the transnational comfort women reparation movement and discusses how activists in Taiwan initiated a humanistic public discourse that emphasizes the individual human characteristics of comfort women survivors, resisting the collective image reinforced by the dominant public discourses. By reflecting on my clinical experience as an activist in the comfort women movement, this single-authored article introduces the political-social context and comfort women reparation movement embedded in Taiwanese comfort women survivors' lives in their twilight years. This manuscript was published in *Journal of Human Rights Practice.*

In Chapter 4, I analyze published literature, survivors' oral histories, and documentaries to reconstruct two Taiwanese Indigenous Truku survivors' life stories. Through the lenses of intersectionality and the life-course perspective, I examine the interplay of these survivors' sexual trauma with their multiple social locations. Reviewing the historical context and social norms of the Truku community, I explore how early sexual trauma interacts with different forms of structural oppression on these two Truku survivors, highlighting their coping strategies and modes of resistance. I co-wrote this manuscript with my Ph.D. advisory committee member Dr. Frank. T.-Y. Wang. As the primary author, I was responsible for analyzing the findings, writing and editing the draft, and finalizing the publication; my co-author contributed his suggestions and edits on the manuscript's content and structure. This manuscript has submitted to a journal

for publication, under the title “Intersectionality of Early Sexual Trauma and Aging in Two Truku Comfort Women Survivors’ Life.”

Chapter 5, is a qualitative study, in which I conduct in-depth interviews to explore ten family members’ perceptions of four deceased Taiwanese comfort women survivors involved in the comfort women redress movement. My main purpose is to elucidate family perspectives on survivors’ sexual victimization and public disclosures. Through the accounts of family members, I illustrate how the families of comfort women survivors learned of their (grand)mothers' comfort women’s experiences, assess their perceptions of survivors' participation in the redress movement, compared the intergenerational differences/similarities in their responses, and analyzed important contextual factors that appeared to shape family perspectives and responses. I co-wrote this manuscript with my Ph.D. supervisor Dr. Myriam Denov: I was the primary author for this manuscript, responsible for analyzing, writing, and editing the draft; my co-author contributed her suggestions and edits on the manuscript’s content and structure. This manuscript under the title “‘Wow, That’s Our Grandma’: The Responses of Family Members of Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors Regarding Public Disclosures of Sexual Victimization” is in preparation for submission.

In Chapter 6, I explore how the family members of three deceased comfort women of Taiwanese Han-Chinese ethnicity perceive their (grand)mothers. I retrace each family’s perspectives of their (grand)mother’s parenting and caregiving, studying how family members were impacted by their (grand)mother’s experiences as comfort women. I use composite narratives to illustrate the ways in which survivors’ sexual trauma impacted their family formation and parenting, with long-term effects on survivors’ offspring. I also recount how the study’s participants showed great strength, actively undertaking their healing journey under

challenging circumstances. I co-authored this manuscript with my Ph.D. supervisor Dr. Myriam Denov: I was the primary author for analyzing, writing, and editing the draft; my co-author contributed her suggestions and edits to the manuscript's content and structure. This manuscript has been submitted to a journal for publication, under the title "Walking Out of the Shadows of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Exploring the Complexities of Motherhood and Intergenerational Realities in the Families of Three Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors."

To conclude, in Chapter 7, I assess the dissertation's overall significance in light of its main findings and its implications for research, policy, and practice. I claim that the principal elements of the dissertation make distinctive, original contributions to the study of comfort women and CRSV against women. I also offer a final reflection on conducting this research project and writing this dissertation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

My story with the Taiwanese comfort women survivors began in 2008. I was privileged to work with them for over nine years, through a nonprofit organization in Taipei, Taiwan. In the course of my involvement in human rights activism dedicated to survivors,[1] I accompanied these "comfort women"—a euphemistic term designating what is now recognized as military sexual slaves of the Imperial Japanese Military in World War II—to many events, such as lobbying in the Japanese National Diet (national legislature). On these occasions, in public forums and on high school campuses, they told their stories of victimization to Japanese audiences. Their lives and testimonies have also appeared in exhibitions or documentary screenings in Taiwan and overseas. I admired their courage in publicly telling their painful stories, which were difficult to share with their families. Meanwhile, I listened to their stories of agony, loss, sadness, and happiness in private conversations and in ongoing support groups. In their telling, these women were more than "comfort women" survivors: they were also mothers or grandmothers—multi-faceted older women who were hardly visible in the mainstream public discourses. I witnessed how they struggled with many issues: the unfinished business of their pasts, dreams kept in their minds, cherished memories of their loved ones, along with loss, long-term illness, and approaching death in their twilight years. As a result, I became curious about comfort women survivors' various identities, particularly how their past experiences of sexual violence interplayed with their identity formation, their family relationships, and their later activism in the comfort women redress movement. How does sexual trauma affect comfort women survivors' multiple identities? Which intergenerational realities should be considered, and how? I undertook

[1] I participated in the comfort women redress movement from 2008 to 2017 as the vice and then the executive director of the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF), and from the end of 2016 to early 2018 as the director of the Ama Museum, a museum established by the TWRF in 2016 in memory of Taiwanese comfort women.

this dissertation in an effort to fill the literature gap on these questions, while simultaneously advocating for the courageous survivors and their families today.

Context and Purpose of this Study

More than 70 years have passed since the end of World War II (WWII) in 1945. Yet, the stories and legacies of WWII experiences have continued to receive attention in recent decades, as many stories still need to be told (e.g., Danieli, 1998; Kuwert, 2014; Lee, 2019; Roupetz et al., 2023; Shmotkin et al., 2003). Among such historical legacies is the sexual slavery system (commonly known as the "comfort women" system) established by the Japanese military—an extreme example of an extensive system of institutionalized sexual violence against women during wartime (Watanabe, 1995). Despite a relative abundance of literature on comfort women, studies that specifically address the impact of early-life sexual trauma on comfort women survivors and their intergenerational families remain scarce (Lee et al., 2018, 2019).

Between 1932 and 1945, an estimated 5,000 to 200,000 women in Asia (from Japan, its colonies Taiwan and Korea, and its occupied territories such as China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Burma, and Indonesia / Dutch East Indies) were conscripted and enslaved into the comfort women system (Yoshimi, 2000). These women were repeatedly subjected multiple forms of violence by Japanese military members, including repeated rapes, sexually transmitted diseases, and mental abuse, with many perishing in the comfort women system due to illness, suicide, and murder (Yoshimi, 2000). Moreover, upon Japan's defeat in 1945, large numbers of comfort women were killed by the Japanese military, to destroy evidence of the comfort women system (Qiu et al., 2013). Nevertheless, despite these historical facts, there have been continuous debates about Japan's legal responsibility for mobilizing women into this system of enslavement in Japan. Indeed, the comfort women issue remains unresolved between Japan, on the one hand,

and many survivors and activists, on the other (McCarthy, 2020; Yamaguchi, 2020). Although the transnational comfort women redress movement has forged on for over three decades, many of the victims are now deceased. For instance, as of May 2023, not a single survivor remains in Taiwan (Chiang, 2023), while only nine survivors can be found in South Korea (Chung, 2023), and thirteen in China (Z.-L. Su, personal communication, June 13, 2023).

The comfort women system is a form of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) against women, whereby CRSV is "sexual violence by armed organizations during armed conflict" (Wood, 2015, p. 458). "Armed organizations" can include both State forces as well as non-State actors. "Sexual violence" refers to "rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity" (Wood, 2015, p. 459); it also encompasses trafficking persons for sexual violence or exploitation committed in situations of conflict (OSRSGSV-SVC, United Nations, 2019). Research has revealed numerous long-term physical, psychological, social, and economic effects of CRSV on survivors, including stigma, reproductive health problems, loss of identity, loss of family, displacement, social exclusion, decreased marriageability, economic insecurity, and marginalization (Denov, 2006; Denov & Piolanti, 2019; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Trenholm et al., 2015). CRSV survivors also face myriad psychological consequences, such as depression, social phobia, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and sexual dysfunctions (Lončar et al., 2006). Women are more susceptible to HIV infection than men, and suffer the health consequences of deprivation and exclusion for many years after wars (Levy & Sidel, 2008). In addition, many survivors and their families are impacted by secondary trauma. For example, survivors' families reported experiences of shame and stigmatization associated with their female relatives' sexual victimization (Kelly et al., 2012); mothers of children born of wartime rape bear the burden of

being excluded by their communities; survivors and their children often face high levels of stigma; the children run the risk of abuse, abandonment, and marginalization (Denov et al., 2018; OSRSGSV-SVC, United Nations, 2021; Woldetsadik, 2018; Woolner et al., 2019). Moreover, survivors face the dilemma of whether to reveal their past to their children or to hide their sexual victimization (Močnik, 2020).

Despite the important findings above, the impacts of early-life CRSV on older women survivors, including comfort women survivors, and their families remain under-addressed. To be sure, a few studies have addressed forms of long-term psychological distress due to CRSV. For instance, research has been done on post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) symptoms among older German survivors of rape by the Allied military post-WWII (Kuwert et al., 2010 & 2014), as well as on the mother–child relationship among children born between 1945–1955 across Germany from rape by the Allied military post-WWII (Roupetz et al, 2021; Roupetz et al., 2023) and its intergenerational impacts (Schwartz, 2020). Other researchers have addressed the life-long psychological distress caused by CRSV, such as the high prevalence of PTSD among comfort women survivors (Min et al, 2011; Lee at al., 2018) and the long-term impact of sexual victimization on comfort women survivors' life course (Park et al., 2016). Importantly, the authors of one study highlighted the intergenerational transmission of comfort women's sexual trauma to their offspring, in the form of psychiatric disorder symptoms among comfort women survivors' families (Lee et al., 2019). Nevertheless, these scholars rarely discuss how older survivors' early sexual trauma intersects with their multiple identities (as women, as older adults, as CRSV survivors), how their intersectional roles were experienced at different stages of life, or how survivors' sexual trauma impacted their offspring.

CRSV is one of the most recurring wartime violations of women's human rights throughout history and territories (Alison, 2007, Denov, 2015). It continues to be part of the broader strategy of conflict, significantly affecting women and girls today (OSRSGSV-SVC, United Nations, 2021). Nevertheless, older women who survived CRSV and their families have received insufficient attention in the academic community. As such, an in-depth study of how comfort women survivors navigated their sexual trauma and multiple social roles along their life-long journey along with the subsequent impact on their intergenerational families may facilitate an understanding of how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma potentially impacts CRSV survivors and subsequent generations. Accordingly, my purpose in this dissertation is to explore how Taiwanese comfort women survivors' early-life sexual trauma interplays with multiple social locations along their life trajectories, while duly considering the intergenerational realities and implications for their family members.

Research Questions

To fill in the current research gap, I aim to understand the impact of early-life sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors by studying how it interplays with survivors' different identities/social locations along their life trajectories; in addition, I will examine this trauma's intergenerational impacts and implications among comfort women survivors and their families. The term "*identity"* here refers to a self composed from the meanings that people attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies (Stryker & Burke, 2000). In my dissertation, I explore the following research question and sub-questions.

Primary research question:

- What is the impact of early-life sexual trauma on older Taiwanese comfort women survivors and the corresponding intergenerational realities?

Sub-questions:

- How does early-life sexual trauma interplay with survivors' multiple social locations along their life trajectories?
- What are the intergenerational realities of survivors' multi-faceted identities along their life trajectories?
- What are the intergenerational impacts of survivors' sexual trauma on their offspring?

Methodology

This dissertation comprises four studies (Chapter 3, 4, 5, and 6) that discuss how sexual trauma influenced how comfort women survivors navigated their multifaceted identities along their life trajectories as well as how this trauma impacted their family members' lives. The research design of each study is as follows.

First Study

In the first study (Chapter 3), I discuss how Taiwan has introduced a humanistic discourse for comfort women survivors. In this article, I used literature analysis to study the development of dominant discourses. I also used the auto-biographical reflection to reflect on my professional experiences, describing the struggle social workers faced in a human rights activism-based setting and recalling the process of initiating art-based activism projects.

Second Study

In the second study (Chapter 4), I examined how two indigenous Truku survivors' life trajectories were influenced by the intersection of sexual trauma with structural factors. At the time of recruitment, only one comfort woman survivor was known to be living in Taiwan, and her health was declining. Accordingly, I decided to analyze instead the published literature and the oral histories of deceased comfort women. First, I collected the available oral histories

conducted by a historian and the TWRF (Chu, 2009; Chu & TWRF, 2004), literature (Lai et al., 2005; Peng, 2012; Tseng & TWRF, 2012; TWRF, 1999; TWRF, 2005a; TWRF, 2005b; TWRF, 2005c; TWRF, 2017; TWRF& Hsia, 2005; Watanabe, 2018), and two documentaries (Wu, 2015; Yang, 1998). Among the seven indigenous survivors' stories that appeared in the literature and documentaries, I chose the publicized stories of two Truku survivors, Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay, as they were more richly documented than the others. Subsequently, I reconstructed these two survivors' life stories, adopting the lenses of the intersectionality and life-course perspective to explore how early trauma interplayed with structural factors (such as Truku historical trauma) during and after Japanese colonialism, the Truku cultural belief of Gaya on the boundary of women's sexuality, and the local and global comfort women redress movement. Within this context, I assessed how survivors' life trajectories, resistance, and agency were impacted.

Third and Fourth Studies

The third and the fourth studies (Chapters 5 and 6) present qualitative research, based on my fieldwork with deceased comfort women survivors' families in Taiwan, from November 2021 to June 2022. Using a narrative approach to data collection and analysis, I explored how survivors navigated their multiple social locations during their aging processes and their impact on their intergenerational families. Prior to data collection, this study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Board of McGill University.

Methodological Approach. For this dissertation, I adopted a narrative inquiry approach. I deemed this approach the most appropriate to my subject because it involves collecting and analyzing narrative materials to understand individuals' lived and told experiences within their broader social, familial, and cultural contexts (Clandinin, 2013), while exploring how these experiences begin and unfold in diverse times, places, and relationships (Clandinin & Connelly,

2000). This approach also facilitates a focus on a smaller number of individuals to gain a deep, nuanced understanding of the narrators' life experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Moreover, researchers have argued that older adults are especially receptive to narrative interviews, as their advanced position in the life-course provides them with a valuable perspective from which to survey their lives (Murray, 2003). Indeed, older adults' narratives provide insight into the "inside" of aging, considering that humans are fundamentally storytelling creatures (Kenyon & Randall, 2004). Furthermore, narrative approaches are well suited for studying the concept of *identity*—a core aspect of this dissertation—as people's identity is presented through their "stories to live by" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999), whereby "[s]tories to live by are fluid, evolving, and profoundly experiential" (Huber et al., 2003, p. 347). Moreover, McAdams (2008) argues that the telling of narratives is closely intertwined with the shaping and maintenance of personal identity: an individual's life-story is re-shaped as new events occur and are evaluated according to their significance for the individual concerned; in turn, these evaluations inform future revisions of the story.

To conduct a narrative inquiry in this study, I applied Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space* approach. The three-dimensional narrative inquiry space includes the dimensions of *personal and social* (interaction), *past*, *present*, *and future* (continuity/temporality), and *place* (situation), along with four *directions* (inward, outward, backward, and forward). Accordingly, the researcher addresses participants' personal and social issues by looking inward (such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, moral dispositions) and outward (the environment) of their narratives; temporal issues are addressed by looking not only at the present event but also at its past and its future. This approach facilitated my exploration of participants' interwoven narrative ways of thinking about survivors' sexual

victimization and the intergenerational realities, while reflecting on the contexts of temporality, place, and social interactions in which their narratives are embedded. My aim was to gain a profound, nuanced understanding of the participants' lived experiences.

Participants. The original design for this research was to recruit eight survivors and eight adult family members from Taiwan and China for this study. These survivors were in their 90s. Family members included in the study comprise the second and/or third generations who were close to the survivors. Most of the second generation was over the age of 60, while the third generation was over the age of 30. As of November 2021, when this research was conducted, only one known comfort woman survivor was still living in Taiwan. But given her declining health, I did not include her in my study. Instead, I decided to interview deceased survivors' family members while referencing available oral histories of survivors and recruiting unreported survivors identified through long-term care services.

Comfort women survivors likely chose to hide their sexual victimization when the Taiwanese government and the NGO (TWRF) first investigated survivors and identified 59 survivors between 1992 and 2004. Consequently, I attempted to recruit hitherto unreported and unknown survivors identified through long-term care services, considering their age. Through email correspondences and personal contacts, I contacted four nationwide long-term care service agencies for their permission to distribute flyers and to contact potential participants. One agency agreed, distributing flyers through its intranet to its staff. In addition, a senior clinician in the long-term care field helped to distribute flyers through her nationwide network. Nevertheless, these distribution channels unfortunately yielded no results. As a result, no comfort women survivors in Taiwan participated in this research.

As for recruiting deceased survivors' families, recruitment materials were shared with individuals involved in the redress movement who were acquainted with survivors' families, leading to two deceased comfort women's families agreeing to participate in this research. Additional family members of deceased comfort women were also recruited through my existing contacts; three deceased survivors' families accepted my interview invitation.

For the participants in China, I gained the support of the Chinese Comfort Women Research Center of Shanghai Normal University to recruit Chinese comfort women survivors and their family members in Hunan province. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, my plan to visit China had to be delayed as per McGill University's regulations for conducting research aboard; finally, the trip was canceled in March 2022 due to the severe outbreak and travel restrictions in Shanghai.

As a result, I managed to recruit a total of 11 participants, including second and third generations, from five deceased comfort women survivors' families in Taiwan. The participants were family members of comfort women representing diverse cultural/national identities including three Han-Chinese, one Indigenous Truku, and one Indigenous Atayal.

Table 1

11 Interviewee's Relationship with the Deceased Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors

Deceased Survivors' Families	Participants		Ethnicity
	Second Generation 60-74 years of age	*Third Generation 29-49 years of age*	
1	1	2, 3	Han-Chinese
2	4, 5	6	Han-Chinese
3	7	8	Han-Chinese
4	None	9, 10	Truku
5	11	None	Atayal

Note. Identifying information such as the name and gender of the participants has been omitted to ensure anonymity.

Interview Process. I collected data in Mandarin Chinese. One to two semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 participants from these five families. In places convenient to them, participants were interviewed about their perceptions of how early-life sexual trauma interplayed with their (grand)mothers' multiple social locations along with their life trajectories, as well as the corresponding intergenerational realities. Most participants received TWD$500 (equivalent to CAD$20) as an honorarium, while a few declined. The interview protocol included questions regarding participants' perceptions about how the former comfort women's experiences affected their later lives, what they knew about their mother/grandmother's life story, how they believed sexual trauma affected their mother/grandmother's gendered roles (e.g., daughter, wife, mother), and the ways their mother's/grandmother's life story affected their own lives. Participants were interviewed individually (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11) or in a group from the same family (7 & 8, 9 & 10) if a participant requested to be interviewed alongside his/her family members. Ten participants' first interviews were in-person, while one requested a telephone interview. After I transcribed each participant's first interview, I sometimes conducted a second interview, either in person, by telephone, or via Zoom, according the participants' preference. Each participant was involved in one to two interviews. Three participants were interviewed once, while eight were interviewed twice, which amounted to 15 interviews. Each interview lasted from approximately 90 minutes to three hours. The interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed for coding and analysis (with the written or oral consent of participants).

Data Analysis and Presentation. Two different narrative analyses were used in Studies 3 and 4. First, I analyzed the raw data in Chinese to ensure that the original meaning was not lost during the translation process. Since the Atayal participant (11) did not answer most of the interview questions, her interview was omitted from this analysis. Second, I discussed the

interpretation of the narratives and themes generated from the stories through many in-person and Zoom meetings with my supervisor Dr. Myriam Denov to enhance the study's trustworthiness. Finally, I selected a collection of interview themes and quotations from the transcripts and translated them into English. The translation was proofed by a Taiwanese fluent in both languages to ensure the trustworthiness of the translation. Details of each study are discussed below.

Study 3 (Chapter 5)—thematic narrative analysis. The thrust of this study was to understand participants' perspectives on deceased comfort women's public disclosures of sexual victimization as well as their perspective on their (grand)mothers' participation in the redress movement. Ten participants were chosen for analysis. I applied the thematic narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008) to better understand the themes that emerged from in-depth interviews pertaining to different cases. Riessman (2008) notes that when applying thematic narrative analysis, the "emphasis is on 'the told'—events and cognitions to which language refers (the content of speech)" (p. 58), stressing the importance of attending to the time and place of narrations, preserving sequences and remaining case-centered to keep the story intact, rather than thematically coding segments and generating generic concepts to theorize across cases. According these principles, the analysis began by reading through the transcripts numerous times. Subsequently, line-by-line coding was conducted to write down initial ideas, followed by selecting the relevant narratives regarding families' perspectives on survivors' sexual victimization and public disclosures. Subsequently, I used an inductive approach to generate initial codes of the selected subtexts, creating categories for codes that appeared recurrently and sorting the categories to elicit dominant themes and subthemes (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Study 4 (Chapter 6)—holistic-content analysis and *composite narratives*. Study 4 aimed to understand the perspectives of three Han-Chinese deceased comfort women's families on (grand)motherhood and the intergenerational effects of sexual trauma. In order to gain a holistic understanding of the data, I used a holistic-content analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998) via the five-element problem-solving approach, which consists of characters, situations, problems, actions, and outcomes as plot elements to structure a storyline (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). In addition, I applied the composite narratives approach, synthesizing research participants' accounts to present them as a single narrative (Taber, 2013; Willis, 2019). Moreover, combining the three families' accounts into a holistic narrative of a single family also served to protect the research participants' anonymity.

The data analysis mainly followed the analytic steps of the five-element problem-solving approach proposed by Ollerenshaw & Creswell (2002). I began by reading these materials many times, coding line by line. Then, I paid particular attention to participants' accounts of the interplay of comfort women survivors' sexual trauma with structural factors with a view to effects on survivors' motherhood, family lives, and other intergenerational realities. Subsequently, I wrote down the global impression of the three families and color-coded the transcripts for the elements of plot structure (characters, setting, problem, actions, and resolution) with attention to unfolding events, epiphanies, and turning-points in the participants' accounts. Later, I graphically organized the color-coded transcripts by the plot structure and sequenced the events.

Regarding data presentation, considering that some of the deceased survivors discussed in this study were involved in the comfort women redress movement and their stories were widely publicized in Taiwan and internationally, I chose composite narratives, which synthesized

research participants' accounts to present them as a single narrative (Taber, 2013; Willis, 2019), so as to protect the participants' anonymity and confidentiality. I applied the approach proposed by Willies (2019), namely using third-person narratives with composite characters, to present data from several interviews as if it came from a single individual. All the quotations in this article are direct verbatim from the original transcripts, and all the contents of the composite narratives are from the original interviews, not fictitious ones. More details about how I wrote the composite narratives are presented in Chapter 7.

Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Board of McGill University. This research had the potential to trigger emotional distress through the process of reflecting on survivors' early-life traumatic experiences. Therefore, I prepared mental health resources for these participants if they need referrals after the interviews. In my 15 interviews, none of the participants needed the referrals. However, three participants showed noticeable emotional swings during the interviews. I did a follow-up for these three participants after the interviews.

I conducted these interviews myself. Previously, I had engaged in activism for comfort women survivors for more than nine years (October 2008 to February 2018) and were acquainted with some of the deceased comfort women's family members prior to the interviews. Although those family members were not service users, we became acquainted while supporting survivors at healing or activism activities. I clearly explained to the interviewees my role as a researcher and that their participation in the research would be entirely voluntary.

The comfort women issue appeared to be a source of profound shame for many survivors and their families in Taiwan and other affected countries in Asia, with survivors not revealing

their victimization to their families or experiencing rejection if they did disclose their past. These factors posed challenges when reaching out to comfort women survivors' families as a researcher (Lee & Lee, 2019). Yet my prior acquaintance with some of the participants facilitated their trust, rapport, and open disclosure in my interviews, especially when raising questions about sensitive issues such as mother–daughter relationships. Accordingly, throughout my data collection process and results dissemination, I remained vigilant about protecting the participants' anonymity. In addition, during my field work, I constantly reviewed my own positionality to reduce the risk of interviewer bias. For example, while my past working experience had informed my epistemological stance on this issue, I remained reflexive about how my experience might bias my interpretation of the interviews by writing reflective journals and kept in constant dialogue with my supervisors.

Following this dissertation's introduction, the literature review and findings of these four studies are presented in Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5, and Chapter 7 contains the conclusion of this dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review contains two sections. In the first section, I assess existing studies—and identify research gaps—on issues related to the Taiwanese comfort women, notably the impacts of sexual trauma on older adults and their families as well as processes of identity formation in the aftermath of armed conflict by CRSV survivors. In the second section, I review the literature pertaining to research methods, while also I introducing and justifying the study's theoretical lenses, namely intersectionality and the life-course perspective.

Section 1: The Study's Research Problem

Background to the Taiwanese Comfort Women Issue

Taiwan was colonized by Japan, from 1895 to 1945. According to a conservative estimate, at least one thousand Taiwanese women were conscripted into the comfort women system during WWII (Lee, 1998). Since 1992, 59 survivors (including 47 Han Chinese and 12 Indigenous people) have been identified by historians and the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF—the only Taiwanese nonprofit organization dedicated to the comfort women redress movement). According to Chu (2009), most of the Han-Chinese survivors, belonging to the Hoklo and Hakka ethnicities,[2] were deceptively recruited by brokers or local officials, who had led them to believe that they were going abroad to work as nurses, canteen waitresses, and domestic servants. Others were forcibly coerced through a lottery system or by relatives, human traffickers, or local officials. When they were first conscripted into the comfort women system around China and Southeast Asia, these girls and women were generally aged

[2] Hoklo Chinese (also called *Fujian, Hokkien*, *and Minnan* people) and Hakka Chinese migrated to Taiwan from Fujian and Guangdong, respectively, beginning in the 17th century. They constitute the largest share of the population of Taiwan (Roy, 2003).

from 16 to 34. Many came from impoverished families and were uneducated. In addition, more than half of these girls were adopted out and raised as adoptive daughters or daughters-in-law in highly exploitative contexts within the patriarchal Han-Chinese culture.[3] Their socially and economically disadvantaged status forced them to enter the labor market at a young age and made them vulnerable to being trafficked into the comfort women system.

The twelve known Indigenous survivors, including Truku, Atayal, and Bunun women, were aged from 13 to 29 when they were first victimized (Chu, 2009). Eleven women and girls were victimized in the military camps near their villages in Taiwan, and one woman was sent (under false pretenses) to a military camp in Hong Kong. Not only were these women forced to provide domestic services to the Japanese army (such as cleaning, cooking, and doing laundry), but they were also repeatedly raped by the troops. Ten of the twelve survivors had unwanted pregnancies resulting from Japanese soldiers' rapes, while three of them gave birth to children from these rapes (Chu, 2009).

After WWII, Taiwanese victims suffered from multiple traumas caused by the perpetrators, exacerbated by a Taiwanese patriarchal culture that blamed the women for their sexual victimization. As a consequence, most victims hid their experiences (Chiang, 1996). However, in the early 1990s, on the initiative of South Korean activists, a transnational comfort women redress movement was formed in the victimized countries to pressure the Japanese government to provide redress for comfort women (Soh, 2008). Moreover, this movement was supported by the global community's increased attention to sexual violence in conflicts. In

[3] Adopting pre-adolescent girls to guarantee wives for sons in adoptive families or to serve as laborers for adoptive households was prevalent in Taiwan in the 19th to the mid-20th centuries. In some cases, girls were adopted for succession through uxorilocal marriage if adoptive parents had no male child. This custom led to many exploitative practices against women and was abolished by the 1970s (Chang, 2000; Wolf & Huang, 1980).

response, Taiwanese comfort women survivors gradually came forward, with the support of activist groups, to demand justice from the Japanese government (Wang, 1992).

In 1995, the Japanese government established the Asian Women's Fund (AWF), a quasi-state, quasi-private humanitarian, non-legal bonded atonement project for survivors (Kim, 2018). The AWF offered various forms of redress: compensation (donated by the Japanese public), access to medical and welfare projects (provided by the Japanese government), and an apology letter from the Japanese prime minister to comfort women survivors (Asian Women's Fund, n.d.). Although Japan claimed to have provided sufficient support and to have brought closure to survivors through the AWF, the initiative was heavily criticized by activists and survivors, who perceived it as part of the Japanese government's longstanding evasion of legal responsibility. For instance, it was denounced and rejected by most survivors in both South Korea and Taiwan (Soh, 2000). In 1999, nine Taiwanese comfort women survivors filed a lawsuit in Tokyo District Court, seeking reparations from the Japanese government. The lawsuit was ultimately rejected by the Court in 2002, and the Supreme Court of Japan confirmed the rejection of the lawsuit in 2005. In Taiwan and other victimized countries such as Korea, the Philippines, the Netherlands, and China, survivors brought lawsuits against the Japanese government, yet all were rejected on various grounds, notably being "over the statute of limitation," nullified by "sovereign immunity," or renounced by "waiver of a claim by victims forgoing the reparation rights." (Lai et al., 2005). Nonetheless, these setbacks did not halt the efforts of activists in Taiwan and overseas. Taiwanese activists continued working with the transnational comfort women redress movement to seek support for comfort women's justice (Lai et al., 2005), demanding that the Japanese government formally and unequivocally acknowledge its historical and legal responsibility as well as educate current and future generations about the historical truth of the

comfort woman system (United States House of Representatives, 2007). Meanwhile, many survivors participated in activism in Taiwan and abroad, gaining broader public recognition in their twilight years (Peng, 2017). Today, while most survivors in victimized countries have passed away, activists worldwide continue to advocate for comfort women survivors through museum exhibitions, artwork, statues, education, and activism (Chun, 2020; Hasunuma & McCarthy, 2019; Son, 2018; Tai, 2020).

In addition to the legal and societal activism described above, the Taiwanese survivors received social services and healing activities offered by the TWRF to assist with their ongoing psychosocial needs resulting from their early sexual trauma, alongside financial and medical support from the Taiwanese government. Many survivors who participated in the healing activities formed a sisterhood, enriching their older adulthood. (More details about these activities aimed to promote survivors' psychological well-being are discussed in Chapter 3.)

Studies on the Impact of CRSV on Older Women and Their Families

Existing Studies on CRSV and Older Survivors. While sexual violence in armed conflict stems from causes similar to those behind sexual violence during peacetime (i.e., gender inequality and sociocultural views), the former is aggravated by ethnic, religious, or ideological conflicts that increase the level of hatred and brutality. It is the use of rape as a weapon to punish people based on specific characteristics (e.g., religion and ethnicity) that distinguishes wartime sexual violence from sexual violence during times of peace (Koos, 2017). Furthermore, wartime rape is also employed as a strategy to disrupt family and social norms and the broader culture of a nation. Indeed, wartime rape not only threatens women's physical and psychological integrity, but also harms the culture and collective identity of the whole group under attack (McKenzie 2010; Seifert 1996). After the conflict, older people often pass stories, histories, and norms to the subsequent

generations. From a developmental perspective, it is important to recognize that historical trauma embedded in the older generation can have negative impacts on the families and communities, such as breaking down family/community structure and social networks, losing resources and loved ones, and passing on trauma to subsequent generations (Sotero, 2006).

Research has shown that older adults who have experienced traumatic events earlier in life may be particularly vulnerable to the challenges normally associated with aging: retirement, widowhood, and chronic illness may overwhelm the coping abilities and resources of these older adults, putting them at risk for the re-emergence of difficult emotions related to early trauma (Anderson et al, 2011; Davison et al., 2006; Graziano, 2003; Sachs-Ericsson et al., 2014). While a growing number of researchers discuss the effects of early trauma on older adults among Holocaust survivors, combat veterans, and childhood sexual abuse survivors (e.g. Anderson et al., 2011; Allers et al., 1992; Dulin & Passmore, 2010; Gagnon & Hersen, 2000), the specific effects of early-life conflict-related sexual trauma on older women remain under-explored.

For this literature review, I conducted a search for topics related to the impact of CRSV on older women. In particular, I entered the following search terms into ProQuest Central, PsycINFO, and MEDLINE: (trauma, mental health, impact, effects, long-term, lifetime, sequelae, consequences); (aged, elderly, older, comfort women); (sexual violence, sexual abuse, sexual slavery, rapes); (war, conflict, wartime). I also searched the Taiwan Citation Index: Humanities and Social Sciences and Taiwan National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations using the term “comfort women.” The inclusion criteria for this review were (1) empirical findings, (2) participants of research were women aged 60 and older or whose mean age was 60 and older, and (3) women who experienced sexual assault or sexual violence in conflict-related contexts. Moreover, I screened all the literature abstracts from the five databases for studies

investigating the long-term effects of sexual violence in conflict contexts on older female survivors. I excluded one study because it did not differentiate the female victims' experiences from those of men and of mere witnesses. The final selections include six articles—five in English and one in Chinese:

Table 2

Literature on the Impacts of Early-Life CRSV on Older Women

Authors	Population	Research Approach	Language
Kuwert et al., 2010	German Women Raped by the Military of the Allies in Post-WWII	Psychiatric Evaluation of Mental Health	English
Kuwert et al., 2014	German Women Raped by the Military of the Allies in Post-WWII	Psychiatric Evaluation of Mental Health	English
Min et al., 2011	Korean Comfort Women Survivors	Psychiatric Evaluation of Mental Health	English
Park et al., 2016	Korean Comfort Women Survivors	Qualitative Interviews	English
Lee et al., 2018	Korean Comfort Women Survivors	Psychiatric Evaluation of Mental Health	English
Chiang, 1996	Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors	Qualitative Interviews	Chinese

The effects of early-life war-related sexual trauma on older women have been addressed in two populations: women who survived mass rapes committed by the military of the Allies in post-WWII Germany, and comfort women survivors who were sexual slaves to the Japanese military during WWII. Studies with the former population reported survivors' post-traumatic stress and other psychopathological symptoms and impaired sexual functioning (Kuwert et al., 2010). Tellingly, compared with women who experienced nonsexual wartime trauma, CRSV survivors reported more psychological symptoms (e.g., anxiety, hyperarousal, and avoidance) and severe sexual dysfunction over their lifetime (Kuwert et al., 2014). The authors of two other studies also identified the long-term impacts of early traumatic experiences on the mental health of older Korean comfort women survivors, such as the lifetime prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Lee et al., 2018; Min et al., 2011). In addition, one group of researchers

used the life-course perspective to study the lifelong consequences of early life trauma on Korean comfort women survivors. Their qualitative study highlighted that early traumatic experiences impacted survivors' intimate relationships, reproductive health, physical pain, and emotional suffering throughout the life course (Park et al., 2016). Another researcher focused on the impact of sexual enslavement on Taiwanese comfort women's lives, revealing the survivors' poor subsequent psychological and physical well-being. In addition, their consequently poor reproductive health or infertility made the survivors pessimistic about their marriage prospects within the traditional gender norms in Taiwan—a society that considered marriage a destiny for a woman's life path. As a result, while some women remained single, many chose to marry divorced or widowed men or maintain cohabiting relationships. A few women's marriages ended due to their past comfort women experiences (Chiang, 1996).

The existing literature contains essential findings about the long-lasting impact of CRSV on older survivors' life and mental health. Not addressed, however, are interactions between early-life trauma survivors and multiple-level structural factors such as historical structures, gender norms, interpersonal relationships, and aging processes. In addition, several researchers have called for recognizing the multiple oppressions—caused by imperialism, patriarchy, and colonialism—experienced by comfort women survivors (Soh, 2008; Yang, 1997). It therefore appears necessary to study the impacts of early-life sexual trauma on comfort women survivors using a more comprehensive framework.

Existing Studies on CRSV Survivors and Their Intergenerational Realities. Playing a central role in shaping CRSV survivors' life experiences following sexual trauma in post-conflict contexts is family. Most CRSV survivors had to navigate shame, humiliation, and exclusion arising from negative family and community perceptions of rape survivors (Kelly et al., 2012;

Stark et al., 2016). In addition, many CRSV survivors' families are impacted by the stigmas and societal taboos attached to women's sexual victimization (Kelly et al., 2012). As a result, these families experience symptoms of secondary traumatic stress—including anger, anxiety, sadness, and social withdrawal—for which they receive little formal social support (Woldetsadik, 2018). Moreover, CRSV survivors who raise children born of wartime rape often experience stigmatization, agony, ambivalence, and social pressure, all of which affect survivors' mother-child relationships and family dynamics (Woolner et al. 2019; Zraly et al., 2013). These children grow up facing critical challenges related to identity formation (Denov et al., 2020; Mitreuter et al., 2019;) and mental health risks (Kahn & Denov, 2019; Van Ee & Kleber, 2013).

Despite these critical findings on CRSV survivors' families, studies of how older CRSV survivors' sexual trauma impacts intergenerational family dynamics, such as (grand)motherhood, remain scarce. I conducted a literature search using ProQuest Central, PsycINFO, and MEDLINE, focusing on the intergenerational realities of comfort women survivors and German women who survived rapes by the military of the Allies in post-World War II. For literature in English, the following search terms were used: (family, families, children, offspring, intergenerational, motherhood, mother-child); (comfort women, German women); (World War II, WWII). I also combed through literature in Chinese by inputting the term "comfort women" into the Taiwan Citation Index: Humanities and Social Sciences and the National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan. I screened all literature abstracts across the five databases for studies investigating intergenerational realities, excluding studies on German occupation children born in the aftermath of WWII if they did not specify whether the children were born from rape or not. This process winnowed down the findings to three articles, related to three topics.

Table 3

Literature on the Intergenerational Realities of Older Women Survived from Early-Life CRSV

Population	Topics	Generations Involved in Research	Author	Methods
German Women Raped by the Military of the Allies in Post-WWII	Children Born of Rape	Second Generation	Schwartz (2020)	Literature Review & Qualitative Interviews
	Mother-Child Relationships of Children Born of Rape	Second Generation	Roupetz et al. (2023)	Qualitative Interviews
Comfort Women Survivors	Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma	Second Generation	Lee et al. (2019)	Psychiatric Interviews & Evaluation

There are two studies on the intergenerational realities of German women raped by the military of the Allies in a post-WWII context. The researchers examined how the children born of rape were impacted by their mothers' history, and analyzed the corresponding mother–child relationships. Schwartz (2020) studies German older adults born to mothers raped by WWII Soviet soldiers; by analyzing two published pieces of literature and by interviewing a few participants' life histories, Schwartz explores how those experiences impacted people's lives and presents how they moved past trauma in their lives. The participants expressed deep traumatization, such as physical and mental abuse, fear of rejection, depression, or suicidal ideation, yet they also demonstrated a capacity for resilience, as they constructed meaningful lives and identities. In a related study, Roupetz et al. (2023) interviewed eight participants, showing that mother–child relationships can be categorized into conflictual, abusive, and punitive relationships, emotional parental absence, and positive upbringing. These participants navigated the struggles of ambivalent and sometimes complex mother–child relationships throughout their lifetimes, in ways which appeared to affect their identity, social connectedness, and family status.

There is one study on comfort women survivors' intergenerational reality. Lee and others (2019) studied the intergenerational transmission of comfort women's trauma through psychiatric interviews and evaluation with six Korean comfort women survivors' second-generation family members. Looking at psychiatric disorders, they found a between comfort women survivors with PTSD and the transmission of intergenerational trauma to their offspring. Both the former and the latter felt a sense of shame and stigma regarding the "comfort woman" issue, held a pessimistic worldview, and suffered from low self-esteem.

These three studies provide essential information on how early-life sexual trauma can have intergenerational effects on older CRSV survivors' families by influencing the experiences or perspectives of the second generation. Nevertheless, there remain some gaps: What of older survivors' families *not* born from rape? What are the perspectives of the *third* generation? I aim to bridge these gaps and enhance our understanding of the impact of early-life sexual trauma on older survivors' intergenerational families. To this end, I will build upon the research implications from the studies of Schwartz (2020) and Roupetz et al. (2023) and the findings about the impact of intergenerational transmission of trauma from Lee et al. (2018) to investigate the nuances of comfort women survivors' intergenerational realities such as survivors' motherhood, family formation, the impacts of sexual trauma on second and third generations, and the ways in which the people affected demonstrate their resilience.

CRSV Survivors and Identity Formation

According to many studies, CRSV survivors experience secondary trauma that profoundly impacts their lives after the war (Denov, 2006; Denov & Piolanti, 2019; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Trenholm et al., 2015). How can sexual trauma further shape their identity in a post-conflict setting? For instance, how does being a sexual violence survivor affect one's

gender roles? In the following, I use the identity theory developed by Stryker and Burke (2000) as a framework for analyzing the aspects of existing studies and literature most relevant to CRSV survivors' identity. Stryker and Burke (2000) developed two somewhat different yet strongly related strands of identity theory: the first concerns the linkage between social structures and identity; the second concerns the internal dynamics of self-processes that affect social behavior. Each provides context for the other. The relation of social structures to identity influences the process of self-verification, while the process of self-verification creates and sustains social structures (Styker & Burke, 2000). According to these concepts, the search of literature relevant to CRSV survivors' identity transformation should focus on (a) the internal dynamics of self-processing before, during, and after the conflict and (b) the interplay between identity and social structure. The findings are adumbrated below.

Transformation and Dispossession of Identity. In several studies, researchers highlight that CRSV survivors' identities were destroyed and re-traumatized in post-conflict contexts (Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Sandole & Auerbach, 2013; Trenholm et al., 2015). Sandole and Auerbach (2013) were interested in female Tutsi survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, studying how survivors experienced trauma-induced identity transformations, including "civilized selves," "survivor selves," and "aftermath selves." The massive trauma of the genocide disrupted women's prior stable identity and expected life path, such as getting married and then becoming a mother. After the genocide, women were often excluded by society, contributing to a complex posttraumatic experience that included emotional distress, a physical sense of danger, chronic medical ailments, unmet basic needs, an uncertain future, and isolation from an indifferent world.

Women's perceptions of themselves can be influenced by the societal rejection of their sexual victimization and the consequent impacts on their socially-constructed gender roles. Mukamana and Brysiewicz (2008) studied survivors of rape during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. They found that survivors' sense of loss of identity was linked to the loss of virginity, a notion tied to what it means to be a girl or to be a woman. In Rwandan society, virginity is essential to defining a female as a 'girl' before getting married as a 'woman'; losing virginity through rape therefore saddles girls with the problem of belonging to neither the 'girls' nor the 'women'. In another study, Trenholm et al. (2015) were interested in women who survived sexual violence perpetrated by the *Interahamwe* (Rwandan Hutu rebels), during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Survivors experienced many forms and levels of loss: bodily integrity, health, family, a sense of belonging and place, economic sustenance, and culturally-embedded life-course possibilities (such as marriage and motherhood). These losses reportedly caused significant dispossession of women's identity related to body and place (literally and figuratively) and shattered the security essential to psychological well-being.

Mothering and Motherhood in the Post-Conflict Era. Women victims of CRSV may experience stigmatization, agony, ambivalence, and social pressure in raising children born from wartime rape in post-conflict settings (Denov et al., 2018; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Woolner et al., 2019). Nevertheless, motherhood can buffer some of these negative emotions, in some cases (Kantengwa, 2014; Zraly et al., 2013). Mothers of children born of wartime rape from the Rwandan genocide and of forced marriages in the war in northern Uganda often experience challenging, highly ambivalent relationships with their offspring (Denov et al., 2018; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Woolner et al., 2019). On the one hand, many women expressed their deep love for their children even as they endured many difficult times together,

both during and following the war (Denov et al., 2018; Woolner et al., 2019). On the other hand, as the bearers of "the children of killers," these women also experienced marginalization, stigmatization, and social exclusion—an ambivalence that also characterizes their relationship with their children (Denov et al., 2018; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Woolner et al., 2019). Importantly, motherhood can support survivors' resilience in the aftermath of armed conflict. In several studies, motherhood was perceived as a positive and meaningful resource for CRSV survivors to overcome the effects of genocidal rape, to foster positive emotion, to provide a reason to live, to cope with the challenges of everyday life, and to imagine and shape possibilities for post-genocide living (Kantengwa, 2014; Zraly et al., 2013). In addition, children can be considered a significant protective resource for CRSV survivors, as they foster resilience (Clark, 2021).

Identity Construction through Collective Activism. Collective actions on anti-gendered violence are critical for developing self-consciousness and an alternative sense of self in individuals (Profitt, 2001). Moreover, formal support from advocacy or support groups can offer CRSV survivors social connection, empowering them to fight the social stigma often attached to rape survivors (Leslie, 2010; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008). Women's hearings/tribunals are examples of CRSV survivors' identity construction through collective social activism. Scholars have different views of the effects of women's hearings/tribunals on survivors' identity in post-conflict contexts, however. Some believe that these legal mechanisms are positive (Durbach & Geddes, 2017), while others criticize them for construing women victims as both passive and vulnerable (Alison, 2007; Korac, 2018; Soh, 2008).

For example, Durbach and Geddes (2017) examine the role of national or regional women's hearings in post-conflict contexts and institutional settings worldwide. These hearings

aim to condemn the long-term effect of sexual violence against women and to provide redress, informed by women's experiences and needs in post-conflict settings. The authors point out that these hearings serve not only to articulate a collective moral condemnation of gender-based crimes, but also to expand women's participation in an alternate oversight mechanism. Nevertheless, several concerns have been raised about women being portrayed in these hearings as merely passive victims. Alison (2007) argues that although international tribunals have certainly contributed to making such abuses visible as more than by-products of war, they once again framed women mainly as victims of war and as the sole victims of sexual violence, requiring (male) protection. Soh (2008) contends that the international redress movement against the sexual violence endured by comfort women survivors contributed to a single-dimensional narrative of suffering, positioning some victims as authentic victim subjects while silencing less conventional narratives, and obscuring the more general roles of colonialism, capitalism, and sexism in the perpetration of these crimes. Korac (2018) notes that CRSV survivors who publicly testify could be re-stigmatized and traumatized by their families and communities (MacKenzie, 2010; Nikoli'c-Ristanovi'c, 2000; as cited in Korac, 2018). Indeed, this concern resonates with Ullman's (2010) questioning whether survivors' disclosure can be empowering in a victim-blaming society focused on the individual. Accordingly, survivors' disclosure should be accompanied by actions to deal with these traumatic experiences, she urges, such as joining in collective action for justice against the perpetrators.

In response to these arguments, Henry (2013) maintains that binary representations of agency and passivity should be avoided when discussing the effects of international law on survivors. Despite the power dynamics within courtroom procedures, survivors may find ways to assert their agency, both inside and outside the courtroom. We should thus view power as

shifting and as expressed in multiple, complex ways. For example, women's disclosures in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia are intricately connected to women's perceived moral obligation to the community to ensure that those who had died were not forgotten, even if they held suspicions or doubts about the Tribunal (Stover, as cited in Henry 2013). Women in the war crimes trials ultimately found ways to express their agency, even within the confines of narrow legal procedures (Henry, 2013).

The literature review above demonstrated that, in the aftermath of conflict, CRSV survivors' identities are impacted by their sexual trauma as well as by the rejection and social exclusion they suffered due to societal prejudice against women's sexual victimization. Despite these challenges, women can rebuild and assert their identities in several ways, notably through their motherhood, activism, and efforts for truth and reconciliation. Among the many insightful studies of women who survived CRSV, however, few are specific to the issues faced by older CRSV survivors as they navigate their multi-faceted identities in post-conflict contexts. Moreover, the discussion of motherhood has mainly focused on women's experiences with children born from rape; there has been little exploration of these women's motherhood and mothering of children not born from rape. There is also a gap related to mothering and motherhood over the life course and into old age, when adult children may renew contact with their mothers due to caregiving responsibilities—for instance, how do survivors' mothering style influence their children's parenting of the third generation? Moreover, there is a lack of detailed discussion about how collective activism shapes women's identities. Hence, further research on comfort women's multi-faceted identities along their life trajectories can help bridge the literature gap and provide implications for policy and practice.

To conclude this literature review, I wish to draw attention to four significant gaps within the existing research on CRSV survivors and their families: (a) the need for a more comprehensive framework to study the impacts of early-life sexual trauma on older CRSV survivors and intergenerational realities, (b) a paucity of research on older survivors' families not born from rape, (c) neglect of the third generation's perspective, and (d) limited insight into how older CRSV survivors navigate their multi-faceted identities in post-conflict contexts along their entire life trajectories. Accordingly, in this dissertation, I aim to study the impact of sexual trauma on comfort women survivors in light of the interplay between individual micro-level factors and macro-structural factors. To this end, I employ a more comprehensive theoretical framework, described below.

Section 2: The Dissertation's Theoretical Framework

As demonstrated above, the impact of early-life CRSV trauma on older survivors, along with its intergenerational ramifications, remain insufficiently studied. A promising strategy to fill these gaps in current theoretical approaches and to deepen our understanding, I argue, is to adopt the life-course perspective and to integrate intersectionality theory. Several scholars (Brotman et al., 2020; Ferrer et al., 2017; Holman & Walker, 2021; Hulko et al., 2020) have proposed that the integration of these two theories can link macrostructures to the unique lived experiences of individual older adults who have faced marginalization and oppression. I adopt this perspective as the theoretical framework of my dissertation to explore how sexual trauma interplayed with the structural factors embedded in comfort women survivors' lives.

Life-Course Perspective

The life-course perspective (Elder, 1994; 1998) is generally considered one of the dominant perspectives in social gerontology today, even as essential for understanding human

beings' lifespan experiences (Chappell et al, 2007; Grenier, 2012). Researchers who adopt this approach emphasize that an individual's life is an accumulated result of the interplay of longitudinal personal development with changing social structures embedded in history, time, and space (Elder, 1994 & 1998). The life-course perspective can be applied to research how an individual's life trajectory and the transition of life stages are intertwined with multi-faceted social factors, such as history, social structures, age-differentiated social context, and the individual's relationships in daily life (e.g., family members, friends) (Chappell et al., 2007; Elder, 1994 & 1998).

Paradigmatic Principles. Integrating three research traditions—social relationship concepts, age-based distinctions on social trajectories, and lifespan conceptions of the person (Elder et al., 2015)—the life-course perspective is usually known for five core principles (Elder, 1994, 1998; Elder et al., 2003; Elder et al., 2015).

First, *the principle of lifespan development* regards human development and aging as life-long processes. Patterns of adaptation and aging in older adulthood are generally reflected in the formative years of life-course development. Second, *the principle of time and place* posits that an individuals' life-course is embedded in and shaped by the historical times and the geographical places they experience over the course of their lifetime. Historical changes differentiate an individual's life in successive cohorts, exposing individuals to different historical periods with their constraints, options, and norms and values. Both cohort effects and period effects are conditioned by geographical places. Third, *the principle of timing* outlines the developmental antecedents and consequences of life transitions, events, and behavioral patterns that vary according to their timing in a person's life. The same events or experiences may affect individuals in different ways, depending on when they occur within their life-course. Fourth, *the*

principle of linked lives emphasizes that lives are interdependent, as sociohistorical influences are expressed through the network of an individual's social world, such as family and friends, over their entire lifespan. Finally, *the principle of agency* stipulates that individuals construct their life-course through their choices and actions according to the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstances.

Strengths and Limitations of the Life-Course Perspective. According to Dannefer and Setterson (2010), what the life-course perspective brings to gerontology is the recognition that life experiences powerfully shape how people age. Patterns of aging are not only organized by chronological age-based changes, but are also fundamentally dependent on one's social circumstances, opportunities, and experiences over prior decades. In addition, cohort-analysis provides a method for linking lives and history: individual trajectories can be constructed, and change can be tracked, to allow for comparisons across multiple cohorts. To be sure, scholars have also pointed out certain limitations of the life-course perspective. One concern is methodological: it is difficult to determine the causal factors of early experiences which contribute to the later-life outcome due to the possibility of overlooking more proximate social effects which may be correlated with earlier events (Hagestad & Dannefer, 2001). Furthermore, the life-course perspective has been criticized for not articulating a sufficiently clear conception of social structure and for failing to draw attention to structural constraints (Grenier, 2012; Hagestad & Dannefer, 2001).

Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality theory serves to consider the intersection of multiple structures of oppression (i.e., patriarchy, racism, sexism) in individuals' lives as well as to analyze the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power. Originating from critical race feminist theories

of the effects of sexism, class, and racism on women of color (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989), intersectionality theory is used to challenge the singular conception of social identities, emphasizing differences between/within groups, and to explain the interaction of various social factors affecting human lives (Collins & Bilge 2016). Crenshaw (1989) coined the term "intersectionality" to flag the need for theorists to recognize how both gender and race interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's experiences, paving the way for its application in various contexts. Collins (2000) provided an approach that relates to the economic, political, and social ideological contexts within which 'intersecting oppressions' linked to gender, race, class, and sexuality are organized. In addition, numerous scholars have expanded intersectionality to include multiple intertwined categories of analysis, such as ethnicity, class, religion, skin color, sexual orientation, education, ability, nationality, and age (Erickson, 2017). Intersectionality has been applied to different disciplines, theoretical perspectives, and political persuasions to address social relationships and power dynamics, to understand how broader social structural inequalities shape individual experiences and to promote social justice issues (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Davis, 2008).

Paradigmatic Principle. Intersectionality underlines the multidimensional and relational nature of individuals' social locations (e.g., gender, race, class, sexuality), enabling theorists to understand what is created and experienced at the intersection of multiple axes of oppression (Brah & Phoenix, 2004). When using intersectionality in their analysis, researchers regard categories of social locations as constitutive: there is no predetermined or pre-hierarchical pattern between categories; instead, all social identity categories are essential (Staunæs, 2003). In addition, intersectionality encourages researchers to give voice to invisible or marginalized populations. An important landmark in the early development of intersectionality is the inclusion

of women of color's experiences within gender studies (Choo & Ferree, 2010). When facing social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are shaped by multiple axes of social divisions (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Accordingly, researchers often use the concept of intersectionality to comprehend the diversity within a category and to include the voices of previously ignored and excluded populations. The interplay of power relationships between different social locations is the key analytic aspect of intersectionality. As Staunæs (2003) notes, intersectionality can be used to highlight relational constructs of social inequality, making it an effective tool for examining how power is maintained and how power relations are reproduced. Collins and Bilge (2016) point out that intersectional frameworks allow researchers to explain power relations through a lens of mutual construction, whereby power relations are to be analyzed via their interactions as well as across domains of power (structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal).

Applying the Life-Course Perspective and Intersectionality to Study Early-Life Sexual Trauma among Comfort Women Survivors and Its Intergenerational Realities

The life-course perspective has been adopted for studying several phenomena related to trauma: the effects of older adults' early-life war-related traumatic experiences (such as the Holocaust) on their aging process (e.g., Berger, 2010; David, 2012; Kahana et al., 2015); the life-course patterns of combat veterans (e.g., Elder, 1987; Elder et al, 1994); and the fates of older survivors of child sexual abuse (Gichaz et al., 2021; Brazelton, 2015). Notably, the concept of "*linked lives"* in the life-course perspective posits that individuals live interdependently, particularly with their family members across the generations, and that sociohistorical influences in relation to changing times, places, and social institutions are expressed through this interconnectedness over time (Elder, 1994, 1998; Bengtson et al., 2012; Bengtson & Allen,

2009). Major events in the life of one family member (such as opportunities or misfortunes) are likely to knock the life of another family member onto a trajectory that may not have been anticipated or desired beforehand (e.g., through intergenerational trauma or cumulative inequality). Several researchers (Elder, 1994; Gilligan et al., 2018; Marshall, 2006), explain the ways in which experiences and events affecting one generation influence subsequent generations' development. I apply this perspective to frame comfort women survivors' life-courses as longitudinal results of the interplay of their sexual trauma and social structures within their historical and structural contexts, and I examine in detail how this interplay impacts subsequent generations in their families.

Intersectionality can help to explain the complexity characterizing women's experiences over their entire life-course—a complexity that emerges from the intertwining of various identities within systems of inequalities (Calasanti & Giles, 2018). In addition, sexual violence should be viewed not only through a gendered lens, but also from a macro-perspective that encompasses structural oppression, among other forms (Crenshaw, 1991). As a result, intersectionality has been applied to understand the voices of marginalized sexual violence victims (e.g., McCauley et al., 2019; Sanchez et al., 2019) and to analyze the multiple social locations of sexual violence victims in conflicts (Trenholm et al., 2015) as well as in other contexts (Armstrong et al., 2018; Balderston, 2013). Researchers studying the comfort women system have similarly argued for the need to view the trauma and lived experience of comfort women survivors through the structural factors of culture, history, colonialism, race, and gender to comprehend how their personal lives intersect with these factors (Min, 2003; Soh, 2008; Yang, 1997).

To take due account of the intersectionality affecting Taiwanese comfort women, I draw upon several scholars' analyses of Korean comfort women's intersectionality, under Japanese rule and in the aftermath of the war. Yang adopts Chung's idea of locating the comfort women issue at the intersection of state, race, class, and gender (Chung, cited in Yang, 1997). Min (2003, 2021) argues that the Korean victims of the comfort women system were situated at the intersection of war, race, gender, and class during the Asia-Pacific War, as they were oppressed by war-related sexual violence, Japanese colonization, patriarchal gendered norms, and disadvantaged social status. Although the interplay of these structural social factors contributed to the comfort women's vulnerability, Min stresses that these intersectional factors should not lead us to overlook the responsibility of the Japanese military government—which launched the Asia-Pacific War and established the sexual slavery system—as the fundamental causal factor behind the forced mobilization of comfort women along with their suffering and atrocious treatment. Another scholar, Soh (2008), studies Korean comfort women in the context of patriarchal colonial capitalism and proposes the model of *Gendered Structural Violence,* contending that the lifelong suffering of Korean survivors was embedded in the concentric structural forms of gender inequality, class exploitation in a capitalist economy, "race" discrimination under colonial Imperial Japan, and nation-state power dynamics (namely, Korea's unequal diplomatic relationships with Japan and with the United States when it comes to redressing historical wrongdoings).

Insofar as Korea and Taiwan were both Japanese colonies in WWII and were also strongly influenced by Confucianism, these scholars' perspectives are germane to the current study. Nevertheless, it should be noted Soh's rejection of the homogeneous discourse of the comfort women system as a sexual slavery system is a topic of scholarly debate. In particular,

she contends that the term "sexual slavery" fails to reflect relevant distinctions among comfort women survivors' various experiences, denying some comfort women survivors' "marked human agency" (Soh, 2008, p.33). However, these claims have elicited criticisms by comfort Women's Studies scholars (e.g., Min, 2021; Qiu et al., 2014; Stetz, 2010) and may also serve as fodder for "exploitation by the neo-nationalists who claim there is no conclusive evidence to support the image of comfort women as 'sex slaves.'" (Caprio, 2012, p.163). Although I adopt Soh's intersectional approach to studying the multiple oppressions embedded in comfort women survivors' lives in this dissertation, I do consider the comfort women system to be a system of sexual slavery, despite women's varying forms of conscription and sexual victimization experiences. Indeed, much research has proven that the comfort women's misery was sexual slavery, regardless of the origins of the women who were drafted (Qiu et al., 2014; Yoshimi, 2000). To be sure, even though some women were recruited into the system from the sex trade or received fees in the comfort stations, these considerations do not obviate the nature of sexual exploitation of the comfort women system. I agree with Min's (2021) argument that when considering comfort women survivors' multiple sources of structural oppression, we should not underestimate the responsibility of the Japanese government and military for establishing and operating the system. Meanwhile, I also consider the unique aspects of the Taiwanese context, such as Han-Chinese and Indigenous beliefs on women's sexuality in Taiwan's sociopolitical environment, when studying comfort women and gender issues. My goal is to research and theorize how comfort women survivors' experiences were shaped by interactions among the multiple structural oppressions embedded in their lives.

Both the life-course perspective and intersectionality theory thus promise to be effective frameworks for deepening and broadening our understanding of older women who have survived

early sexual trauma. Indeed, by integrating the two approaches, I aim to provide a comprehensive analysis that contextualizes survivors' sexual trauma within lifespan development, cohort effects, and historical and time effects. In order to fully explore comfort women survivors' multiple identities (as sexual trauma survivors, as women, and as older adults), in the following chapters, I will analyze how these identities intersect with the social and historical structures that shape their aging process and intergenerational legacies.

Chapter 3: Manuscript 1

Toward a Humanistic Discourse: Approaches to Gaining Public Support for Taiwanese Comfort Women

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Abstract

The sociopolitical context of Taiwan has long impeded the full recognition of surviving comfort women and the issues they face. This paper examines the public discourses with which activists have engaged to gain public support for survivors in such a challenging environment. Besides the dominant discourses centered on nationalism and women's human rights, there is also a "humanistic discourse" that has been undertheorized. This article discusses how activists in Taiwan initiated a humanistic public discourse that emphasizes the individual human characteristics of comfort women survivors, resisting the collective image reinforced by other narratives. By reflecting on the author's professional experience of arts-based social activism in this field, the paper offers new perspectives on comfort women discourses and the implications for human rights practice.

Introduction

Between 1932 and 1945, the Imperial Japanese Army used deception, abduction, and violence to recruit women to work as "comfort women", a euphemistic term to describe what is now recognized as military sexual slavery (Coomaraswamy, 1996). An estimated 50,000 to 200,000 women from across Asia were victimized (Yoshimi, 2000), with thousands believed to have been of Taiwanese origin (Chu, 2002; Lee, 1998). After World War II, Taiwanese victims continued to suffer, hiding their experiences because of the patriarchal norms in which women's sexual victimization is considered taboo and degrading (Chiang, 1996). This forgotten history was unveiled in the 1990s, when Taiwanese activists were motivated by the South Korean reparation movement and encouraged survivors to come forward (Wang, 1992). Seeking recognition for survivors has had two key challenges: the lack of meaningful reparation from the Japanese government, and the difficult sociopolitical context in Taiwan.

Activists in Taiwan have engaged with a number of discourses to address these challenges and gain public support and recognition for comfort women survivors. Influenced by the South Korean movement in the 1990s, advocacy drew on nationalism and women's human rights. The nationalist discourse focuses on survivors as compatriots and victims of unpunished crimes by Japan, but consequently established the issue as highly political. Activists also employed a transnational feminist approach, framing the comfort women in the language of women's human rights and the violation of sexual slavery. This broadened the movement but struggled to reach the general public due to perceptions of elitism and the underlying patriarchal norms.

In the 2000s, Taiwanese activists encouraged a new discourse, presenting the comfort women in a grandmotherly role, highlighting their individual characteristics and vivid life stories

in a way that people could identify with their own grandmothers, as someone who had the perseverance to confront the miseries in their lives. Arts-based social activism such as photography, documentaries, books, and museum exhibitions helped to break through the stereotypical image of comfort women as merely the victims of Japanese war crimes. The author identifies this approach as a "humanistic discourse", which has had significant effects, especially in connecting the younger generation with the comfort women issue. The term *humanistic* borrows from the concept of humanistic psychology which emphasizes personal worth and the uniqueness of individuals, of their free will, and the ability for self-actualization (Colman, 2009; Rogers, 2012).

These reflections draw on the author's experience of working with the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF) between 2008 and 2018, the only Taiwanese non-profit organization dedicated to the Comfort Women. The author served as the Chief Executive Officer for over seven years and spent one year as the Director of the Ama Museum (founded and managed by the TWRF in 2016). During this time, the author led arts-based social activism projects using the humanistic approach.

This article examines the development of the humanistic discourse in the context of Taiwanese comfort women. First, the background to the movement and an overview of the sociopolitical context is discussed. The nationalist and women's rights discourses are then analyzed before identifying the process and impact of the humanistic discourse in Taiwan. This section reflects on using arts-based activism in the TWRF to reposition comfort women within Taiwanese society and connect with the public as well as the role of social workers as activists. Born from the efforts of social workers, activists, supporters and artists, this paper argues that a humanistic discourse counters the overgeneralized collective image of comfort women by

highlighting their individual differences. Finally, it is hoped that the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the humanistic discourse may provide lessons for other social movements.

Background

The Taiwanese Comfort Women Movement

In December 1991, Kim Hak-sun (1924–1997) came forward as a former comfort woman of Korea in the colonial period to unveil her story and filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government with two other Korean survivors, demanding a formal apology and compensation. Kim's testimony was a bombshell to both Japanese and international society. Motivated by Kim's speech, in January 1992, the Japanese historian Yoshimi Yoshiaki found six official documents in the Library of the National Institute for Defense Studies in Tokyo which confirmed that the Japanese military and government directed the establishment of the military comfort system (Soh, 2008; Yoshimi, 2000). Later, the Self-Defense Agency of Japan began to research documents on comfort women and found about 70 relevant documents in the Agency's library. Soon after that, Ito Hideko, a member of the Diet (the Japanese parliament) demanded that these documents be disclosed to the public. The Self-Defense Agency handed Ito the 70 documents, including three telegrams, which proved unambiguously that during World War II, Taiwanese women were sent to the front line as comfort women (Y. Yoshimi, personal communication, Jan. 10, 2019).

This critical finding motivated activists in the TWRF to intensify their efforts for the comfort women redress movement in Taiwan. Led by Ms. Wang Ching-Fen, the then-chairperson, the TWRF set up a survivor hotline in February 1992 and lobbied the Taiwanese government, which later established a special inter-ministerial committee in charge of related issues (Chen, 1992). The TWRF also held a press conference with three survivors in August

1992, in which the survivors opted for anonymity and revealed their stories to the media from behind a black curtain (TWRF, 1999; TWRF, 2012b). Through the support of activists and historians, 59 survivors were identified by the TWRF from 1992 to 2004 (Chu, 2009). As of 2021, only one living survivor remains.

Taiwan's Sociopolitical Context

Unlike Japan's other former colonized or occupied territories, the Taiwanese have mixed feelings toward colonial rule (1895-1945), which makes it difficult to achieve social consensus against Japan on the comfort women issue. Jennings (2016) of the *Los Angeles Times* points out that Taiwan's friendly yet complicated relationship with Japan stems from a mixture of its colonial history, the return to the Chinese government after War World II, and its later separation from China under the KMT (Kuomingtang, Chinese Nationalist Party). This context sets Taiwan apart from its neighbors, such as China and South Korea, who have recently made strong condemnations of Japan regarding the comfort women. A few studies (e.g., Hwang, 2010; Peng, 2017; Suzuki, 2011) note that the comfort women issue in Taiwan has been intertwined with Taiwan's national identity (independence or unification with China), involving the past and current relationship between Taiwan, China, and Japan. It is also an incendiary topic between local political parties, the KMT, and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Some believe that Taiwan was better off under Japanese colonialism, compared to the KMT's successive totalitarian reign which ended in the late 1980s. The Asia-Pacific War, in which comfort women were enslaved, is considered more a part of China's history than Taiwan's. Moreover, under the traditional Taiwanese patriarchal culture, the taboo of rape can lead to condemning the victim rather than the perpetrator. As a result, people in Taiwan often view comfort women as a

politically charged or anti-Japanese issue. Some even claim that the victims were voluntary military prostitutes.

Kobayashi Yoshinori's manga *On Taiwan* is a significant example of the interplay between the comfort women movement and Taiwan's sociopolitical context. This Japanese comic book presents a positive evaluation of Japanese colonization, and sparked intense debate on the justification for comfort women in 2001 in Taiwan. In this manga, Kobayashi quotes a Taiwanese businessperson born and educated during colonial rule who says that comfort women voluntarily provided sexual services. He noted that working in a Japanese military brothel was the best possible thing for many Taiwanese women and was a means of raising their social status. This quotation was highly debated in Taiwan. The TWRF called a press conference with the survivors condemning Kobayashi and the businessperson and demanded an apology (Lai et al, 2005; Hwang, 2010).

Suzuki (2011) argues that support for comfort women in Taiwan has been declining because the comfort women campaign has been overshadowed by identity politics, distorting the issue into a historical narrative of a benign Japanese colonial rule. Peng (2012) also proposes that the Taiwanese movement has been hampered due to factors such as the advancing age of survivors; a public empathy gap; ambivalence toward Japanese colonialism; and the younger population's ignorance of history. These elements have made advocating for justice extremely challenging.

Approaches to Gaining Public Support for Taiwanese Comfort Women

To contextualize the humanistic discourse used by Taiwanese activists, this section will first examine in greater depth the nationalist and women's human rights-based approaches. While these discourses intertwine, they also differ in significant ways.

Transnational Nationalist Discourse

Under the nationalist discourse, the comfort women represent the atrocity committed under Japanese militarism which constituted the violation of a nation's integrity. Scholars have pointed out the flaw in this narrative by recognizing comfort women's individuality and the complexity of the comfort women system. Ueno (2004) proposes that this discourse neglects women's individual experiences and turns them into "national subjects," thereby reinforcing the patriarchal paradigm. Soh (2008) argues that public discourse on Korean comfort women has been fueled by postcolonial ethno-nationalism. This is characterized by an emotional devotion to upholding the honor of one's nation without taking the complex history of the comfort women system into account. Yang (2008) adds that Korea's patriarchal social structure would only oppress the victims' post-war suffering by framing survivors as subjugated to the nation in this way.

The rejection of the Asian Women's Fund (AWF) is considered an example of the nationalist discourse (Kim, 2015). In 1995, the Japanese government established the AWF as an effort to bring closure to the comfort women issue. The AWF proffered compensation donated by the Japanese public, medical and welfare projects offered by the Japanese government, and an apology letter from the Japanese prime minister sent to the comfort women survivors. However, the AWF was heavily criticized by activists and survivors due to the perceived evasion of the Japanese government's legal and moral responsibility, as well as the fund's inadequate political and administrative leadership (Kumagai, 2014). It was denounced and rejected by most survivors in South Korea and Taiwan. Kim (2015) argues that the following public statement made by South Korean campaign minimized the role of gender by appealing to nationalism:

> The comfort women issue is one that concerns the restoration of *national pride*, national existence in a struggle against wars, and recovery of the victims' (*comfort women*'s) honor…. Taking the AWF means giving a remission to the Japanese government that has failed to admit its crimes (Public statement at the 137th Wednesday Demonstration, October 5, 1994, as cited in Kim, 2015, p.6).

The movement leadership in South Korea and Taiwan was criticized by Soh (2000b) for interpreting the AWF with an elitist mindset to exhort the survivors to form a unified front to reject the fund. This "…underlining the predominance of ethnic nationalism over feminism and/or human rights advocacy with regard to the comfort women movement" (Soh, 2000b, p.128). However, from the activists' perspective, the AWF was a cunning ruse for the Japanese government to deny its responsibility. Therefore, they not only proposed that the survivors should reject the funds, but also raised alternative funds from the public and lobbied the South Korean and Taiwanese governments to provide support to survivors.

At that time however, a nationalist approach may have been necessary in order for activists to leverage this issue at the national and international levels, and to motivate citizens to support economically struggling survivors to reject the AWF. How to respect the survivors' self-determination without creating additional pressure while also facilitating survivors' full understanding of the possible results of their decisions remains a dilemma for activists.

Transnational Women's Human Rights Discourse

Comfort women discourses centred on women's human rights also emerged in the early 1990s, developed by South Korean activist groups and influenced by the international feminist movement. Kim Hak-sun's testimony in 1991 served as an important trigger for framing the comfort women system as a military sexual crime violating human rights (Ueno, 2004). At the

same time, the international community became more aware of wartime sexual violence, such as the atrocities committed during the conflicts in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. These factors supported the development of the women's rights discourse on comfort women (Kim, 2012; Soh, 2008). This discourse was utilized as a more effective way to gain support from the international community and "achieved its ascendancy in the context of the post-cold war politics of human rights" (Soh, 2008, p.33). Led by the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (Korean Council) with participation from many countries with victimized women, a transnational coalition gradually formed, employing international solidarity to pressure the Japanese government to redress the comfort women issue. A series of UN formal hearings and investigations on comfort women, such as the Vienna Human Rights Conference (1993), the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women's Rights in Beijing (1995), and Reports from UN human rights specialist rapporteurs Radhika Coomaraswamy and Gay L. McDougall (1996) (Piper, 2001; Soh, 2008), led to a radical paradigm shift for representing comfort women. They changed the nature of the debate from a bilateral post-war compensation dispute between Japan and South Korea, to an international condemnation of Japan's crimes against women during the War (Soh, 2000a).

The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in Tokyo, Japan, in December 2000 presents another milestone in the women's rights discourse. Approximately 1,100 local and international participants attended, including 64 comfort women survivors, and also survivors of mass rape from the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Bangladesh and other countries. More than 20 survivors from nine countries told their stories of enslavement (Matsui, 2001). The preliminary judgment included a statement about the tribunal, an initial summary of findings, and rulings on the liability of Emperor Hirohito and the responsibility of

the state of Japan (Chinkin, 2001). While it held no legal power, the tribunal was the first judicial decision to confirm the responsibility of the Japanese government on the issue of comfort women (Kim, 2015). Although the participating countries failed to reach a unanimous agreement on some aspects (Dolgopol, 2018), the endeavor gave survivors courage to speak publicly, and restored dignity to survivors through acknowledgement of their suffering (Dudden, 2001). The combination of efforts of the tribunal such as consciousness-raising, networking, and alliance-building, all directed toward pinpointing the perpetrator's responsibility, surpassed the strategies of the women's rights movement in the 1990s (Chinkin, 2001). It also transcended national and cultural boundaries to form international feminist solidarity on the comfort women issue (Dolgopol, 2006; Kim, 2015).

Scholars have acknowledged the limits of utilizing the nationalist and women's rights discourses in interpreting the suffering of comfort women, and have pointed out the need to recognize the multiple oppressions caused by imperialism, patriarchy and colonialism. Yang agrees with Chung's idea of locating the comfort woman issue at the intersection of state, race, class, and gender (Chung, cited in Yang, 1997). Soh (2008) argues that both discourses over-simplify the roots of comfort women's misery, and proposes that Korean comfort women suffered from "gendered structural violence". This resulted from the economic, sociopolitical, cultural, and international forces embedded in everyday life—notably gender, class, racial and ethnic inequalities, and power relations in the context of Korean patriarchal colonial capitalism. Kim (2015) also points out that the comfort women system cannot be fully understood by viewing it from the perspective of sexual violence and war, because its establishment and operation as a system of female sexual slavery is unprecedented in the multilayered socio-historical context of Japan's imperialism, colonialism, Korean patriarchal culture, and the

interactions thereof. Analysis of the comfort women issue requires addressing the intersection of gender oppression and national oppression.

The Taiwanese Activist Context

The movement in Taiwan also employed nationalist and women's rights discourses to gain public recognition for surviving comfort women. Before the early 2000s, the main strategy adopted by the TWRF focused on the survivors' victimization and the demand for justice. Ueno (2004) and Kim (2015) argue that nationalist and women's rights discourses normalize the collective image of comfort women that emphasizes the compulsory nature of the comfort women system, creates the dichotomy of virgin/purity (forced comfort women) and whore/impurity (voluntary prostitutes), and excludes those who deviated from the model victims. This can be seen in one of the indigenous survivor's stories which was publicized by the TWRF under this discourse. There are 12 indigenous survivors among the 59 identified. Their victimization began from ages 13 to 29. Except for one woman who was recruited by a broker to be sent to Hong Kong, 11 survivors were forced by the Japanese police to serve soldiers stationed in Taiwan's mountainous region. They were originally recruited to do tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and laundry for the Japanese army, yet they were raped incessantly by troops between 1942 and 1946 (Chu, 2009).

> In December 1942, I was seventeen years old. A Japanese policeman ordered me to cook and do laundry at the Japanese military barracks. After a month, Narita, the soldier in charge of [indigenous] women ordered us to stay in the barracks at night. A maid during the day, my "night duty" was sex slavery. I was so young that I did not know intercourse would result in pregnancy. Even during my pregnancy, I was still raped. Only when I started having massive bleeding did I realize there was

> something wrong. I was taken to the hospital and finally saw [understood] that I was having a miscarriage. This nightmare repeated itself until my young life was totally ruined. In the mountains, the tribal [indigenous people] did not know of Japan's defeat in August 1945. We did not know that we were no longer in the clutches of the Japanese. We still obeyed the Japanese soldiers. They were very depressed because of the defeat and took out their anger on us. They drank and danced with over twenty girls. And right on the tatami, they ganged raped us. I don't remember what they looked like, but their names were Yoshinmoto, Yamamoto, Wukamoto (Grandma Shen-Chun, in Lai., et al, 2005, pp.164–165).

This narrative emphasizes the comfort women's victimization and suffering. However, it also raises the question as to what an "ideal" story would be for gaining public recognition. To a certain extent, these discourses influence how the survivors see themselves and other survivors and exclude stories that do not fit into the transcript of "ideal" survivors. According to Chu (2009), 80% of survivors identified by the TWRF are Han-Chinese who were between 16 and 34 years old when they were forced into the comfort women system. Many came from impoverished families and lacked education. More than half of them were raised by adopted families to provide labor or become future brides. Some were even forced by their adoptive families to work in brothels. Before being recruited by the Japanese military, about 60% of the survivors were factory workers, farmers, tailors, cookers, nursing aides, nannies, waitresses, while about 40% of them worked in various forms of the sex trade or entertainment industry. Furthermore, according to Hsiao (1993) and Chu (2009), most of the Taiwanese survivors who contacted the TWRF were deceived by brokers under the guise of going abroad to work as nurses, cafeteria staff, and waitresses. Some victims who already worked in the sex trade were

coerced through a lottery system by local officials or recruited by brokers, told they would be working as cafeteria staff or bar ladies. While some knew that they were going to work as comfort women, none could have known the monstrous suffering they would eventually face.

Despite these realities, survivors have been subjected to attacks by Japanese right-wing groups and some of the Taiwanese public, claiming that comfort women were military prostitutes and therefore unworthy of public sympathy. The criticism selectively ignores the intrinsic nature of sexual exploitation and purposely blames victims for the violence perpetrated against them. One could argue that, under the pressure of the Japanese right wing and the taboo of sexual victimization in society, it would be stressful rather than empowering for an "untypical" survivor to unveil her story and be scrutinized by the public. Activist groups thus chose to highlight aspects of comfort women's victimization and traumatic experiences to gain social recognition. However, the nationalist discourse has not been very effective within Taiwanese society, given the aforementioned sociopolitical context.

The TWRF has been involved in the transnational movement since 1992, framing the comfort women as a universal human rights issue. The women's rights discourse tries to link the movement to human trafficking and sexual violence in conflict. It is more consistent with the TWRF's mission as a women's rights advocacy group that also provides services to victims of human trafficking and domestic violence. It also allows for the TWRF to have dialogues with different political parties, and link feminist and human rights groups together. The women's rights discourse focuses on viewing the survivors as women's rights activists, and on situating comfort women within gendered violence. It acknowledges those comfort women who can express their opinions articulately and publicly. This discourse has the limitation of being perceived as somewhat elitist and hence it can be difficult to reach the general public under the

patriarchal norms. Moreover, it risks overlooking the importance of colonial and historical factors that contributed to the establishment of the comfort women system. Furthermore, it may create tension among the survivors, especially for the survivors who chose not to testify to the public.

Toward a Humanistic Discourse

The TWRF has since made a "humanistic turn", to combine women's rights with a humanistic discourse so as to avoid the politics that undermine the development of the comfort women movement in Taiwan. Starting in 1996, several Mental Wellness Workshops were established to provide supportive services for comfort women survivors. The Workshops conducted various activities, such as storytelling, art therapy and drama therapy, all designed to help women to overcome their trauma and build resilience. The Workshops were well received and as a result, Taiwanese activists initiated several arts-based social activism projects in the 2000s. These aimed to showcase the survivors' stories, and the insurmountable courage shown in their artwork created in Mental Wellness Workshops. This new approach to gaining social recognition places emphasis on the humanistic characteristics of comfort women survivors; they are the essence of the discourse, and they deserve to be seen as ordinary human beings. It includes comfort women of all social positions, which is in defiance of the collective comfort women image of a victim of the Japanese or a women's rights activist. For example, Grandma Shou-mei was not only a brave activist for survivor's rights but also experiencing the joy of being a flight attendant, and the excitement of wearing a bridal gown in the Dream-Come-True project[4] (TWRF, 2012a). We call this the humanistic approach; although is not new to the

[4] With the generous support of the public, the Dream-Come-True project (2006–2012) was initiated by social workers in the TWRF and brought into realization the survivors' unfinished personal dreams, such as wearing a bridal gown, being a flight attendant, postwoman, policewoman, and singer.

comfort women's reparation movement, it has been heavily relied on as the main discourse used to engage public response in Taiwan over the past decade. In the following section, the author will narrate how this discourse first emerged in Taiwan, and present two of its exemplary milestones: the documentary *Song of the Reed* and the *Ama Museum*.

Mental Wellness Workshops and Social Workers

A few studies have identified the long term psychological and physical distress of the older comfort women survivors (Lee et al., 2015; Min et al., 2011; Park et al, 2016). Research has also shown that traumatic events earlier in life may make older survivors particularly vulnerable to additional challenges associated with aging such as retirement, widowhood, and chronic illness (Anderson et al, 2011; Davison et al. 2006; Graziano, 2003). How early trauma affects the psychosocial adaptation ability of older comfort women survivors is an issue that deserves more attention. Meanwhile, in the last two decades, the role of mental health workers, including social workers, in post-conflict settings has been brought into focus due to increased recognition of the need for psychosocial services in war-affected areas (Kagee, 2018). Social Workers, a profession that requires a sense of mission to fight oppression, injustice, and human suffering, play a vital role in resolving conflict and recovering from violence. For example, there were cases where social workers contributed to truth and reconciliation commissions in post-conflict contexts by providing clinical services to the victims of violence, and professional advocacy and policy-making (Androff, 2010).

In the process of advocating for the Taiwanese survivors' human rights and caring for their psychosocial needs, a few board members and activists in the TWRF, who were professional social workers, launched several initiatives. They not only participated in the advocacy work, but also provided supportive services to the aged survivors, which was a very

unique distinction from other comfort women advocacy groups mainly composed of historians, lawyers, feminists, or human rights activists in other countries. Working with counselors and therapists, these activists utilized their skills to organize the Mental Wellness Workshops and group activities for the survivors three to four times a year (1996–2012) using arts-based healing intervention, such as talking therapies, art therapy and drama therapy. Kelly and Hamber (2005) argue that the process of reconciliation involves five interwoven and related stands: developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society; acknowledging and dealing with the past; building positive relationships; significant cultural and attitudinal change; and substantial social, economic and political growth. When reconciliation between the comfort women survivors and perpetrators cannot be achieved, how to help the survivors' inner psyche gain reconciliation with their past trauma, as well as attaining social recognition of their suffering becomes a key question. The Mental Wellness Workshops were some of the most important projects that the TWRF adopted to help the survivors develop their inner psychological resources, and it was a unique aspect of TWRF's services that set its support model apart from how those in other countries (Kang, 2017). Social work-activists also used a geriatric practice perspective to assist the survivors in facing the challenges in their final stage of life. This element of social work focuses on the individual and allows each survivor to distinguish herself in the redress movement from the collective actions and images of the victims that are constructed by the normalization of the dominant discourses.

Two photographers, Huang Tzu-ming and Shen Chun-fan, were invited by the TWRF staff in the early 2000s to document the Mental Wellness Workshops. The Mental Wellness Workshops provided a sanctuary for the survivors to explore their feelings and stories. Moreover, the artistic elements within the Workshops became an inspiration for the

photographers to present their healing process. The artwork of the survivors and the photos taken by the photographers became the foundation for the humanistic discourse and the public were engaged in the movement through exhibitions and publications. This approach has also been used in South Korea. Artwork initially used for therapeutic purposes has served as an immensely powerful and productive channel in attracting attention and support (Joo, 2015).

As the comfort women movement gradually lost traction, this productive humanistic discourse emerged from intensive discussion within the TWRF and with its interdisciplinary collaborative partners, such as counselors, photographers and artists, about how the positionality of Taiwanese comfort women survivors should be taken into account. This positionality has been influenced by Taiwan's particular sociopolitical context toward the comfort women reparation movement, the agenda of the transnational movement, and the comfort women's intersectional roles as survivors of sexual exploitation, women, and older adults. During that period, many of the survivors had rapidly deteriorating health, and it became difficult for them to actively participate in public activities. Moreover, those older survivors were encountering new psychosocial and physical challenges in their later stages of life while facing disappointment at the lack of official justice. Hence, some questions were raised by social work-activists: "Should we continue putting the survivors through rallies?", "Should we continue to encourage them to testify?", "Do they like being visited by artists and journalists for interviews?", "Can the survivors decide to quit from the movement?", and "Can they express their 'true' will freely and know that their decisions will be respected?" At the time of being the CEO of the TWRF, the author had been constantly dealing with and pondering over those debates brought up by her colleagues.

As an activist, how to prioritize their work with the comfort women survivors while balancing the needs of a social movement and attending to the survivor's individual needs has always been a challenging, yet necessary task. When a survivor, the subject of this movement, cannot be on stage anymore, how to continue on with this movement is a task that the activists need to tackle. The activists at that time concluded that they would respect the survivor's decisions concerning their level of involvement in the redress movement, and assure the survivors that their decisions would be followed. They also discussed these concerns in the Mental Wellness Workshops to ensure that the survivors were well-informed. Some survivors expressed that they would like to continue to attend the movement actively, while others said that they would like to take a rest from public activities. It is a process of reflection for both the activists and the survivors that gradually transforms the movement into a new phase.

With the rich data accumulated from the excellent work left behind by former activists, the TWRF initiated several new projects in the 2010s, including a documentary film *Song of the Reed*, a book *The Reason to be Strong*, several exhibitions, and the founding of the *Ama Museum*. Those initiatives are positive examples and outcomes of this new discourse. The author of *The Reason to be Strong,* Tseng Shu-Mei, portrayed the survivor Grandma Shen-Chun through an interview with her three grandchildren:

> When the topic of grandma's hobbies was brought up, her three grandchildren excitedly fought over whom should speak first. "Grandma loves watching Japanese and Korean TV dramas, which is really cool. Grandma also likes to watch the wrestling matches held in Japan, the Giant Baba and the one on channel Z, where two guys are beating each other up. Oh, she also likes the kind of wrestling that

rings in the combatants on stage, and she just shouts go-go-go along with the real audience" (Tseng 2012, p. 50).

Through her grandchildren's narratives, we see Grandma Shen-Chun's optimism, enthusiasm, and humor, an image that is entirely different from one constructed by the nationalist discourse. She is no longer just a tragic victim, but a vividly "real" live and bouncing grandma.

Arts-based Social Activism

The arts have the power to raise critical awareness on social justice through different ways of knowing that may otherwise be suppressed or ignored (Sakamoto, 2014). Arts also serve as a mutual communication platform where the mainstream meets marginalized populations to exchange dialogues and set up foundations for social change (O'Neill, 2008). Moreover, the aesthetic power of art can evoke empathy and transformative understanding of social issues, which is different from cognitively acquired knowledge (Chilton & Leavy, 2014). In the 2010s, Taiwanese activists launched several arts-based social activism projects to engage the general public with comfort women. This article will use the documentary film *Song of the Reed* and the *Ama Museum* to showcase how arts-based social activism facilitates the development of the humanistic discourse.

Song of the Reed. The documentary film *Song of the Reed*, produced by the TWRF 2010–2013 and released in 2015, symbolizes the turning point of the TWRF's effort to reconstruct the existing nationalist discourse of comfort women. It used a humanistic approach that showed how the TWRF accompanied survivors in their healing process. Wu Shiou-Chin directed this film while the author was the executive producer. Based on the Mental Wellness Workshops organized by the TWRF and the supporter groups in Taiwan and Japan, this

documentary tells the story of six survivors and their journeys to overcome their trauma during their twilight years (four of whom have passed away since the completion of filming in 2013).

Director Wu and the author of this article discussed how this film could focus on documenting the mental wellness workshops and the survivors' healing process. For Wu, the theme of this film matched with her interest in the reconciliation of personal trauma rather than focusing on accusation, despite the comfort women still not having received justice (Ho, 2015). "Despite the pain they suffered during the war, and lack of support from society and family members once the conflict ended, these inspiring figures proved that bravery and love could give rise to tremendous strength," Wu said in an interview (Hou, 2015). Her idea was to completely erase the overall stereotype of comfort women. Instead of focusing on the atrocities committed against them, she proposed to show the audience that the survivors are not so different from the ordinary older women we see, and they are maybe even very similar to anyone's grandma, who is going through a journey to find reconciliation with the multiple traumas in their life. If their stories could touch people's hearts, people would be motivated to learn more about the history behind the stories.

This documentary is different from the first documentary, *A Secret Buried for 50 Years–The Story of Taiwanese Comfort Women,* released by the TWRF in 1998. The plan at that time was to urge Taiwanese society to support the comfort women's redress movement, focusing on testimony from 13 survivors, which told of the atrocity of the comfort women system. Wu's contrasting idea for the documentary received criticism initially, especially from activists within the movement. Part of the reason, according to the author's understanding, was that Wu's narrative was not familiar to most of the activists, who felt more confident using the dominant discourses on comfort women at that time.

When the production of *Song of the Reed* was completed in fall of 2013, the search for a distributor took another two years, because few distributors had confidence that the Taiwanese audience would be interested in a documentary about comfort women. We finally found a distributor in the spring of 2015, and the documentary was shown in theaters on August 14, 2015, which was International Comfort Women Memorial Day. At that time, there happened to be a vigorous debate in Taiwan about how high school textbooks should narrate and interpret the comfort women history. The social and political context facilitated the success of the documentary and brought media attention. The documentary was a box-office success, receiving positive reviews. According to audience feedback, it was evident that the film had also drawn the attention and interest of the younger generation. The TWRF and the director received many film screening requests from high schools, colleges, and governmental agencies. This was a rare phenomenon for the comfort women movement over the previous decade and gave the TWRF an opportunity to reach out to the public and publicize the redress movement. It also effectively assisted the TWRF's fundraising campaign, and public support for the establishment of a museum in memory of comfort women. Among the many films dedicated to comfort women issues worldwide, *Song of the Reed* stands out to be an exceptionally unique narrative.

The Ama Museum. The birth of the Ama Museum in 2016 after 12 years of effort by the TWRF was truly a crystallization of the humanistic discourse. Although it only ran for four years (Dec 10, 2016–Nov. 10, 2020) due to the financial deficit (McCartney, 2020) and has been relocated to a new site, it connected widely with the public. The Ama Museum, literally meaning "grandma's home" in Taiwanese, is a museum dedicated in memory of Taiwanese comfort women. The museum itself was a restored 90-year-old traditional two-story southern Fujian-style building located in Dadaocheng, a historic commercial area that has been successfully

transformed into a popular tourist spot in downtown Taipei. The most significant characteristic of this museum is that it alters people's sorrowful image of a comfort women museum. It used soft and warm hues in the design to create an inviting atmosphere, inducing visitors to enter and explore the "grandmas' stories." The aesthetic narrative of this museum, uniquely expressed by a combination of its lively architectural design and exhibition themes, merged with heavily traumatic yet inspiring stories of the survivors' resilience. It has received much acclaim since its opening.

After the opening of the world's first comfort women museum in 1998, the Historical Museum of Sexual Slavery by the Japanese Military in Seoul, South Korea, activists in the international community have been gradually establishing similar museums in their home countries to preserve history and educate the public. The TWRF envisioned the need of a comfort women museum and approached the local and central governments for their support in early 2000s. The TWRF encountered many difficulties in finding a place to house the museum. In 2015, after a long and grueling lobbying process, the TWRF decided to raise the money and establish the museum on its own (Chiao, 2016).

As the CEO of the TWRF and responsible for leading a preparation team for the museum, the major challenge the author faced was to achieve operational and financial sustainability, given the political and social context in Taiwan. Of particular importance, was the question of whether the mission of the Ama Museum resonates with the public and if it went beyond activists' sense of obligation for posterity. The museum preparation team and the author had several perspectives on this issue. In their opinion, for the private museum to run sustainably while preserving the history of comfort women, the theme should adhere to the humanistic discourse. By inviting people to observe the strength, resilience and power of comfort women

survivors, the comfort women issue would connect with the audience emotionally, inspire the audience's strength, and encourage the audience to move forward in their personal lives. Hence, the museum is a place to link the past with the present and future, rather than merely a reminder of the past. Strategically, this is also a more practical way by which the privately run comfort women museum can operate by attracting parties who are indifferent or hostile to the topic in contemporary Taiwan (Menconi, 2017).

Despite some arduous and even harsh experiences for the survivors during this process, all in all, the long journey of the redress movement brought warm and important support, helping the survivors reconcile with their past traumas. As the number of aging survivors gradually declined, one important issue is: how can we pass on the knowledge and experience gained in supporting comfort women survivors on to other people who have also encounter difficulties in their lives? Inspired by this question, we used the phrase: "The Ama Museum is a place just like your own grandma's home," and the mission statement:

> The Ama Museum preserves and commemorates this history to call for the ongoing attention to contemporary women's rights, to help the victims overcome their trauma, to stir the spirit of moving forward, to transform the scars of history into a cornerstone of peace, and to pursue a nonviolent future of respect and equality for the coming generations (TWRF, 2016b).

We hope that visitors feel the warmth and supportive spirit of the mission when they visit the museum. While the comfort women grandmas' stories are laden with emotion, their powerful resilience has the potential to motivate people to move forward. Therefore, the tragedy and trauma of the comfort women grandmas should not be seen as simply unhealed wounds, but rather as scars of power and honor that can inspire people to see all the beauty in life.

With this mind, the design of the Ama Museum was exceptional. The Ama Café, supported in part by a socially responsible local coffee chain, was located at the entrance of the museum to generate an inviting atmosphere, quelling any feelings of unease visitors might harbor. Following the café are the displays of the history of the comfort women system, the victims' stories, and the decades-long redress movement, while highlighting the comfort women survivors' strength and humanity. The Museum further served its mission to empower women's social participation by hiring domestic violence survivors to work in the café (albeit it was not easy to achieve this goal successfully in the first year), selling merchandise designed by women in the gift shop, and holding several forums featuring women's resilience in the face of trauma. The Museum's architecture, art design, the showcase of the survivors' artwork from Mental Wellness Workshops and varied educational activities all worked in unison to highlight this theme. The architectural design by Sheng-Ming Wu and his team, and the underlying concept by the TWRF has won awards and media attention. The museum came to life through the efforts of an interdisciplinary preparation team, including architects, artists, designers, historians, lawyers, scholars and professionals of museology, gender scholars, social workers, writers, and marketing experts. Its location, design, and function has transcended the comfort women issue, heightening it into an issue through which people can feel a real connection. While some people will argue that the Ama Museum's decor was too "soft" to reflect the cruel historical facts, it is a successful crystallization of the humanistic discourse that was developed in a long-term process, cumulated by many people's efforts. The Museum's connection with interdisciplinary professions has made arts-based social activism with comfort women a productive example in Taiwan. More than 120,000 people visited the museum in just four years (TWRF, 2020). The reasons for the Ama Museum's closure deserves more assessment than is possible within this paper. Nevertheless,

many young supporters have shown their concern about the Ama Museum's relocation in a fundraising campaign launched in Oct 2020. This is an example of how the museum for comfort women has won the hearts of many of the younger generation.

Lessons for Future Organizing Efforts

Why is justice for comfort women survivors necessary? Would telling survivors' stories reopen old wounds? For the victims and survivors of mass atrocities, receiving justice can restore their dignity, reaffirm their value as human beings, help them obtain assurances that the larger community understands the impact these acts on their lives, and knowledge that the perpetrators have been punished (Dolgopol, 2006). Public support of comfort women survivors signifies that our society understands the suffering they have undergone even if justice has not yet been served. In the process of achieving social recognition, different discourses have shaped the image of Taiwanese comfort women. These have been influenced by the power interplay between survivors, activists, and local and international sociopolitical forces, which subsequently influence how we understand, perceive, and interact with the issue of the comfort women.

The nationalist and women's rights discourses in Taiwan were inspired by the South Korean-led transnational comfort women's movement, and intertwined with the local sociopolitical context. The two discourses can be thought of as the result of the activists' continued efforts to bring justice to the survivors, in a context where the Japanese government has not fully accepted its legal and moral responsibility. While these discourses have limitations, the results in mobilizing society to recognize the comfort women issue and bring forth an international level of recognition can never be over-emphasized. The humanistic discourse can be considered a manifestation of activists and supporters' resistance to the dominant public discourses that obscure survivors' humanistic characteristics. This discourse did not emerge

overnight; it resulted from proactive responses from a diverse and inclusive interdisciplinary team of activists who strive to assure the survivors' positionality, individuality, and autonomy, and confirm that the collective action of a social movement will not obscure their individual needs.

The reflection above raises the question of how social workers in human rights settings find the balance between social work ethics and the needs of a social movement. How can we ensure that a service user's individuality, autonomy, and needs will not clash with the collective actions of a social movement? While the reflection process may bring tension and conflicts, it has also led to productive results that have formed a basis for new public discourse through creative artwork that speaks out to the public. The aesthetic power of artwork, such as the documentary *Song of the Reed,* and the *Ama Museum*, gives activists opportunities to gain standing on a social issue. The idea of using art projects to realize this discourse may be applied to other social movements to facilitate social dialogues and understanding of the voices of marginalized populations that otherwise may be dismissed or suppressed.

Nevertheless, the humanistic discourse has limitations and flaws that should be raised. It can be criticized for insufficient historical context, or for using soft, touching stories that may oversimplify the complexity of the comfort women's experiences. Possible misuse of this discourse is a new collective image that embellishes the survivors' stories, to the extent that they diverge from their original humanistic intent. Peng (2012) criticized TWRF that in order to obtain public recognition, the comfort women have become icons with the image of "living historical witnesses" that people can recognize rather than just as victims in the reparation movement. Publicizing the comfort women's anguish could distort the multiple aspects of the historical trauma. Several scholars (Kim 2012; Soh 2008; Yang 2008) have also argued that

South Korean activists should not rely solely on one discourse to interpret the contributing factors that caused comfort women's suffering. This also applies to their Taiwanese counterparts. On the one hand, the humanistic discourse serves as an accessible way for people to be aware of this issue. On the other hand, activists must provide more critical information, so that people may be able to truly understand women's sexual exploitation, their atrocious suffering during wartime, gender inequality during the colonial era, survivors' pressure under the Taiwanese patriarchal society, and their connection to current gendered violence and the international sociopolitical structure. Nevertheless, the crucial question is how such historical issues can find a footing in people's lives today. Each victimized country needs to solve this question under its own sociopolitical circumstances. In Taiwan, the mission, design, and even the closure of the Ama Museum have provided avenues by which to understand this question.

It is inspiring and uplifting to see an age-old issue being transformed into a new paradigm, thanks to critical reflections, the passion of many activists and supporters, and new perspectives developed by multidisciplinary collaboration. These interdisciplinary arts-based and person-centered experiences may be applied effectively to other social issues. The power struggle over comfort women narratives in Taiwan continues despite only one survivor remaining. While it is a challenge to keep the movement motivated in the context of these competing discourses, we have a historical responsibility to move forward, not only for the victims, but also for future generations.

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Bridge Between Manuscripts: Chapter 3 and Chapter 4

In Chapter 3, based on literature analysis and autobiographical reflection, I discuss how public discourses have portrayed Taiwanese comfort women survivors, highlighting the socio-political context behind survivors' participation in the women's redress movement and healing activities during their twilight years. This study enables readers to understand the social locations embedded in these aging survivors' older adulthood and for appreciating the role that the NGO (TWRF) played in accompanying these survivors when facing their early-life sexual trauma and in gaining support from the public. Against this backdrop, in the following chapter I examine how two Indigenous Truku women's life trajectories were impacted by their early-life comfort women trauma, and analyze the interplay of this trauma with their later public disclosures and participation in the comfort women's redress movement supported by the TWRF. In the next chapter, I highlight the social structures that Indigenous Truku survivors faced, identifying specific factors that had received less attention, both in the existing literature and in the redress movement.

Chapter 4: Manuscript 2

Intersectionality of Early Sexual Trauma and Aging in Two Truku Comfort Women Survivors' Life Trajectories

Kang, S.-H. & Wang, F. T.-Y. (2022). *Intersectionality of early sexual trauma and aging in two Truku comfort women survivors' life trajectories* [Manuscript submitted for publication].

Abstract

While existing literature has pointed out the effects of early sexual trauma on Indigenous comfort women survivors' lives in Taiwan, the impact of the interplay of survivors' sexual trauma with their multiple social locations on their life trajectories is rarely discussed. In this article, two Truku Indigenous survivors' life stories are reconstructed to explore the social locations that shaped their life trajectories and the effects of early-life sexual trauma via intersectionality and life course lenses. The historical context and social norms in which the Truku people are embedded are reviewed to contextualize the meaning of sexual violence for Truku women. Then, we explore and compare how early sexual trauma interacted with different forms of structural oppressions on these two survivors' life trajectories as well as their coping strategies and resistance. We argue Truku survivors' life trajectories intersect with four-layered structural oppression from the state, society, and communities different from that of Han Chinese survivors. In addition, we highlight the oppression via Gaya, the Truku traditional belief, with its emphasis on sex boundaries, has further oppressed Truku comfort women by shaming their stories, impeding them from telling for healing, while inter-racial marriage and conversion to Christianity became strategies of resistance to this collective shaming. The findings of this study reveal unique features of Indigenous survivors that should not be overlooked.

Introduction

"Comfort women" is a euphemism coined by the Imperial Japanese Military to downplay the sexual enslavement of women. Between 1932 and 1945, the Imperial Japanese government and military coerced women into sexual exploitation through deception, abduction, and violence. An estimated 50,000 to 200,000 women across Asia were victimized (Yoshimi, 2000), and at least 1,000 were of Taiwanese origin (Lee, 1999). After World War II (WWII), most of those victims were silenced due to taboos and societal prejudices, until the early 1990s supported by the international comfort women redress movement. In Taiwan, fifty-nine survivors have been identified by the local non-profit organization Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF) and historians since 1992 (Chu, 2009). Among those, twelve Indigenous women came forward in 1996; most of them victimized between 1942 and 1946 by Japanese soldiers stationed in regions primarily inhabited by Taiwanese Indigenous peoples (Chu, 2009; Wang & Chiang, 1997a).

A few studies have identified the long term psychological and physical distress of the older comfort women survivors (e.g., Park et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2018). Previous research also has pointed out the effects of sexual trauma resulting from the comfort women system on Taiwanese Indigenous survivors' physical health, mental health, marriage, family life, unwanted pregnancies, and social exclusion (Chu, 2009; Wang & Chiang, 1997a; TWRF, 1999). These efforts have contributed to understanding the impact of the comfort women system on survivors. However, they have rarely discussed the interplay of survivors' multiple social locations, such as colonized racial groups, women, older people, survivors of sexual violence, and the effects thereof on their life trajectories and life-long adjustment. Nevertheless, several studies on comfort women have acknowledged the need to recognize the social locations of the state, race, class, and gender in which comfort women survivors had been positioned and the structural

oppressions arising from their locations when discussing their suffering (Soh, 2008; Yang, 1997). Hence, to understand the effects of early sexual trauma on Taiwanese Indigenous comfort women survivors' life trajectories, we analyze two Truku Indigenous survivors' stories from intersectionality theory and life course perspective.

This article reviews the historical context and social norms in which the Truku people are embedded to contextualize the meaning of sexual violence for Truku women. After reconstructing the survivors' narratives from the existing literature and oral history, we explore and compare the interplay of early sexual trauma and different structural oppressions on these two Indigenous survivors' life trajectories and their coping strategies. The findings of this study present unique structural oppressions the Indigenous comfort women survivors faced and their agency.

Background

The Historical Context Embedded in the Truku

Several ethnic groups who migrated to Taiwan in different historical eras live on the island. Before Han Chinese and foreign regimes entered Taiwan in the seventeenth century,[5] the Indigenes Austronesian peoples had been residing on the island for at least six thousand years.[6] In 2021, the total number of Indigenous peoples was 580,758, accounting for 2.5 percent of the total population of 23,375,314 in Taiwan (Ministry of Interior, Taiwan, 2021), and the

[5] Han Chinese migrated to Taiwan in the 17th century from China. The Spanish occupied northern Taiwan from 1626 to 1642, while the Dutch occupied southern Taiwan beginning in 1624. The Dutch defeated the Spanish in 1942 and ruled Taiwan until 1662. Later in 1662, the Dutch were defeated by the Cheng family from China. In 1684, the Qing Dynasty included Taiwan in its territory (Dai, 2007).

[6] Taiwan's Indigenous peoples belong to the Austronesian linguistic family. Scholars argue that Taiwan may be the starting point where the Austronesians dispersed throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans after they arrived from southeast China six thousand years ago (Simon, 2005).

Indigenous population was composed of sixteen Indigenous groups. Amongst them, the Truku people, who used to be recognized as the East Sediq of the Atayal group and initially lived in Nantou before gradually moved to Hualien beginning in the seventeenth century (Liao, 1977), became the twelfth Indigenous group officially recognized by the Taiwanese government in 2004 (Wang, 2008). Their population is approximately 33,000, accounting for 5.7 percent of the total Indigenous population (Council of Indigenous Peoples, Taiwan, 2022); today most Truku people reside in Hualien county in eastern Taiwan.

The Truku people's lives have profoundly intersected with the history of Japanese colonization. In 1895, Taiwan was ceded to Japan by the Chinese Qing dynasty due to its defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War and colonized until 1945. During the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese Indigenous peoples were represented as "savages" by the colonial government until the post-Wushe Uprising period when the imperialization policies intended to make Indigenous peoples subjects of the Japanese Emperor.[7] Accordingly, they used several colonial strategies toward Indigenous peoples, including pacification to mobilize Indigenous peoples against the resistance of Han Chinese toward the Japanese and subsequent aggression measures, assimilation, and imperialization policies to eradicate Indigenous sovereignty and culture. These policies aimed to efficiently extract natural resources, such as timber and camphor, from Indigenous territories and human resources, such as the mobilization of Indigenous peoples becoming *Takasago Volunteers*, referring to soldiers in the Imperial Japanese Army recruited from among Taiwanese Indigenous peoples, for Japan's war effort during the expansion of

[7] The Wushe Uprising was a rebellion by the Sediq communities against the local Japanese population subduing of the region in 1930 that killed 134 Japanese. In response, the Japanese led a counter-attack by a large number of forces into the Wushe area in a punitive expedition against the Sedig. It is estimated that a total of 644 Sediq people died (of which half of the victims committed suicide) (Berry, 2022; Ching, 2001).

Pacific War (Barclay, 2017). Under this atmosphere of colonial rule on Indigenous peoples, the Truku were reputed for their bravery and skill in fighting against the Japanese regime. The colonial government's repressive rules initially resulted in fierce Truku resistance that defeated the Japanese military. Hence, the colonial government adopted an appeasement policy toward the Truku while establishing Defense Lines that enclosed the Truku lands with forts and even electric fences and minefields to limit the living space of the Truku and stave off their attacks.[8] These policies prompted the vigorous defense of the Truku against the Japanese colonial government for years until the Truku War in 1914, in which the Japanese colonial government mobilized resources on a massive scale to conquer the Truku after more than eighty days of battle.[9] Although the Truku were defeated, this event strengthened their identity of being a Truku on the pride of their fierce resistance to the colonial power (Simon, 2015).

After the Truku war, the Japanese colonial government implemented a series of policies resulting in the collapse of the Truku culture. For example, they urged Truku people's resettlement on the plains, broke up existing kin groups to different locations to weaken their solidarity, and destroyed many precolonial social institutions. The resettlement project forced people of various communities, including those of previously hostile groups, into the same village as a divided community which would be incapable of resistance under Japanese police's surveillance (Simon, 2015). They also established a control system through intensive policing

[8] The Japanese colonial government in Taiwan followed and advanced the system of Defense Lines (*aiyongxian*) initially established in the Qing dynasty to enclose the Atayal, Sediq, and Truku settlements of northern Taiwan. From 1903 through 1915, the colonial government forces extended the Defense Lines and marched them inward to the Indigenous territory (Barclay, 2017).

[9] Between May and August 1914, the Japanese colonial government deployed massive numbers of troops and resources to conquer the Truku to consolidate the government's control in eastern Taiwan. To overpower the resistance of Truku warriors, the colonial government mobilized approximately 20,000 people in the field against a Truku fighting force of 2,000 people (Liao, 1978; Simon, 2015).

and road construction entering the Truku mountain regions (Liao, 1978). Moreover, they attempted to erase the Truku language and culture such as implementing a Japanese schooling system for the children and replacing the Truku swidden agriculture with a modern agricultural economy (Dai, 2014; Liao, 1978). After the Wushe Uprising in 1930, the colonial government took even more strict control of the Truku to eliminate their ethnic identity and social solidarity, through forced eviction, cultural assimilation, and imperialization through schooling and language (Dai, 2014; Liao, 1978).

The conflicts between the Truku people and the colonial government may be inferred to be one of the remote causes that resulted in Truku women suffering from sexual violence at the hands of the Japanese comfort women system. We presume that many war survivors' families were broken in the aftermath of the Truku war; hence, children and women needed to bear the family's economic burden. Working in the Japanese military camps to do laundry or cleaning to earn a wage might become an incentive at the beginning without knowing they would be sexually abused. Further, the weakening of the Truku group by the colonial government disabled the community to protect the women when the Japanese police or military coerced women to work in the military camp.

After WWII, Japan returned Taiwan to the Republic of China (ROC) in 1945. After 1947, Taiwan was under martial law until 1987, restricting civil rights such as assembly, association, procession, petition, and publication. In 1949, the ruling party, the Kuomintang (KMT, the nationalist party), was defeated by the Chinese Communist Party and exiled to Taiwan, allied with the US against communist China in the Cold War (Roy, 2003). The KMT's policy toward Indigenous peoples followed the Japanese colonial government's assimilation policy until the pushback from the Indigenous social movement unfolded in the 1980s such as the name

rectification of Indigenous peoples from Mountain Compatriots (*shanbao*) to Indigenous Peoples (*yuanzhuminzu*) and the 'Return our Lands' land reclamation movement (Lin, 2010; Simon, 2017). The government applied Sinification assimilation policies such as learning Mandarin and shifting to Chinese names to supersede Indigenous culture, implemented a unified legal and public administration system upon the Indigenous peoples disregarding their historical and cultural differences from Han Chinese, and used the external political system to replace the traditional Indigenous leaders' system (Dai, 2007; Simon, 2005).

Economically, the government introduced a market economy of agricultural production such as paddy field agriculture and cash crops in the 1950s in the Indigenous communities through a series of land development policies that profoundly changed Truku people's self-sufficient subsistence economy (Lin, 2001). In addition, the government loosened the regulations on Indigenous reserved land for tourism and economic development purposes, resulting in a massive Indigenous land loss. Han-owned Taiwanese corporations accessed Indigenous land, even for destructive purposes such as mining, cement production and the disposal of nuclear waste (Simon, 2005). Those policies marginalized the Indigenous peoples in the market economy. Many Indigenous peoples left their motherland and moved to urban cities for job opportunities in the 1970s. They became migrant workers in the urban area as lower-skilled workers with precarious, low-paid, and dangerous tasks (Lin, 2001; Simon, 2011). A high percentage of Truku young girls and women became involved in the sex trade due to their socially and economically disadvantaged position and the disappearance of the traditional culture (Rudolph, 1994; Yu, 1979). The sexual objectification of Truku women is not limited to comfort women but a pattern of Indigenous colonial history that the colonized female body became the object of sexual exploitation for the ruling class.

The traumatic experience of comfort women survivors was further exacerbated by the lack of a safe social environment to tell their stories. Because of their disadvantaged economic, social, and political position, Truku women's sexual victimization, considered a shame both in Truku and Han Chinese-dominated mainstream, would further marginalize and stigmatize the Truku people. These interwoven challenging factors minimized the chance for survivors to reveal their past sexual victimization and led them to hide their traumatic secrets for years.

Utux, Gaya and Social Relation

The Truku is a male-authoritative patriarchal family-organized society with a gendered division of labor. Traditionally, males take care of hunting while females are in charge of weaving. Males and the elderly in the family are treated as authority figures. Patrilineal kinship established through marriage is fundamental to maintaining peoples' interrelationships. Kin members are forbidden from intermarrying, bear the same punishments for members' sins, take revenge on behalf of other members, and have some rights and duties during members' weddings, festival celebrations, and funeral services (Yu, 1980). For example, if a woman and man engage in sexual misconduct, it is believed that their 'sin' would result in the anger of the spirits and bring misfortune to other family members. Also, if a rival headhunts a kin member, others in the kinship need to take revenge for him.[10] Emphasis on collectivity via shared lifestyle, beliefs, and customs makes the Truku a close-knit community.

The Truku value system is heavily influenced by its traditional religion, called *Utux*. Anthropologists have different interpretations of its meanings. Utux involves belief in ancestors'

[10] Many Austronesian people in Southeast Asian and Oceanic societies practiced headhunting. For example, it was historically practiced in the Truku community as an expression of the implementation of the sacred law of Gaya to protect the territorial boundaries and settle legal disputes within communities. Truku men also use it to consolidate political power or express masculinity. However, this practice was forbidden by the Japanese colonial government as they considered it "savage damage." (Simon, 2012; Yu, 1978).

spirits and the spirits of rivals who have been head hunted. The Truku believe that those enemies will become the spirits that protect the hunter's community (Yu, 1978). Utux may also include an individual's soul, the souls of deceased family members, and the souls of dead people living in a particular land (Chang, 1997). There is also a distinction between ancestral, good, and evil spirits (Wang, 2021). Despite the difference in interpretations, generally, scholars agree that Utux involves belief in the aggregation of spirits and divine beings in Truku people's worldview (Chiu, 2013).

The teaching, customs, and rules of Utux are called *Gaya*. Gaya plays a vital sacred role in disciplining Truku people's personal and social behaviors (Simon, 2012). The Truku believe that people should obey Gaya to construct a good relationship with the Utux; otherwise, misfortune such as accidents, illnesses, lethal injuries or death are expected to occur not only for individuals but for all members of the kinship group or community (Chiu, 2013; Lin, 2001; Wang, 2008; Yu, 1978). In the Truku tradition, only men and women who had obeyed Gaya through actions had the right to tattoo their faces. After their death, only tattooed individuals could cross the Rainbow Bridge of the ancestors and become ancestral spirits (Simon, 2012). On the other hand, people who violate Gaya will experience suffering and caused their tense relationship with the Utux, their families, the community, and themselves (Wang, 2008). If they do not correct their behaviors and restore their social relationships, they will fall into the cold river and be eaten by crabs when they walk over the Rainbow Bridge after their death (Tadaw, 2018).

When someone violates Gaya, a misfortune will occur to one's family, and then a *powda gaya* (moving through Gaya) ritual will be held to pray for forgiveness from ancestral spirits. Normally, the offender's household, the offender's siblings and parents' household have a duty

to conduct this ritual. They would slaughter a pig, as a sacrifice for the Utux, and distribute the meat to relatives and friends, to cleanse the impurity (Lin, 2001; Wang, 2008). Through Gaya or powda ritual, the Truku strengthen their communities by emphasizing the importance of establishing mutual sympathy for each other, and maintaining the relationship between people and the Utux in joy, that is, "people are happy when getting together, their inner side and outside are wrapping together" (Wang, 2014).

Truku people believe that women's sexual activity before marriage is a severe violation of Gaya and will bring danger to her male kin, especially her brothers (Chiu, 2013). A sexual violation of Gaya is not only an incident between two people or families but also offends the ancestors' spirits and brings misfortune to all the community. Therefore, the two parties who violate Gaya by their sexual misconduct would be condemned and asked for compensation by the community. The offenders need to do a powda ritual to ask for the forgiveness of the Utux to restore the relationship with the Utux, and the social relationship with the community (Wang, 2008; Yu, 1979). Lin notes that the powda ritual highlights that the cohesion of Truku society is subjected to collective vulnerability to spiritual or otherworldly aggression, and the need to keep a broad alliance amongst households to counter it (Lin, 2001). We further argue that social cohesion in the Truku works as a double-edged sword for comfort women survivors. The community can protect, support, but also condemn, exclude, even bully comfort women, depending on how the community makes sense of the behaviors of comfort women through the Truku value system, especially their values regarding women's sexuality. Although Gaya regarding women's sexual activity was meant to strengthen the boundary of marriage and prevent conflicts within the community, it failed to recognize the distinction of sexual abuse from outside invaders and was still applied to comfort women victims' forced sexual activity

with Japanese soldiers.[11] In addition, the community and comfort women victims themselves would consider comfort women impure and broken because they had sexual activities outside their marriage.

The Comfort Women Redress Movement with the Indigenous Survivors in Taiwan

Motivated by the comfort women movement in South Korea and the findings of three telegrams in the library of the Self-Defense Agency of Japan proving that Taiwanese women were sent to the front line as comfort women during WWII, the TWRF has dedicated itself to the comfort women redress movement in Taiwan since 1992. The TWRF set up a survivor hotline and lobbied the Taiwanese government, which later established a special inter-ministerial committee in charge of related issues (Chen, 1999). Among the 59 survivors identified by the TWRF, twelve Taiwanese Indigenous survivors from the Atayal, Truku, and Bunun peoples came forward in 1996.[12] Those twelve Indigenous survivors' victimization began from ages thirteen to twenty-nine. Except for one Bunun woman recruited by a broker to be sent to Hong Kong, eleven Indigenous survivors were forced by the Japanese police to serve soldiers stationed in Indigenous regions between 1942 and 1946. The Japanese army initially recruited those eleven Indigenous survivors to do cleaning, cooking, and laundry tasks, yet those women later were raped incessantly by troops (Chu, 2009).

A few Indigenous survivors have publicly participated in the transnational comfort women redress movement supported by the TWRF to testify on the atrocities committed by the Japanese

[11] To our best knowledge, no literature specifically discusses Truku people's perception of women's suffering from sexual violence. Nevertheless, Chen's (2013) study on the Atayal group, which Truku was traditionally classified as before 2004, sheds a glimpse. The study reveals that the Atayal consider women's victimization from sexual violence a curse from the utux due to victims' families violating the disciplines of the utux.

[12] Mr. Chen Deng-Shan, a Truku historian specializing in Taiwanese Takasago Volunteers, petitioned the Taiwanese government on behalf of sixteen Indigenous women victimized by the comfort women system. The Taiwanese government transferred those cases to the TWRF for further investigation, and twelve were confirmed (Wang & Chiang, 1999).

government and military. Four Indigenous and five Han Chinese defendants joined the TWRF in filing a lawsuit against the Japanese government in 1999 (TWRF & Hsia, 2005). Although the Tokyo Supreme Court rejected the lawsuit in 2005 (Lai et al., 2005), some Indigenous survivors continued their participation in the redress movement until the early 2010s. Those survivors also received the social services offered by the TWRF to assist with their multiple needs that emerged due to their early sexual trauma and aging process (Kang, 2021; Lai et al., 2005).

Nevertheless, the socio-political context in Taiwan hindered Taiwanese comfort women from gaining social recognition, despite the redress movement. Generally, Taiwanese people have mixed feelings toward Japanese colonial rule; hence, it has been difficult to achieve social consensus on the comfort women issue. It is an incendiary topic among local political parties with different perspectives on Japanese colonialism and Taiwan's national identity, either independence or unification with China. Within the nationalist one-China political framing, the comfort women issue was portrayed with nationalism against Japanese aggression on China and colonialism in Taiwan. At the same time, some pro-independence extreme Japanophiles denied the comfort women's victimization by the Japanese government and military and claimed that comfort women were voluntary prostitutes. Consequently, people in Taiwan often view the comfort women issue as politically charged and treat it with indifference (Jennings, 2016; Kang, 2021).

From the Indigenous perspective, both nationalists and those who are pro-independence are colonizers who deny Indigenous ways of understanding history, including the history of comfort women. As members of a racial minority who participated in the redress movement, Indigenous comfort women survivors inevitably were objectified without the Indigenous perspective, by both of the competing political frames–one-China and pro-independence. Torn

between colonial Taiwanese society and the Indigenous local community, their decision to come out in public as comfort women to testify about their experiences might be seen by their people as a form of betrayal–of bringing shame upon Indigenous peoples–and therefore elicited varying degrees of prejudice from their own communities. Finally, because the activism of the reparation movement has been lasting for three decades, the decline of aging survivors and the continuing unresolved political debates on comfort women in Taiwan eroded the legitimacy of this issue, resulting in a movement that lacked a robust social support system. This created further difficulties for the women–psychological and physical–as they sought to heal from a life shadowed by tragic experiences.

Study Design

To understand the effect of early life sexual trauma on Indigenous comfort women survivors' life trajectories, given that only one survivor is still alive, we use a life history approach informed by multiple sources of data, including existing literature (Chu, 2009; Chu & TWRF, 2004; Lai et al., 2005; Peng, 2012; Tseng & TWRF, 2012; TWRF, 1999; TWRF, 2005a; TWRF, 2005b; TWRF, 2017; TWRF& Hsia, 2005; Watanabe, 2018) and two documentaries (Wu, 2015; Yang, 1998) to reconstruct two survivors' life stories with intersectionality and life course lenses. Among the seven Indigenous survivors' stories represented in total in the literature, we choose the publicized stories of Iwar Tanah (*Tsai, Fang-mei*) and Iyan Apay (*Lin, Shen-Chung*), given the richer information available on these two than others. Although past publications provide valuable information on Indigenous survivors' life histories, there is a lack of discussion about how Indigenous individuals were affected by the macro-structure (i.e. history, time, space) and structural oppressions (i.e. gender, class, race, state, culture) and the interplay thereof. Researchers have acknowledged the need to recognize the multiple oppressions

caused by imperialism, patriarchy, and colonialism that Korean comfort women have experienced. Yang (1997) argues that the comfort women issue should be positioned at the intersection of state, race, class, and gender contradictions. Soh (2008) provocatively disputes the simplistic view that comfort women were victims of a war crime committed solely by Imperial Japan and asserts that they were also victimized by Korean patriarchy and its political economy under colonial rule. These concepts can also be applied to Taiwan. We propose that to gain a full understanding of the Taiwanese Indigenous survivors' stories, it is necessary to consider at which intersections the survivors were positioned and what structural oppressions the survivors were facing throughout their aging process, and the interplay thereof when combined with early sexual trauma. We adopt intersectionality and life course lenses as the framework of analysis for this study

Intersectionality theory considers the intersection of multiple social locations (i.e. gender, class, race) in individual lives with the relevant structures of oppression (i.e. patriarchy, racism, sexism) by which they are constrained as well as the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power. Originating from critical race feminist theories of the effects of sexism, class, and racism on the lives of Black women, intersectionality is used to challenge the singular conception of social identities, emphasizing differences between/within groups, and seeks to explain the interaction of various social factors affecting human lives (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). It provides a framework for analyzing the economic, political, and social ideological context within which individuals' structural oppressions linked to gender, race, class, and sexuality are organized (Collins, 2000). Intersectionality has been applied to different disciplines to address social relationships and power dynamics, understand how broader social structural inequalities shape individual experiences and promote social justice issues, such as understanding the voices of

marginalized sexual violence victims (Collins & Bilge, 2016; McCauley et al., 2019; Trenholm et al, 2015). Scholars have also argued that intersectionality explains the complexity that characterizes women's experiences over the life course and in old age that emerge from the various intertwining identities within systems of inequalities (Calasanti & Giles, 2018).

The life course perspective outlines how the life course can be understood through structured pathways and individual trajectories that shift over time and affect individual identities and behaviors (Elder, 1994, 1998). It emphasizes that an individual's life is a transactional result of longitudinal personal development in time, history, and space intertwined with multifaceted social factors, such as the individual's linked lives and social structures embedded in daily life. It also highlights the notion of agency that individuals construct their own life course through the choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstance. This perspective has been utilized in studying the effects of older adults' early-life war-related traumatic experiences, such as Holocaust and comfort women, on their aging process (Berger, 2010; Kahana et al., 2015; Park et al., 2016).

Studies have highlighted that a framework combing intersectionality and life course perspective can link macrostructures to the unique lived experiences of marginalized older adults who face multiple structural oppression (Brotman et al., 2020; Ferrer et al., 2017). We used these two approaches to facilitate an in-depth analysis of how Taiwanese Indigenous comfort women survivors with multiple identities as survivors, women, Indigenous peoples, colonized persons, and older adults are embedded within time and space and how they intersect with the social and historical structures that shape their life courses.

Two Truku Survivors' Stories

Iwar Tanah

Iwar Tanah was born in 1931 in Nantou after the Japanese killed her birth father during the Wushe Uprising.[13] Her mother, born with polio that resulted in physical disability, later remarried a mute Truku man when Iwar Tanah was five and gave birth to three more children. The family lived in poverty. When Iwar Tanah was eight, she studied at an elementary school for Indigenous children. She was good at Japanese and mathematics, enjoyed dance and music, and made good friends. She was also responsible for doing household chores and taking care of her younger siblings, especially after her stepfather died in 1943. Unfortunately, Iwar Tanah's younger brother, second sister, and mother passed away in quick succession due to illness between 1943 and 1944. Therefore, Iwar Tanah relocated to Hualien to stay with her aunt in early 1945.

Three months after Iwar Tanah's arrival, the aunt arranged for her to marry a Truku man. Soon after their engagement, Japanese police recruited Iwar-Tanah's fiancé for the Takasago Volunteers and went to Southeast Asia, while Iwar Tanah moved into her fiancé's home. Later, police recruited her and four other women in the village to work in a military camp. They were required to do cleaning and laundry and make tea for the military. After working for three months, Iwar Tanah and the other women were raped by the soldiers. From that incident forward, she was forced to have sex with two to three soldiers every evening before returning home. Iwar Tanah did not dare tell anyone about the sexual violence she experienced. Her victimization lasted for more than two months until the Japanese troops withdrew from Taiwan in 1945.

In 1947, Iwar Tanah's fiancé returned home, and they got married. She gave birth to four boys and two girls. Her husband was a farmer and did temporary labor when there was no

[13] The life stories of Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay from 1931 to 1996 are based on Chu's study (Chu, 2009).

farming work. She took care of the children and helped her husband do the farm work to share the heavy economic burden. They had a loving relationship. However, Iwar Tanah did not tell her husband about the sexual violence she had experienced in the war. Resultingly, she felt she was living in sin and went to the Christian church with her husband in the village, pleading for God to make her pure. She finally revealed her victimization to her husband in 1992, right before his death, and gained his acceptance.

In 1996, when Iwar Tanah was sixty-five, she attended a Takasago Volunteers meeting because her late husband did not receive any compensation from the Japanese government for his military service. During the meeting, a Bunan Indigenous woman revealed her experience of sexual violence at the hands of Japanese soldiers (Chu & TWRF, 2004). After long consideration, Iwar Tanah decided to tell her story and seek reparations from the Japanese government and started participating in the redress movement supported by the TWRF.[14] As a result, the stories of Iwar-Tanah and the other twelve survivors were filmed by the TWRF in the documentary *Secrets Buried for Fifty Years*, released in 1998. During the filming process, Iwar-Tanah and the camera crew went back to the cave where she was victimized, which was the first time she had returned to this site since the war (TWRF, 1999). She was also one of the nine plaintiffs filing a lawsuit against the Japanese government supported by the TWRF in 1999 (TWRF & Hsia, 2005). In the meantime, the TWRF worked with a few feminists to preserve the cave where Iwar-Tanah was victimized as a women's rights landmark in 2005. Nevertheless, this

[14]The non-profit Taiwanese Japanese Veterans and Family Members organized the meeting to request reparations from the Japanese government for Taiwanese Indigenous soldiers who served in the Imperial Japanese Army (TWRF, 1999). In addition, several Indigenous comfort women survivors decided to seek reparation for their victimization in 1996 after they knew the comfort women's reparation movement by attending the Takasago Volunteers' reparation meetings for their husbands or family members (Wang & Chiang, 1997b).

proposal was rejected by Iwar-Tanah's son and the villagers and failed (Peng, 2012). Due to health issue, Iwar Tanah gradually faded out from the reparation movement in 2010s (TWRF, 2016a).

Iyan Apay

Iyan Apay was born in Rongshu, Hualien, in 1927. Her mother had a boy in her first marriage and re-married in 1921 after her husband's death, giving birth to three more boys (one died at an early age) and Iyan Apay. Iyan Apay's parents were both Truku and lived in different villages in Tianxiang, Hualien, before marriage. They later moved to Rongshu for work. As Iyan Apay recalled, her father would sell firewood and the vegetables he grew. She wore clothes woven by her mother to go to the elementary school for Indigenous children. Iyan Apay liked Japanese and math classes. She also liked sports, especially running. She always won first place in races.

In 1937, the Second Sino-Japanese War began, and Rongshu was designated as a military warehouse; a military training camp was created there in 1941. All residents were forced to move to Tongmen. In the meantime, Iyan Apay's three elder brothers were recruited as Takasago Volunteers and sent to Southeast Asia. In December 1944, Iyan Apay was summoned by the police to the military camp to help with laundry, tailoring, and folding clothes in Rongshu. After working for one month, she and the other women were raped by the soldiers and forced to have sex with one to three soldiers every evening after that. Iyan Apay did not reveal the incident to her parents. The victimization lasted until 1946, when the Japanese left Rongshu and returned to Japan.

Iyan Apay married a Truku man when she was nineteen. They had a loving relationship until he heard that Iyan Apay had worked in the military base. He thought she must have done

something shameful. The marriage only lasted for three years. Iyan Apay agreed with his divorce proposal even though she was two months pregnant. Her second husband was a Hoklo Chinese, [15] a tailor in Hualien from Pingtung, and served as a soldier in the Japanese army during the war. The marriage lasted for ten years, and the couple had two boys and one girl, as well as the child from her previous marriage. They divorced because Iyan Apay wanted to move to Pingtung to avoid gossip about her past, while her husband insisted on staying in Hualien due to his employment. During a period of separation due to these disputes, he had an affair. Iyan Apay proposed a divorce and raised her children on her own.

Her third husband was a veteran who had retreated with the nationalist government from China. They had two girls and one boy. Her husband worked in the Mu-Gua forest district in Rongshu with a fair salary for Iyan Apay to manage. Iyan Apay was good at doing business and worked hard. She helped people with farming and owned a small business hiring workers to chop bamboo and other woods. Their marriage lasted eleven years until her husband passed away due to illness. Iyan Apay's fourth husband was also a veteran from China. He was a chief master sergeant in the military base nearby Rongshu. They finally decided to divorce due to disputes over his gambling and sexual affairs.

Iyan Apay participated in a Takasago Volunteers meeting for her late brothers in 1996. Inspired by a Bunan woman's revelation of her suffering in the comfort women system in the meeting, she decided to stand forward (Chu & TWRF, 2004). Like Iwar-Tanah, Iyan-Apay joined the TWRF's comfort women's transnational redress movement and filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government in 1998 (TWRF & Hsia, 2005). She actively participated in the

[15] There are three groups of Han Chinese after WWII in Taiwan, including Fujian Chinese (also called *Hoklo*, *Hokkie*n, *Minnan* people) and Hakka Chinese, who migrated to Taiwan from Fujian and Guangdong China beginning since the 17th century, and Mainlanders from China after 1949 (Roy, 2003).

TWRF's activism and healing activities until late 2012 when she became ill due to cancer (Tseng, 2012). Iyan Apay was baptized in 2012 and passed away in 2013 at eighty-six (TWRF, 2017; Wu, 2015).

The Interplay of Trukus' Historical Context with Survivors' Social Locations

The life course perspective notes that individuals are embedded in and shaped by the historical times and places they experience over their lifetime. Japanese governing policy toward Indigenous peoples in Taiwan is divided into three stages: military repression from 1900 to 1915, forced educational assimilation from 1916 to 1937, and cultural imperialism from 1937 to 1945 (Fujii, 2001). Military repression enabled the Japanese colonizers to plunder the Indigenous people's land and exploit their labor force; educational assimilation would transform the language, culture, and identity from Indigenous to Japanese; and cultural imperialism would remake Indigenous warriors into Japanese soldiers serving the glory of the Japanese Empire. These policies had impacts on Truku women's experiences as comfort women.

First of all, the vulnerability associated with being comfort women is historically constructed by the Japanese colonial government's warfare against Indigenous peoples in Taiwan. Both Iwar Tanah's and Iyan Apay's parents were victims of military repression. Iwar Tanah's father was killed by the Japanese in the Wushe Uprising in 1930, a historical trauma for the Sedig community caused by Japanese retaliatory actions that resulted in their genocide, forced dislocation, the split-up of community, and the loss of land and social support. After her stepfather and mother passed away due to illness in 1943 and 1944, Iwar Tanah, as an orphan, was separated from her sister and moved to her aunt's home, where she had no other relatives and lived in economic hardship, resulting in her early marriage. Similarly, Iyan Apay's family

was also a victim of warfare. In 1922, her parents moved to Rongshu from Tianxiang,[16] which was suffering from the aftermath of the 1914 Truku War against the Japanese colonial regime. After the Truku War, to enhance the capacity to govern the Indigenous peoples, the Japanese built roads into the mountains, introduced police forces into every village, and encouraged the collective settlement of the Truku (Liao, 1977). We can assume that Iyan Apay's parents were forced to move to Rongshu and resettled themselves within this historical context. The migration may have situated Iyan Apay's family in a marginal position in the new settlement, as they lost their land and hunting ground, which further influenced their economic and social status in the new place.

Both Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay studied in an elementary school designed for Indigenous children through Japanese colonialism, which was meant to assimilate them into Japanese culture, breaking their Truku identity and linkage with indigenous culture. Iyan Apay recalled that children were given Japanese names and those older than grade four were forbidden to speak indigenous languages (Chu, 2009; TWRF & Hsia, 2005). Furthermore, the Japanese colonizers initiated the cultural imperialism movement, promoting the Takasago Volunteer as the most glorious figure that Indigenous men could ever be in their lives. Both Iwar Tanah's and Iyan Apay's male family members were recruited as Takasago Volunteers to the Japanese government's occupied territories in Southeast Asia. For Iwar Tanah, after her fiancé departed, she moved to her fiancé's home, worked in forced labor for the Japanese camp, brought the money she earned to her fiance's house, and suffered from sexual violence from the military for

[16] Tianxiang was in the Inner Truku region, the earliest region where Trukus settled in Hualien after moving from Nantou in the mid-1800s. However, along with many people moving in, there was limited space for development. Hence, people moved to the lower fork of the Liwu and the Mu Gua rivers, called the outer Truku region, where Rongshu was located (Chiu, 2013).

months. For Iyan Apay, as her three elder brothers were sent to Southeast Asia as Takasago Volunteers, she became the only child living with her parents and grandparents. Her elder brother died in New Guinea, the third brother was psychologically distressed by the war experience, and the fourth elder brother soon passed away after returning home. Iyan Apay also suffered from sexual violence for more than one year, with three miscarriages soon after the pregnancies from the rape by the Japanese military. The Japanese colonizer had written a script based on gender for Taiwanese Indigenous peoples to support its war, as Indigenous young men were glorified as Takasago Volunteers, soldiers for the Japanese Emperor, while Indigenous young women were deceived and forced into becoming comfort women.

Gaya as a Form of Oppression on Survivors of Sexual Violence

Both Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay did not dare tell their families about their sexual trauma due to Truku Gaya's disciplines on gender boundaries. Iwar Tanah hid her suffering from sexual violence during the war and felt she had sinned, a phenomenon sexual violence survivors often experienced, internalizing the pervasive societal messages that placed undue blame on victims and minimized the experience of sexual violence (Heath et al., 2011). Her conversion to Christianity can be seen as a way to relieve Gaya's punishment. Christianity was first introduced to the Truku in 1931 after the Wushe Uprising by the first Truku convert, Ciwang, a woman baptized in 1924 in the Canadian Presbyterian missionary and became a minister. After the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the colonial government carried out the imperialization movement, prohibited Christian preaching in Indigenous regions, and persecuted many Christians. Nevertheless, Ciwang and the Truku Christians still preached secretly (Chiu, 2013; Simon, 2021). After the Japanese defeat in World War II and the arrival of the ROC, evangelism

accelerated, many Truku and other Indigenous peoples massively converted to Christianity.[17] Iwar Tanah converted to Christianity after the war. She was very religious and devoted herself to being a good Samaritan, including being a hospital volunteer to pray for other patients.[18] Chiu notes that Christianity's stress on God's love and forgiveness, in contrast to Truku Gaya's emphasis on punishment, comforted the Truku people under the strict Japanese colonial (Chiu, 2013). In addition, the social service and material aid provided by the Christian organizations after WWII to Indigenous communities strengthened the image of the love and power of God (Chiu, 2013). Moreover, the defeat in the Truku War disrupted Truku people's relationship with the Utux. They considered that the Utux did not stay on their side anymore, causing their defeats. In addition, the prohibition of headhunting by the Japanese also made the Truku feel that they could not increase their spiritual power through headhunting and compensate for their relationship with the Utux. Therefore, the Truku had to search for a new Utux. Furthermore, the prohibition of Christianity by the Japanese government strengthened the Truku people's belief in the spiritual power of Christianity. It also served as a form of resistance to the colonial government (Chiu, 2013). Nevertheless, Chiu argues that Christianity coexists with and complements the traditional Truku Utux in the Truku community. For example, when faced with misfortune, the Truku tend to use Gaya to explain it. They also strongly believes that any Utux has power beyond human beings. Hence, when they try to resolve the misfortune brought about by Gaya, Gaya, the Christian god, and even the traditional Han religious belief can become the

[17] For example, by 1949, nearly 5,000 Sediq had converted to Christianity compared with 500 believers in 1946 in a church in Hualien. Presbyterian churches in Indigenous communities in Taiwan also grew considerably from 20,000 to 60,000 believers from 1949 to 1959 (Covell, 1998; Simon, 2021).

[18] Iwar Tanah was baptized by Rev. Wilang Takuh, who started to preach the Gospel after WWII (Watanabe, 2018).

spiritual power they are searching for protection from adversity (Chiu, 2013). Simon (2021) also points out that religion in the Truku community is a relationship nurtured by humans with spirits and game animals through a complex of rituals and myths. Christianity can be considered to bring rituals indoors for the Truku to navigate their relationship with the world. There is a syncretism of Christianity and traditional Truku spiritual concepts. For example, the Presbyterian church translated notably God as *Utux baraw* (the spirit above) and the Ten Commandments as the "Ten Gaya." We can see that Iwar Tanah was navigating between the condemnation of Gaya and the comfort derived from Christianity. Strongly impacted by Gaya's restriction on women's premarital sexual activities, she hid the secrets from her husband for years and sought comfort from Christianity to erase her guilt of violating Gaya (Chu, 2009). Nevertheless, she still strongly felt sinned even after being a Christian (Watanabe, 2018).

It is also important to understand how Gaya plays a role in influencing the Truku people's and families' reaction to women's sexual victimization. Previous studies have shown that most conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivors must find their way amidst the shame, humiliation, and exclusion arising from negative family and community perceptions of rape (Kelly et al., 2012). In the documentary *Song of the Reed*, Iyan Apay mentioned that people in the community would question her past sexual experiences with the Japanese soldiers, and she would argue with them, "I was forced, not of my own will!". Her first and second marriages ended because of the intolerance of her first husband and the community for her sexual trauma. Nevertheless, some of her family members supported her participation in TWRF's redress movement, especially the younger generation. In an interview, Iyan Apay's grandchildren stated that although Iyan Apay never discussed her sexual victimization directly with them, they understood their grandmother's past suffering and supported her (Tseng, 2012). Likewise, some

of her family members were involved and showed their support when Iyan Apay participated in the documentary *Song of the Reed* shooting.[19]

For Iwar Tanah, she finally decided to tell her husband about her secret and request his forgiveness before his passing away. Her husband comforted her, "There is no one without fault. The time was in chaos, and I could not be with you to protect you. It was not all your responsibility" (Chu, 2009). It took her fifty years to tell her secret for the first time. Her husband's forgiveness relieved her from the strong sense of guilt and shame, which may be one of the factors that enabled her more public testimony as a comfort woman later. Nevertheless, she still suffered from the judgmental responses from the community. For example, in the late 1990s Nobuo Watanabe, a Presbyterian priest and also the Taiwanese comfort women support group leader based in Tokyo, Japan, visited Iwar Tanah's church and urged the church to support the survivors. However, the priest's wife in the church, who did not know that Iwar Tanah was a survivor, interrupted and claimed that there were no comfort women in the village. The Truku church thought comfort women were prostitutes (Watanabe, 2018). Moreover, Iwar Tanah faced blame from her family and community after public screenings of the documentary S*ecrets Buried for Fifty Years,* released in 1998, from the belief that it revealed the shame of the community to outsiders (Peng, 2012).

The failure to preserve the cave where Iwar Tanah was victimized as a women's rights landmark reflects the community considered comfort women a symbol of shame. Peng describes her interview with a young Truku man; the young man said, "The women in our community being violated by the Japanese means that [Truku] men have no ability to protect the women in our group. For Truku men, it can be seen as a big shame! If they [the feminist groups] establish a

[19] The leading author was involved in the shooting and witnessed the support from Iyan Apay's family.

landmark in the cave, we young men in the community would immediately bomb the cave to destroy it" (Peng, 2012). The failure to preserve the site symbolizes the multiple barriers to Indigenous comfort women's voices being heard within their community. As men's pride was compromised by being unable to protect the women in the community, comfort women survivors faced ignorance stemming from cultural patriarchy even though they gained support from the human rights activists. Hence, comfort women survivors experienced another form of trauma at the hands of the Truku community.

Survivors' Agency and Resistance

The life course perspective considers that all individuals have a certain degree of autonomy and agency to reflect on their motivations and actions to better respond to events and protect their long-term interests (Elder, 1994). Individuals are not just passive recipients of the historical or social structure present; they can make either good or bad choices or act wisely or unwisely (Chappell et al, 2007). Both Iyan Apay and Iwar Tanah showed their agency and resistance to structural oppressions through different means.

Iyan Apay asserted her agency to surmount the sexual trauma and the barrier posed by her gender within the Truku culture through her four marriages. Her marriages to men of different ethnicities, from Truku to Han Chinese, including two soldiers from China, may reflect her intention to be distant from the taboo on women's sexual victimization in the Truku community, and also her actions to pursue socio-economic advantages to support her family. Her story was consistent with studies indicating that the percentage of Truku women who married outside of the community was high, especially with Han-Chinese low-rank soldiers moving to Taiwan after 1949 for better economic status (Lai, 1998; Yu, 1979). Her marriages also reflect her ability to overcome language and cultural differences between her and her

partners. In those relationships, she was not a passive actor relying on her husband's will; she could be the one to propose divorce and leave a difficult relationship. Also, in Iyan Apay's employment history, we can see her capacity for negotiation between the Truku and people outside the community. She adapted herself well to the opportunities emerging in the new market economy to support herself and the family. The difference between Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay is that Iwar Tanah identified herself as a sinful Truku woman by keeping the secret to herself, but converted to Christianity for a new worldview without the sense of shame she had accrued within her community. At the same time, Iyan Apay fought against her sexual stigmatization through interracial marriages and seized opportunities in the emerging market economy to solidify her socio-economic capabilities to supersede her disadvantaged identity as a sinful Indigenous woman breaking the Truku sexual taboo.

Both Iyan Apayi and Iwar Tanah actively participated in the redress movement in their older adulthood supported by the TWRF. Besides the reparation actions, they also attended the long-term support group organized by the TWRF with other survivors for trauma recovery and resilience building.[20] Although they needed an interpreter's assistance to communicate with the counselors and social workers, since their Chinese was limited, they showed their interest and enthusiasm in those activities (TWRF, 2005b). Research on gendered violence suggests that collective activism is critical for developing self-consciousness and an alternative sense of self in individuals. Moreover, formal support, such as in the form of advocacy groups, is vital for fostering collective activism (Profitt, 2001; Roche & Wood, 2016). Such support offers women who survived CRSV social connection and empowers women to fight the social stigma inflicted

[20] The support group was established since 1996 to provide supportive services for comfort women survivors through various activities, such as storytelling, art therapy and drama therapy, to help women to overcome their trauma and build resilience (Kang, 2021; TWRF, 2005b).

upon rape survivors (Koos, 2017). We can assume that Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay gained support from their participation in the redress movement and the support group hosted by the TWRF that they could not get in their families and community and formed relationships with other survivors. In addition, both Iyan Apay and Iwar Tanah mentioned in their seventies that they were still constantly having nightmares about their early-life traumatic incidents (Chu, 2009). Their older adulthood intersecting with the comfort women redress movement opened a new channel for them to relieve their lifelong pressure.

Both Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay were of the nine plaintiffs supported by the TWRF in filing a lawsuit against the Japanese government in 1999, and attended several lawsuit hearings and testified overseas.[21] Durbach and Geddes (2017) note that public hearings/tribunals have acted as an alternate oversight mechanism to generate a collective moral condemnation of gender-based crimes in post-conflict settings and spur the expanded participation of women in the process. However, Korac raises that the recognition of CRSV against women as a war crime through international law might open space for further victimization of women survivors. For example, women are further victimized in court hearings that mute women's voices; women who testified have been stigmatized and rejected by their communities and families in post-war settings (Korac, 2018). Nevertheless, Henry argues we should avoid binary representations of agency and passivity when discussing the effects of international law on survivors. Despite the power dynamics within courtroom procedures, survivors may find ways to assert their agency, both inside and outside the courtroom. We should view power as shifting and expressed in complex and multiple ways (Henry, 2013). Iwar Tanah's story presented by Peng may serve as

[21] For example, the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in 2000 in Tokyo (Lai et al., 2005).

an example of survivors breaking out of the confines of the courtroom (Peng, 2012). In 2001 Iwar Tanah went to Japan for a court hearing. She spoke Truku and needed interpretation from Truku to Mandarin Chinese to Japanese. After repeatedly giving many details, Iwar Tanah suddenly sang a holy song in Truku in the court. Although most people did not understand her song, her voice captured and moved people. Peng confirmed with Iwar Tanah's daughter, who heard this song sung by her mother since childhood, the meaning of the song:

I've endured many sufferings, but Jesus' blood purified me

Because I believe in Jesus with my whole heart, I have survived.

I hope to return to heaven early for Jesus to hold me.

Iwar Tanah's song conveyed many meanings. She used her voice and comfort from her religious belief to assert her agency and resist the court's pressure and the structural oppression within her life.

Conclusion

The two Truku women's stories demonstrate four layers of oppressions Truku comfort women survivors faced during their lives. First, there was the initial oppression stemming from the state violence perpetrated by colonial Japan on Truku people which forced Truku women into military sexual slavery. Moreover, within Truku culture, Gaya's restrictive views on the female gender shamed, stigmatized and thus silenced comfort women survivors' voices in their own communities. Furthermore, the Taiwanese government's assimilationist policies toward Indigenous peoples after 1945 relegated Indigenes to a disadvantaged social-economic-political status. That marginalization further impeded Truku comfort women survivors from sharing their stories with their communities and the larger Taiwanese society. Finally, the general public's

ignorance of or indifference to the comfort women issue in Taiwan also meant that the Indigenous survivors' participation in the redress movement lacked a solid social support system.

Some of the oppressions Truku survivors face are similar to Han Chinese survivors, although with differences in specifics. Eighty percent of the fifty-nine survivors identified by the TWRF are Han Chinese women who were between sixteen and thirty-four years old when they were forced into the comfort women stations located in China and Southeast Asia. Many women came from impoverished families and lacked education, and were thus forced to enter the labor market at a young age and become the target of being trafficked into the comfort women system. More than half of them were raised by adopted families to provide free labor or become future brides due to the long-held prejudice against girls in Han Chinese patriarchal culture. Some were even forced by their adoptive families to work in the sex trade (Chu, 2009).

Despite the similarities in the structural oppressions, it is necessary to note the differences between Truku and Han Chinese comfort women's experiences. For Truku survivors, the oppression via Gaya of women's sexual activities before marriage derived from the emphasis of the Truku on collectivity. However, while Gaya succeeded in maintaining order and harmony within the community, it failed to deal with disorder caused by outsiders. Comfort women's sexual victimization was viewed as a violation of Gaya that was believed to bring danger to women's families and communities. Despite being a mechanism for maintaining daily order and gender norms in the community, Gaya failed to recognize the colonial state machine as a perpetrator and instead put the responsibility on the victims. It resulted in communities' negative response toward the survivors and survivors' internalization of the blame. Therefore, comfort women survivors experienced a secondary victimization due to stigmatization and social exclusion from their group. The marginalization and stigmatization deprived their social identity

of gender roles (e.g. wives) valued by the society which, in turn, affected the survivors' life trajectories. One Truku survivor in the literature was forced to leave her community due to exclusion from her group and migrate to the city with her daughter, born from sexual violence by the Japanese military, doing entry-level jobs to make a living (TWRF, 1999). Her lack of a family support system and marginalization as an Indigenous woman in a Han Chinese dominant society put her at a cultural and economic disadvantage in comparison to Han Chinese survivors.

The victimization stories of Iwar Tanah and Iyan Apay became examples of the perpetrators' crimes used by the activists. Nevertheless, their testimony as sexual violence survivors victimized by the Japanese military did not gain them support from their communities. The rejective attitudes of the church in the village on the comfort women issue, the negative reaction of Iwar Tanah's family and the community to the release of the documentary in 1998 and the proposal to establish a women's human rights landmark in 2005 may exemplify the fact that Truku women's sexual victimization challenged the Truku community. Skjelsbæk (2006) studied the narrated social identities of women who experienced rape during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and their different strategies for war-rape survival and identity construction. The researcher found that women who identified themselves as ethnic survivors rather than gendered victims can form solidarity with men of the same ethnicity that superseded traditional patriarchal relationships that stigmatize raped women. It prompts us to consider whether the reaction of the Truku community to comfort women survivors would be different if the discourse on those survivors was based on the identity of ethnic survivor rather than gendered victim.

There are some limitations of this study that need to be noted. First, the analysis is based on the available literature. There is limited information on how survivors viewed the effects of sexual trauma on their life course, the structural oppressions they faced, and the motivation

behind their choices in asserting their agency and resistance. Nevertheless, this study revealed various manifestations of Truku survivors' identities. Besides being survivors of sexual trauma, their identities are also embedded in their ethnicity, family, community, and society. The various identities are crystallized from the direct negative experience of sexual violence, the reactions of the survivors' social circles, and survivors' choices in responding to the opportunities and constraints emerging in their lives. Moreover, there was also an interplay between the two Truku survivors' intersectional identities and the historical context, social structure, and traumatic life events that impacted their life trajectories.

The impact of early-life CRSV on older women survivors remains under-addressed. Hence, the aging experiences of comfort women survivors allow us to apprehend how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts survivors' life trajectories and life-long adjustment. The analysis via the life course perspective and intersectionality theory provides an alternative framework to deepen our understanding of aging Truku comfort women who survived early sexual trauma. We hope that our work inspires more studies on aging Indigenous sexual violence survivors' life trajectories and adjustments.

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Bridge Between Manuscripts: Chapter 4 and Chapter 5

In Chapter 4, I use the concept of intersectionality and the life-course perspective to examine the impacts of conflict-related sexual trauma on two Indigenous Truku comfort women, retracing the survivors' life trajectories, coping strategies, and resistance activities. Filling a gap in the current literature on Taiwanese and Indigenous comfort women, my findings suggest that the survivors' life trajectories were profoundly influenced by their sexual trauma, which in turn interplayed with particular forms of structural oppression tied to colonialism, ethnicity, class, and gender. In particular, I highlight the traditional cultural belief, *Gaya*, which blamed women for their sexual victimization, thereby shaming survivors into hiding their victimization from their own families and communities. To follow up on this line of inquiry, in the next chapter I examine the perspectives of four deceased comfort women survivors' families on their (grand)mothers' sexual victimization and public disclosures. Through the narratives of ten participants belonging to the second and third generations, I explore family members' responses to survivors' sexual victimization and analyze their links to survivors' multiple and complex identities as they were shaped by both structural oppression as well as participation in the redress movement. With this chapter, I seek to remedy the lack of family perspectives in the literature about survivors' public disclosures of sexual victimization and their impact on family relationships.

Chapter 5: Manuscript 3

"Wow, That's Our Grandma!": The Responses of Family Members of Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors Regarding their Public Disclosures

Kang, S.-H., & Denov, M. S. (2023). *"Wow, that's our grandma!": The responses of family members of Taiwanese comfort women survivors regarding their public disclosures* [Manuscript in preparation]. School of Social Work, McGill University.

Abstract

Studies show societal prejudice hindered comfort women survivors' disclosures of sexual victimization. However, little research has addressed the perspectives of their families. This qualitative study explored the perceptions of family members of Taiwanese comfort women survivors. The study revealed that participants sympathized with survivors' early-life trauma despite important distinctions in the experiences of second and third generations. The article underscores the important contextual factors that shaped family responses, including participant–survivor relationships, activism campaigns, and changing gendered norms. Findings indicate that macro and micro-level interventions for conflict-related sexual violence are important not only to survivors, but also to their descendants.

Introduction: The Importance of Exploring Family Perspectives on Comfort Women Survivors

"Comfort women" refers to women ensnared in a system of sexual slavery and exploitation by the Imperial Japanese Army during World War II. It is one of the most extensive systems of institutionalized sexual violence in conflicts in modern history, and between 50,000 and 200,000 women across Asia, including in Japan, its colonies, and its occupied territories, were victimized between 1932 and 1945 (Yoshimi, 2000). Comfort women were deemed necessary "materials" for the Japanese army and these women were subjected to repeated rape by Japanese military, including multiple forms of violence, sexually transmitted diseases, and mental abuse, with many perishing in the comfort women system due to illness, suicide, or murder by the military (Yoshimi, 2000), and only about 30% survived the war (Soh, 2000b).

Research has shown that societal stigmatization of survivors of sexual violence tends to hinder survivors' disclosures of their experience (Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Mukangendo, 2007; Murphy et al, 2020). Moreover, withholding or delaying disclosure of sexual victimization is linked to the worsening of trauma-related psychological symptoms (Ruggiero et al., 2004; Sinclair & Gold, 1997). In the aftermath of the war, given the profound impact of patriarchal ideologies on views of women's sexuality and the frequent blame placed on women for their sexual victimization, most comfort women survivors suffered from shame and actively hid their comfort women's experiences (Chiang, 1996; Min, 2003). Many survivors' silence stemmed from a desire to protect their loved ones and offspring from living in disgrace (Chiang, 1996; Kim & Shin, 2023). However, the transnational comfort women's redress movement, launched by South Korean comfort women survivors and activists in the early 1990s, worked to bring to

light this forgotten and silenced history (Soh, 1996). The movement encouraged and supported many comfort women survivors, including 59 Taiwanese survivors (47 Han-Chinese and 12 Indigenous), to come forward after decades of silence (Chu, 2009; Wang, 1992). Given that 1,000 Taiwanese women, a conservative estimate, were victimized (Lee, 1998), only a small number of survivors publicly disclosed their experiences.

Studies have demonstrated that family members can play an essential role in supporting sexual violence survivors' healing from traumatic experiences (Campbell et al., 2009; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Kelly et al., 2012; Stark et al., 2016). Adverse or unsupportive reactions from family and friends may precipitate survivors' poor psychological adjustment and more significant posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms (Campbell et al., 2001; Ullman, 1996; Ullman & Filipas, 2001). Consistent with these studies, research has revealed that comfort women survivors often experienced secondary trauma from familial prejudice and rejection in relation to their sexual victimization, and from a patriarchal culture that often magnifies women's sexuality, amplifying survivors' psychological distress and hindering their disclosures (Chiang, 1996; Min, 2003; Yoshimi, 2000). Comfort women survivors' familial networks may thus act to support or undermine survivors' disclosures (Kim & Shin, 2023).

Despite these important findings, there is a corresponding lack of research addressing the perceptions of family members on comfort women survivors' sexual victimization and public disclosures. Ultimately, a deeper understanding of family perspectives can enhance knowledge on the role of the family in supporting and/or undermining the recovery of sexual violence survivors in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Given the importance of family members, and a lack of research on their unique perspectives, our qualitative research examines the second and

third generations' perceptions of deceased Taiwanese comfort women survivors following their discovery of their (grand)mother's early life sexual trauma. We seek to answer the following key questions: (1) How did family members learn of their (grand)mother's comfort women experience? (2) What were the responses of family members to survivors' sexual victimization? and (3) How did family members perceive survivors' public disclosures and participation within the redress movement? Explored are the similarities and/or differences between second and third generations. Through the accounts of family members, we demonstrate how the families of comfort women survivors understand, explain, and perceive the comfort women experiences and public disclosures of their (grand)mothers. In addition, we identify the intergenerational differences/similarities in their responses and analyze the factors that appeared to shape their views. As a result, we argue that interventions for survivors and their families should proceed at both micro and macro levels to support the recovery of wounded family relationships caused by survivors' trauma, while addressing social changes to support families facing traditional gendered norms and taboos on women's sexuality and sexual victimization. Ultimately, drawing on the voices of family members of Taiwanese comfort women survivors facilitates a greater understanding of key perspectives that have been ignored in research and practice and highlight the importance of involving families in supporting CRSV survivors.

Prior to examining the perspectives of family members of comfort women survivors, the multiple structural oppressions in the lives of comfort women survivors in context of Taiwanese are addressed. These structural oppressions, alongside comfort women's later public disclosures, help to frame the lived realities of survivors and their families.

Comfort Women as Victims of Structural Oppressions

Studies on Korean comfort women have acknowledged the importance of recognizing the unique social locations of the race, class, and gender in which comfort women survivors have been positioned, alongside the structural oppressions arising from their social locations (Min 2003; Soh, 2008; Yang, 1997). Comfort women's wartime exploitation and lifelong suffering arose not only within the context of the comfort women system, Japanese colonial rule, and the war, but also within the broader context of patriarchy and class exploitation embedded in women's everyday life during and after the war (Min, 2003; Soh, 2008). The multiple oppressions experienced by Korean comfort women similarly apply to Taiwanese comfort women who shared similar social locations of race, gender, and class. According to Chu (2009), the Han-Chinese survivors were generally aged between 16 and 34 when they were first enslaved into the comfort women system around China and Southeast Asia. Highlighting various forms of socio-economic, and gendered oppression, many of these women came from impoverished families and lacked education. Given the long-held prejudice against girls in Han-Chinese patriarchal culture, more than half of these girls were adopted out and raised to provide free labor or become future brides in highly exploitative contexts.[22] Their economically disadvantaged status forced many girls to enter the labor market in their youth as unskilled workers, making them vulnerable to being trafficked into the comfort women system.

With regard to the structural realities of race, power and marginalization, the twelve known Indigenous peoples forced into the comfort women system were aged between 13 and 29 when they were first victimized. Eleven Truku and Atayal women were enslaved to Japanese

[22] Adopting a pre-adolescent girl as an adopted daughter or daughter-in-law was a Han-Chinese custom in pre-industrial Taiwan. It was relied upon as a means to continue the family legacy and enhance farm labor within families. This custom gave rise to many exploitative practices against women and was abolished by the 1970s (Chang, 2000; Wolf & Huang, 1980).

soldiers stationed near their villages by the Japanese police, and one Bunun woman was deceptively sent to Hong Kong by a broker. These women and girls were forced to provide labor services, such as cleaning, cooking, and laundry for the Japanese army and were repeatedly raped by the troops. Ten of the twelve survivors reported unwanted pregnancies from rape by Japanese soldiers, while three of them gave birth to children born of these rapes (Chu, 2009).

As victims of multiple forms of gendered oppression, after the war, most of these Taiwanese women were forced to navigate shame, humiliation, and social exclusion from negative family and community perceptions of rape survivors. In addition, given the cultural importance of having descendants, especially male offspring for succession, many survivors struggled with the shame of infertility due to their comfort women's experiences (Chiang, 1996; TWRF, 1999). Research has noted that the Han-Chinese comfort women survivors often internalized societal blame which influenced all aspects of their lives including self-perceptions, marriages, and interpersonal relationships (Chiang, 1996). For the Indigenous survivors, mostly from Truku and Atayal communities, women's sexual activities before marriage were viewed as a violation of ancestral spirits and were believed to bring danger to women's families and communities (Yu, 1980; Wang, 2008). The communities' negative response to comfort women survivors often led to survivors' internalization of blame (Chu, 2009; Wang & Chiang, 1997a). This, in turn, affected the survivors' life trajectories and outcomes (Kang & Wang, 2022). These phenomena are consistent with previous research underscoring that many CRSV survivors experience secondary trauma from negative family and community responses due to a patriarchal culture that frequently inflates women's sexuality and endorses women's gender roles as wives and mothers (Denov, 2006; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Sandole & Auerbach, 2013).

Resistance, Activism, & Sisterhood: Taiwanese Survivors' Public Disclosures in the 1990s

Research shows that involvement in anti-sexual assault activism can improve survivors' psychological well-being, build connections with others, and provide a source of meaning and fulfillment in their lives (Strauss Swanson & Szymanski, 2020, 2021). Collective action on anti-gendered violence is critical for developing self-consciousness and an alternative sense of self in individuals (Profitt, 2001). Moreover, formal support, in the form of advocacy or support groups, can offer CRSV survivors social connection and empower them to fight the social stigma often inflicted on rape survivors (Leslie, 2010; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008). A few Taiwanese survivors joined the redress movement in their older adulthood, following fifty years of actively concealing their comfort women experiences and sought redress from the Japanese government. In August 1992, during the first press conference revealing Taiwanese women's victimization in the comfort women system hosted by the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF),[23] three survivors opted for anonymity by sitting behind a black curtain while sharing their stories with the media (Peng, 2017). In 1996, a Taiwanese survivor revealed her identity to the media for the first time at an international lobbying event in Japan inspired by a South Korean survivor (Chang, 1999). This disclosure subsequently encouraged more Taiwanese survivors to reveal their identities to the public, although some insisted on remaining anonymous.

Although Japan proclaimed that they had provided support and brought closure to comfort women survivors through the Asian Women's Fund (AWF), a quasi-state, quasi-private humanitarian, non-legal bonded atonement project for survivors created in 1995 (Kim, 2018), the atonement project was denounced and rejected by most survivors in both South Korea and

[23] TWRF is the only non-profit organization dedicated to the comfort women issue in Taiwan. It supported the comfort women survivors' redress movement and provided supportive social services for survivors.

Taiwan. It was primarily perceived as an evasion of the Japanese government's legal responsibility (Soh, 2003). In 1999, nine Taiwanese comfort women survivors filed a lawsuit seeking reparations from the Japanese government in Tokyo District Court. The lawsuit was ultimately rejected by the Court, and the Supreme Court of Japan confirmed the rejection of the lawsuit in 2005 with the verdict of being "over the statute of limitation," and as a result of "sovereign immunity," and a "waiver of a claim by victims forgoing the reparation rights." The lawsuits filed by other victimized countries such as Korea, China, and the Philippines were all repealed on the grounds of these three conclusions (Lai et al., 2005). Despite the setback, activists in Taiwan worked with the transnational comfort women redress movement to seek support from the international community (Lai et al., 2005). Many survivors participated in the activism in Taiwan and abroad, with some survivors becoming iconic figures of the movement, later gaining broader public recognition in their twilight years (Peng, 2017).

In addition, to assist with their multiple needs that emerged from their early sexual trauma, survivors also received financial and medical support from the Taiwanese government, alongside social services offered by the TWRF. Alongside social work case management, the TWRF organized Mental Wellness Workshops and group activities for the survivors using arts-based healing interventions, such as art therapy, talking therapy, and drama therapy to help women to overcome their trauma and build resilience (Kang, 2021). Most survivors joined these activities, forming a sisterhood with other survivors, gaining powerful forms of peer support.

This literature review has highlighted how multiple structural factors–gender, race, and class–were embedded in the lives of Taiwanese comfort women survivors in the war and post-conflict era. It also demonstrates the global redress movement that helped facilitate survivors' disclosures in the 1990s, which considerably impacted the families of comfort women survivors.

The following section describes the research methodology used to explore families' reactions to survivors' sexual trauma and their public disclosures–key elements of this study.

Methodology

This study is part of a larger qualitative research exploring the impact of early life conflict-related sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors and how family members perceived their mother's/grandmother's experiences of sexual victimization. This article specifically focuses on how family members from four comfort women survivors' families perceived their deceased (grand)mothers' public disclosures and comfort women's experiences.

Participants

For the present study, ten participants from four deceased comfort women's families were recruited through those associated with the survivor redress movement. The second generation included four females ranging from 60 to 74 years of age and were composed of four survivors' daughters and one daughter-in-law. The third generations were survivors' grandchildren, including three males and three females ranging from 29 to 49 years of age.

Table 4

Interviewee's Relationship with Comfort Women Survivors

Survivors' Families	Participants	
	Second Generation	*Third Generation*
Lan	Daughter (1)	Grandchild (2), Grandchild (3)
Zhu	Daughter (4), Daughter-in-Law (5)	Grandchild (6)
Mei	Daughter (7)	Grandchild (8)
Abi	None	Grandchild (9), Grandchild (10)

Note. All names have been changed for reasons of confidentiality. Identifying information has been omitted to ensure anonymity.

Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from McGill University. The confidentiality of the participants was maintained at all times during data collection, analysis, and dissemination of data. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, the voluntariness and anonymity of their participation, and their withdrawal rights. Data collection was initiated only after the research objectives were clearly understood and participants gave written or oral consent.

Data Collection

Between November 2021 and June 2022, the participants were interviewed by the first author, who speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese. Semi-structured interviews began with a broad question asking each participant to share what they knew about their mother/grandmother's life history. Following this, participants were asked about their perspectives regarding how sexual trauma affected their mother/grandma's gendered roles (e.g., daughter, wife, mother), and in what ways had their mother's/grandmother's life history affected their own. Participants were interviewed individually (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) or in a group from the same family (7 & 8, 9 & 10) if the participant requested to be interviewed with his/her family member. All participants met with the first author at least once. This included nine in-person interviews and one telephone interview. A second interview was scheduled after the first author transcribed the participant's first interview and found additional information needing exploration. This second interview occurred either in-person, by telephone, or via Zoom, depending upon the participants' preference. As a result, two participants were interviewed once, while eight were interviewed twice, which amounted to 14 interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 90 minutes to three hours. The interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed for coding and analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008) was used to better understand the emerging themes and find common thematic elements across cases. According to Riessman (2008), in applying thematic narrative analysis, the "emphasis is on 'the told'–events and cognitions to which language refers (the content of speech)" (p. 58), and the importance of preserving sequences and case-centered, rather than thematically coding segment, to keep the story intact. According these principles, the analysis began with reading the transcripts numerous times, followed by line-by-line coding to write down initial ideas. Subsequently, the relevant narratives regarding families' perspectives on survivors' sexual victimization and public disclosure were selected for analysis. The raw data were analyzed by the first author in Chinese to ensure that the original meaning was not lost during the translation process. We used an inductive approach to generate initial codes of the selected subtexts, creating categories for codes that appeared recurrently and sorting the categories to elicit dominant themes and subthemes (Lieblich et al., 1998). Here, both authors discussed the interpretation of the narratives and themes generated from the stories through many in-person and Zoom meetings to contribute to the study's trustworthiness. Finally, a collection of interview themes and quotations were selected and translated into English by the first author. The translation was proofed by a Taiwanese fluent in both languages to ensure the trustworthiness of the translation.

Findings

Our analysis revealed themes regarding how participants discovered and reacted to survivors' comfort women's experiences and public disclosures. As a result, the vast majority of participants were not aware of survivors' sexual victimization until survivors were involved in the redress movement or participated in healing activities, when these women were older adults.

In addition, many participants demonstrated a complex understanding of the sources and impacts of early trauma on survivors. Although all family members supported survivors, there were important distinctions between the second and third generations regarding their reactions toward survivors' disclosures. Below we address these findings.

Discovering Survivors' Hidden Secrets

According to participants, in all four families, all their late (grand)mothers actively hid their experience of being a comfort woman during WWII. Most survivors reportedly worried their families would look down upon them if they had known about their comfort women experiences. The following section outlines the ways in which family members discovered their mother/grandmother's experience of being a comfort woman.

Survivors' Use of Silence and Disclosure. In the survivor Mei's case, it was only until she sought redress, encouraged by a close friend who saw the news about NGO and government efforts to support comfort women victims, did she reveal her story to her family. Her daughter explained her late mother's worry, "… she never told me [about comfort women's experience] in the past … she mentioned it [to her close friend], 'Am I going to apply? If my daughter knows, I'm afraid that she will look down on me.'" Mei's daughter knew her mother's secret after Mei met with the TWRF for redress, "After coming back [from the meeting] ... I saw that my mother was in a different mood ... Then she told me how she was sold by her adoptive family when she was young."

In Mei's case, having fewer social and familial constraints may have also prompted her disclosure. Mei's family stated that it was only when Mei's husband passed away, did their (grand)mother dare to reveal her story to the public. Her daughter explained, "I heard from my

mother that my father … passed away; hence she dared to come forward. Grandma wouldn't have dared to come forward if grandpa hadn't died."

Discovering Survivors' Secrets through Non-Direct Routes. The daughter of survivor Lan, did not discover her late mother's comfort woman experience until Lan's participated in the redress movement, "One day someone came to my father and asked them whether they wanted to sign up [for reparation]. I overheard their conversation ... My mom never mentioned [comfort women to us]." Lan's daughter explained that her mother worried her relatives and friends would disparage her; therefore, she never revealed her comfort women's experience to the public until those social networks declined as time passed. In addition, Lan never revealed her comfort woman experience to her grandchildren. Instead, one of her grandchildren took the initiative to research the topic and find information about Lan on the internet, uncovering the realities and details of her story:

> In fact, I got 60% of my information through Google, because she [my grandmother] didn't tell much about herself ... She talked about what happened during the war, but she largely avoided the part of being a comfort woman … instead, I went to find the information myself, and I knew more than her. In fact, TWRF's involvement initiated my interest … So, I started doing homework, reading various reports and historical materials, and cross-checked a particular part of my grandma's story [that she had told us], and then I gradually learned the whole picture.

Another survivor, Abi, never revealed her story to her grandchildren until they saw her in a TV news report on the comfort women redress movement in Japan. Nevertheless, the topic of comfort women was never discussed at home. It was only when they grew up and the TWRF's involvement that they learned more details about their grandmother's past:

> She would tell us that she went to Japan for a visit or something like that. So, we just thought, how come she can have the chance to go to Japan and travel abroad all the time? And, then, we knew her story indirectly … We suddenly discovered that she appeared in the TV news report, and then we knew about it … Because we were still young at the time, we did not understand what the issue of comfort women was, and then it seemed that we might be conservative, so we didn't dare to ask her about the details … It was not until later when the TWRF frequently contacted us ... our family had never mentioned it before.

In the case of Zhu, her family expressed that she revealed her sexual victimization to a select number of family members, while most of her family only learned of her comfort woman experience after she was deceased. During interviews, Zhu's daughter stated that she did not know why the activists of the TWRF had initially contacted her mother. Her daughter thought the contact was to support disadvantaged people and that the subsidy Zhu received every month from the TWRF, entrusted by the Taiwanese government was, in fact, charity:

> I never knew about my mother's past until she passed away. I remember I had asked why my mother had more than (TWD$)10,000 yuan in subsidy every month … I only regarded it as charity for the elderly [from the TWRF].

Zhu's grandchild did not know about Zhu's comfort woman experience until Zhu's involvement with the TWRF. Prior to that, the family did not speak of Zhu's comfort woman's experiences. This grandchild expressed her shock and disbelief upon knowing the fact:

> I found out about Grandma's past through the women's foundation. So, I asked my mother whether Grandma was [a comfort woman] ... I didn't believe it, and I said, "Grandma didn't admit it." Later, I was still in disbelief …

According to family members, survivors actively hid their stories from their families for over 50 years, highlighting the long-time pressure engraved on the survivors. Except for Mei, who took the initiative to reveal her story to her daughter, the other three families discovered survivors' histories accidentally by overhearing a conversation, through news reports, searching the internet, and the involvement of the TWRF in survivors' households. The majority of family members did not discuss the topic with survivors, even after discovering their hidden histories, highlighting the powerful forms of shame and secrecy that has encompassed the comfort women experience–for both survivors and their families.

"We Think What Happened to Her is a Tragedy": Responses of the Second and Third Generations to Survivors' Sexual Trauma and Public Disclosure

Several themes emerged regarding participants' responses after they learned about survivors' sexual victimization and participation in the redress movement. Both second and third generations showed their overarching support, sympathy, and understanding of their late mother/grandmother's traumatic experiences, and their participation in the redress movement. However, some participants also reported feelings of ambivalence, avoidance, and denial towards survivors, and the issue of comfort women, more generally. Moreover, most third-generation participants highlighted the multi-faceted identities of survivors in the redress movement as historical figures, activists, and artists, enabling a richer and deeper portrait of their mother/grandmother. Family members also expressed that the redress movement and healing activities helped their learning about survivors' complex history and personal strengths, ultimately facilitating healing and understanding. The following section outlines these findings.

Attributing Survivors' Suffering to Multiple Structural Factors. Most participants in this study recognized survivors' life-long trauma due to myriad structural factors, including

patriarchal culture, class, sexual violence, the war and battlefield, and the limited choices in the many intersections of survivors' lives rather than holding hostile attitudes or rejecting survivors' victimization.

Survivor Mei was sold several times since her childhood to be a child bride and laborer, which eventually led to her enslavement to be a comfort woman overseas, suffering ongoing violence. During interviews, Mei's family alluded to her complex social locations, the structural oppressions that impacted her life, and expressed their sympathy for her long-term suffering:

> We definitely support her because we know the hardships of her time … women were sent out to be child brides or adopted daughters … Can you imagine a person being sold several times from one place to another; what kind of suffering is that, right? (grandchild)

Another survivor, Lan, was given away for adoption due to economic hardship and was deceptively recruited to and victimized in the comfort women system in Southeast Asia in her youth. In their own words, Lan's family acknowledged that sexual violence and war precipitated enormous trauma in Lan and how these early-life sexual traumas led to profound forms of self-abasement with regard to Lan's gender, class, and sexuality. Her grandchild noted:

> … The loss of peer relationships, the fear of losing their lives, and the fear of being abused by gender-based violence [the comfort women system], I think all of the above has been entwined into her being … She would suppress herself, and she would think that "I was dirty." Then she felt that she was inferior to others. And because she was poor, she felt inferior to others … So, she had lived with such a suppressed identity for a long time.

Another survivor, Zhu, was born into a wealthy family but given away for adoption. Her adoptive family forced her to work as a waitress at several restaurants and bars in her youth, leading to her later enslavement to the comfort woman system overseas. Zhu's daughter

expressed regrettably that her late mother was a victim of profound gender and economic inequality that limited her life opportunities:

> … When she was born, her birth mother died. Because she was a daughter, the family worried it would be inconvenient for her biological father to marry again. So, they gave my mother away … All these experiences made my mother feel regretful about her life. My mother was actually very good at studying, but her adoptive parents didn't have the money to let her study. Her teacher even went to her biological parents' house, asking them to help with my mom's tuition. But my mother's biological father refused.

Support, Sympathy, and Understanding. Second-generation participants expressed their support for their mothers after learning of their suffering in the comfort women system. For example, Lan's daughter expressed her sympathy and acceptance of her mother's comfort women's experiences:

> We think what happened to her was a tragedy. We didn't know what happened at the time, and we couldn't hold anything against her; after all, she was my mom, right? We would support her whether it was right or wrong.

Lan's daughter further expressed that she ensured her mother their support and encouraged her to end her feelings of shame:

> … she said she was afraid her grandchildren would know. I told her there was nothing to be ashamed of and her grandchildren had known about it, and they would not treat her differently … would not look down upon her …

Lan's daughter also expressed her understanding that the impact of comfort women trauma represented a lifelong struggle:

We understand that when such a thing happens, the impact is lifelong and it is impossible for a person to wipe it out ... So, we can relate to her. Sometimes when she loses her temper, we know we shouldn't provoke her. We never mention comfort women at home.

Mei's daughter similarly expressed her support for her mother, assuring her mother that she would not look down on her after Mei disclosed her comfort woman's experience and sought redress that further encouraged Mei to share her involvement in the activities held by the TWRF:

… "If lawyer Wang Ching-feng[24] is willing to stand up for you, that's great; you should go bravely and talk about it," I told her. Then she slowly understood that I did not look down upon her and that I was supportive of her. She became more courageous about going to Taipei [to attend the TWRF's activities]. After that, my mother would tell me what she did in those activities. I would say, "It's great." I think it was wonderful that at least there was this compensation for the bitterness and insults she had suffered in the past …

As Mei shared her story as part of the TWRF's activities, her family learned that Mei had fallen in love during the war. While this was certainly unexpected, the realization that their late (grand)mother had experienced a loving relationship when she was young pleased them, especially since her arranged marriages did not have happy endings:

Very good! I find it was very romantic … We always thought that grandma had never been in love ... It turned out that when she was young, she had also fallen in love, like any ordinary girl. That was very sweet … I believe during that time, after all, that guy would make grandma forget some of the pain. (grandchild)

[24] Ms. Wang was the then-director of the board of the TWRF and the founder of the Taiwanese comfort women redress movement.

Ambivalence, Avoidance & Denial. Given the complexity of their family situations and histories, some second-generation participants discussed long-term tensions within the family, the impact of their mother's trauma, and at times, their ambivalence towards their mothers, as a result. Lan's daughter explained her mother's volatile temper due to her past trauma:

> Sometimes it was not easy to communicate with her … However, after she joined the comfort women movement, I was in favor of her participation, because it gave her a channel to express herself and would make her less likely to keep everything bottled up inside … it seemed that she would be in a better mood. However, if she was in a bad mood or couldn't be open-minded about certain things, her temper would rise again. She was very sensitive, and she would be in a bad mood if someone talked about some sensitive topics. She would think people were looking down on her.

Mei's daughter similarly discussed how, as a result of ambivalence, she would avoid discussing the topic of comfort women with others in public. She noted:

> … It's just that when the news was reported, sometimes my colleagues watched it and they would discuss the comfort women in the news and talk about the survivors. Someone with sympathy would say, "if it were my mother, it would be sad." However, some people would say they volunteered [to be comfort women], and I just pretended I never heard [their discussion]. It is up to them to say whatever they want to say; we don't need to pay much attention. Let's look on the bright side because they don't understand the nature of comfort women at all…. You know everybody's thoughts are different; we just let them go.

There were also instances of participants suggesting that survivors should "let go" of the past. In Zhu's case, she never revealed her story to her family members, although they knew,

much later in her life, that Zhu was involved in the comfort women issue through the TWRF. Participants in this family mentioned that they thought the survivor had complained "too much" about her birth and adoptive parents. Her grandchild recalled, "I remembered that she would often say how it was in the past, everything was negative, and I would say, 'Grandma, don't say it anymore.'" Similarly, her daughter explained that while her mother was alive and discussed her suffering, she encouraged her mother to "let it go", only to realize much later, the true reason behind her mothers' pain:

> In retrospect, I couldn't understand my mother's pain at the time, and I always persuaded her to let it go … My mother had a lot of regrets about her biological and adoptive parents. Later, when my mother passed away, I also felt angry for my mother as I looked back, but I was not the party involved. When my mom complained, I would tell her that many people in those days were like that. Only when I became older, did I finally realize my mother's resentment.

"Wow, That's Our Grandma!": Seeing the "Ordinary" Grandmother as a Human Rights Activist. Most of the participants' mothers/grandmothers had been keenly involved in collective activism, working to urge the Japanese government to face its past wrongdoings. Lan's grandchild expressed his stunning impression that his "ordinary" grandma was standing on the international stage for redress. He showed great respect and admiration for his grandmother:

> With my grandma's personality and the fact that she used to be a part of it [comfort women] while in such an international situation, it was hard to believe that she would stand there and then speak up for this issue. This was quite shocking to us; we were, like, "Wow!" Because in our perception that was a very incredible thing ... We all know how much burden she carried, but she still stood up ... The fact that she went to Tokyo

> was incredible; that was already an evident and strong appeal to the Japanese government … Our grandma was in such an event. In the outbreak, she stood on the top; yes, she was standing there, so this incident significantly impacted me and my sibling's perspectives of her. One feeling was "Wow, she is a historical figure!" Maybe others would think it is nothing; comfort women may be just a page of a history textbook. But for us, it was different. And then it was "Wow, that's our grandma!" Yes, we usually saw her [at home] like that. However, today she was standing there with such an inspiring attitude, so we felt like looking up to her ... We would find it truly admirable that she did that ... for her courage, she faced her own past … she had to meet the people who hurt her; it was really, really agonizing.

Lan's other grandchild expressed that there were private and public spheres overlapping in his grandmother's life. Even though Lan was a strict mother at home, it did not affect her willingness to do something good for society. This grandchild explained about the motivation behind Lan's act of coming forward to the public:

> I think she was encouraged by the TWRF's staff, who came to talk to her; she got inspired. And then it was possible, because of more internal reasons, I guess, the pressure needed to be released; after all, who could bear such a heavy secret or emotional stress for a lifetime? In fact, there was no way. That burden was too heavy … Second, she wanted to stop bringing such a tragedy to the next generation. Because, I have to say, people have two sides … on the internal side she might be a strict mother to my mom … but she also had an external social side… she wanted to do something good for society …

Not every family was entirely surprised by survivors' roles as activists. Abi's family, for example, expressed that the image of a strong, brave activist was consistent with the actual

characteristics of her grandmother. Her grandchild felt that standing up as a strong activist represented her grandmother well:

> With her personality, I think this is what she would do. She was a very strong woman. Although she was very lively and cheerful, when she encountered something she might need to fight for, she would fight for it. She was tough.

Filling in "the Missing Pieces": The Redress Movement as a Bridge to Complete Families' Understanding of Survivors. Lan's grandchild thought that through the movement discourses and media coverage, he had a more comprehensive knowledge of his grandmother, and was able to be more empathetic about her feelings:

> The deeper I dug, the more I realized how terrible it was for a person to have endured such trauma in that era, and yet had to still go living on with it. When she had to move on, she had to carry many things … I later was able to be more empathetic about her feelings as I read more information and knew more.

This grandchild also thought that his understanding of his grandmother–the woman he knew at home, and that had "hidden secrets", was fragmentary and incomplete. He understood his grandmother more through the media materials and the redress movement:

> How should I say this? I feel the information I googled fills in the missing piece of the grandma I know ... Because the past may have been too one-sided ... But we didn't understand it [the complexity], and we even ignored the huge hidden wound that she carried. Yes, it can even be said that the grandma I knew when I was a child was not a whole and complete grandma. It was just one side of grandma that we saw, but the real grandma, we only understand more and more in the last few years of her life.

Appreciating Survivors' Personal Strength through Healing Activities. Survivors' participation in arts-based healing activities provided another channel for their families to view them from a different perspective. Zhu's grandchild greatly admired her grandmother's immense artistic talents inspired by the healing activities. She described that she used to think of her grandmother as an "aloof person, distant from the family." However, through Zhu's art, she was able to appreciate a new facet of her grandmother that she had never known but appeared to link their relationships:

> I think she was very good [at art] … She said "the child [in the art piece] was me".

Abi also actively participated in the TWRF's activism and healing activities. One of her grandchildren expressed that those activities enriched Abi's life and that she would share her artwork with her family. In addition, she considered that comfort women's participation in the healing activities was a symbol of personal strength:

> After she came into contact with the TWRF … She was able to do more things that would make her happier … At that time, we did not know what the TWRF was doing, but she would share her (art)work. For example, there are some carvings, decoupage … She even turned her work into a photo frame and put it on the bedside … They [comfort women survivors] carried the pain for a lifetime … Their participation in the workshops [healing activities] would make people feel that they worked hard to give themselves a brand new life in their older adulthood. It's a feeling of restoration [trauma] … a sense of strength.

Discussion

According to the families, all survivors actively hid their experience as comfort women until their involvement in the redress movement. The reasons for their silence are multiple, yet mainly stemmed from their concern that families would not accept their sexual victimization or

that it would bring shame and stigma to their offspring. Several factors appeared to break survivors' silence in their old adulthood. First, participants maintained that the comfort women redress movement emerging in the 1990s was an essential catalyst that helped survivors' disclosure to seek collective redress. The public disclosures of comfort women survivors served as a counterforce to the lifelong structural oppression of patriarchy, sexual violence, class exploitation, and state power imposed on them. Nevertheless, it also stirred up their family relationships in multiple ways. While the families in this study showed their sympathy and support for survivors' comfort women experiences, other research has argued that comfort women survivors who publicly testify could be re-stigmatized and traumatized by their families and communities (Kim & Shin, 2023; Peng, 2017). Therefore, the supportive attitudes of families in this study deserve more attention for policymakers and clinicians to engage families in supporting survivors' recovery.

Second, the easing of pressure from social and familial constraints, such as the passage of one survivor's husband and the decline of social networks as time passed, is another factor named by family members that enabled disclosures publicly in survivors' twilight years. This finding echoes with the analysis of Kim and Shin (2023) on Korean comfort women survivors that the size of social networks was positively associated with survivors' delayed disclosure. In our study, even after the survivors revealed their identities to the public, most did not discuss the comfort women issue at home, characterizing that the complex and taboo on the comfort women issue impede the dialogue between survivors and their families. As a result, some of their offspring only learned of survivors' stories through indirect channels such as searching the internet or being involved in the TWRF's activities.

In this study, after learning about survivors' sexual victimization, most family members could relate to the effects of early trauma on survivors and expressed sympathy for and understanding of survivors' suffering. Knowing that their (grand)mothers had experienced early-life trauma, family members of survivors took on new ways of seeing the survivors. Especially for the third generation, survivors' involvement in the redress movement and healing activities enabled them to appreciate the multi-faceted images of their grandmothers in the public sphere, challenging their perception of what they knew about their grandmothers at home. Generally, the families' reactions challenged these already deceased comfort women's worries that their families would despise and reject them.

Family members' understanding of comfort women issues and their supportive perception of their late (grand)mothers result from many interrelated factors. First, family members' involvement in the redress movement appeared to shape their understanding of survivors. The activist perspective was first initiated in the 1990s and mainly deployed in the transnational comfort women's movement, influenced by the wave of feminism both in Western countries and South Korea (Ueno, 2004), framing comfort women in the language of women's human rights and changed the nature of the comfort women debate from a bilateral post-war compensation dispute between Japan and South Korea to international condemnation of Japan's crimes against women during the War (Soh, 2000a). Similarly, the humanistic perspective, popularized in Taiwan since the 2000s, presented comfort women in a "grandmotherly" role, highlighting their individual characteristics and vivid life stories so that people could identify comfort women survivors with their grandmothers as women who had the perseverance to confront the miseries of their past lives (Kang, 2021). Most family members in this study accompanied survivors to activism and healing activities or heard about survivors sharing their

participation in TWRF's activities. A few searched the internet for more information about their grandmother and comfort women's issues. As a result, family members had opportunities to be exposed to the redress movement and positive public human rights and activist discourses framing the comfort women issue. Family members' perception of survivors as "admirable activists" "incredible artists" and their appreciation of the survivors' strength and humanity presented through the healing activities held by the NGO in many ways echoes the human/women's rights discourse surrounding the humanistic discourse. These discourses appeared to resonate with families' images of their (grand)mothers, making families feel proud and connected with survivors. Second, the societal context can be said to play a role in shaping participants' understanding of the violence against women issue. In particular, after Taiwan lifted its martial law in 1987, a series of social movements were launched to oppose traditional oppressive gender norms. As a result, the second and third generations have experienced rapid societal change in relation to gender and sexuality (Chen, 2006). Interviews show that some survivors' daughters encouraged survivors to come forward, and most of their grandchildren respected and supported survivors' roles as activists. All these factors highlight the importance of a supportive social context for CRSV survivors' recognition by their families and society.

There were some differences in the perceptions of the second and third generations towards survivors in the redress movement shaped by family relationship that should be noted. Although they all showed support and sympathy, the second generation presented varying degrees of ambivalence, avoidance, and denial regarding survivors, which was less apparent in the third generation. One can assume that the direct relationship of the second generation with the survivors was sometimes accompanied by tension, such as parenting issues, complicated family dynamics, or living with a mother who suffered tremendous unspoken trauma. For

example, two second-generation participants in this study reported that they were adopted and later compelled to enter into an uxorilocal marriage at their survivor mothers' request so that their (future) eldest son would carry the family name or remain with the adoptive families. Participants reported that this shaped the complex of mother–daughter relationship. Another second-generation participant reported being consistently under the pressure of her mother's dominant personality that her daughter linked to her mother's early life trauma. All these factors rendered the relationships between the second generation and survivors highly complex. Compared with the second generation, the third generation appeared to have less direct negative implications from survivors' early-life sexual trauma and, as a result, generally held less ambivalent and more positive perspectives on survivors.

Conclusion and Implications

Our study explored the perspectives of Taiwanese comfort women survivors' families regarding survivors' public disclosures of sexual victimization. It revealed how family discovered and responded to their (grand) mothers' public disclosures and the similarities and differences among generations. Factors that appeared to shape participants perspectives included participant-survivor relationships, global and local social activism on comfort women issues, and changing gendered norms in Taiwan. Together, these findings hold important implications for intervention and research on comfort women and other CRSV survivors' families.

In this study, the differences between second and third generations in their responses to survivors appeared to stem from the differences in intergenerational relationships with survivors impacted by survivors' early life trauma. This finding underscores how the relationships between family members and survivors influence their responses. Research has highlighted the

importance of including families of sexual violence survivors in intervention or educational activities in order for them to understand the possible impact of their reactions to survivors' sexual victimization; it is also key to provide the necessary support for survivors' recovery (Stark et al., 2016; Ullman, 1996). Our findings suggest that improving CRSV survivors' relationships with their families is essential when implementing these educational activities. Interventions aimed at improving survivors' relationships with their families can facilitate family members' understandings of the impact of sexual trauma on survivors and families and better respond to survivors' needs.

In this study, family members actively involved in the redress movement were highly aware of the structural elements that shaped survivors' past sexual trauma and sympathetic to and supportive of survivors. Family members' exposure to public discourses on the issue of comfort women and the rapid societal change in norms concerning violence against women appeared to influence their perception. This phenomenon underscores the necessity to address and incorporate macro-level changes to support the families of CRSV survivors who face the traditional gendered norms and taboos on women's sexuality and sexual victimization. Researchers have questioned whether sexual violence survivors' disclosure can be empowering in a victim-blaming society focused on the individual (Ullman, 2010) and have highlighted the urgency of addressing harmful social norms contributing to social stigma against survivors (Stark et al., 2016). Similar to these concerns, we argue that support to CRSV survivors can be boosted by transforming cultural taboos on violence against women through effective social activism and encouraging family involvement of CRSV survivors' activism.

The third generation in this study was particularly vocal about their recognition of survivors' suffering from multiple oppressions and appreciated survivors' multi-faced identities

both in the redress movement and within the home. Within a rapid-changing global/local context, this younger generation can play an active role in supporting survivors' trauma healing. Factors including the less direct impact of their grandmothers' sexual trauma, their more liberal perspectives regarding gender and sexuality, their easy access to technology and information about various discourses on gendered violence and their positive outlook towards survivors' involvement in the redress movement, shaped the third generation's unique perspectives and roles in supporting the survivors in trauma healing and activism.

This qualitative study explored participants' perspectives on survivors' disclosure of sexual victimization. Their accounts help to facilitate a vision of more effective practice to engage families in supporting survivors' recovery and underscore the importance of garnering the perspectives and accounts of the families of comfort women and CRSV survivors. Nevertheless, there are a few limitations in this study that should be noted. First, no comfort women survivors participated in this study. Hence, survivors' perspectives on their disclosure experiences are not available. Second, all four families in this research were involved with the redress movement to different degrees. Family members who did not participate in the redress movement or rejected survivors' disclosure are not included in this study, rendering their perspectives unavailable. More research on their unique perspectives will be important to understand their concerns, dilemmas, and challenges. Despite these limitations, the in-depth information revealed by the participants provided views and experiences of families supporting CRSV survivors' disclosure.

Family plays a central role in shaping the life experiences of CRSV survivors following sexual trauma. Engaging families to support CRSV survivors is essential. Our study underscores the importance of involving families in micro-level family relationship and macro-level social

activism intervention. We hope our study facilitates a more comprehensive service model to bring implications to support CRSV survivors and families.

Bridge Between Manuscripts: Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

In Chapters 5 and 6, I examine the perspectives of comfort women survivors' families on the intergenerational repercussions of their (grand)mothers' sexual victimization. In Chapter 5, I discuss family members' perceptions of Taiwanese comfort women's public disclosures, after the survivors had actively hidden their past experiences of sexual violence from their families. Both second and third generations expressed great sympathy for their (grand)mothers, recognizing that they had been victims of structural oppression. Although both generations supported the survivors, I observed that the second generation showed varying degrees of ambivalence, while the third generation could more fully appreciate survivors' multi-faceted identities as they participated in the redress movement. In Chapter 6, I further analyze how sexual trauma informed survivors' experiences of mothering, family formation, and intergenerational family relationships. Based on family members' accounts, I reconstruct composite narratives of three deceased Han-Chinese survivors' families. While these families reported living silently and invisibly in their (grand)mother's shadow of sexual violence, they nonetheless showed great strength and ability in navigating this challenging history. Lastly, I draw implications for policies and practices to support comfort women and other CRSV survivors' families.

Chapter 6: Manuscript 4

Walking Out of the Shadows of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Exploring the Complexities of Motherhood and Intergenerational Realities in the Families of Three Taiwanese Comfort Women Survivors

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Abstract

Previous studies have found that Taiwanese comfort women survivors faced multiple forms of trauma from the comfort women system, and that societal prejudice against women's sexual victimization further impacted their marriages. However, there is minimal research exploring how sexual trauma may have impacted comfort women survivors' experiences of motherhood, alongside the consequences of survivors' experiences on subsequent generations. This paper explores the perceptions of eight family members, including the second and third-generations, of three deceased Taiwanese Han-Chinese ethnicity comfort women survivors. In particular, we trace family members' perspectives of survivors' mothering, and how family members were impacted by their mother's experiences as a comfort woman. To ensure participants' anonymity, findings are presented using composite narratives. The narratives illustrate the ways in which survivors' sexual trauma reportedly impacted survivors' family formation and mothering, and had long-term effects on survivors' offspring. According to family members, ambivalent mother–daughter relationships and conflictual relationships resulting from the preferential treatment of the male offspring were found. In addition, family members' psychological well-being, marriages, personality, and parenting were impacted by survivors' sexual trauma and conflictual family dynamics. Nevertheless, participants showed great strength and capacity under challenging circumstances and actively undertook their healing journey. We highlight the importance of providing culture-driven multilayered services for the families of comfort women survivors to foster intergenerational resilience, enabling them to continue to 'walk out of the shadows' of conflict-related sexual violence.

Introduction

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is one of the most recurring forms of wartime violence (Alison, 2007) that significantly impacts all genders, but particularly women and girls (OSRSGSV-SVC, United Nations, 2021). Among the numerous incidents of CRSV, the sexual slavery system during World War II (commonly known as the "comfort women" system), employed and operated by the Imperial Japanese government and military, offers an extreme example of institutionalized sexual violence against women (Watanabe, 1995). It has been estimated that between 50,000 and 200,000 women across Asia were victimized between 1932 and 1945 (Yoshimi, 2000). These women were raped by Japanese soldiers under strict surveillance and experienced multiple and severe forms of violence. Many of these women suffered profound mental distress, with many later dying from illness or suicide (Yoshimi, 2000). Moreover, with Japan's defeat in 1945, large numbers of comfort women were killed by the Japanese military to destroy evidence of comfort women system (Qiu et al., 2013).

Among the comfort women victims, at least 1,000 women were of Taiwanese origin (Lee, 1999). After decades of silence and silencing, through the support of the transnational redress movement for the victims of Japanese military sexual slavery of the comfort women system, since 1992, fifty-nine Taiwanese survivors have been identified by historians and activists, including 47 Han Chinese and 12 Indigenous peoples victimized in Taiwan and overseas. Studies show that after the war, these comfort women survivors faced additional trauma from societal prejudice regarding women's sexual victimization that impacted survivors' marriageability, and their status as wives and mothers, as defined by traditional gender norms for a woman's life path (Chiang, 1996; TWRF, 1999). Many survivors faced reproductive health issues from their sexual trauma, often resulting in infertility, which caused tremendous loss and

shame in a Confucianism society which valued women's reproductivity for family succession (Chiang, 1996). Furthermore, 29% of survivors became pregnant or gave birth to children as a result of repeated rape and sexual slavery within the comfort women system (Chu, 2009). Many survivors, including Indigenous survivors, were often rejected by their communities because of their sexual victimization (TWRF, 1999). While it has been argued that comfort women are victims of multiple structural oppressions involving their race, class, and gender (Min, 2003; Soh, 2008; Yang, 1997), little in-depth attention has been paid to survivors' experiences of motherhood, and also, the ways in which the families of comfort women survivors may have been impacted by their mother's history of wartime sexual violence and sexual slavery.

To address this gap, we drew upon qualitative data from the families of three deceased Taiwanese Han-Chinese ethnicity comfort women survivors, including from the second and third generations. First, we provide contextual information on the socio-historical, cultural, and familial structures embedded in these three Taiwanese comfort women's families to situate the reader. Next, we explore how complex structural oppression may have shaped the deceased survivors' experiences of motherhood and the intergenerational realities experienced by their children and grandchildren. We sought to answer the following questions from family members: *How did survivors' sexual trauma interplay with structural factors shaping motherhood and parenting? And, how did survivors' experiences of multiple forms of violence impact subsequent generations?*

Literature Review

Structural Realities, Gendered Norms & Family Formation: The Impact on Taiwanese Comfort Women and their Descendants

Traditional Han-Chinese gendered norms have been highly influenced by Confucianism, a system of socio-political order, ethical doctrine, and a religious tradition, originated in ancient China and influenced many East Asia countries as guiding principles of people's behaviors and social culture (Yao, 2000). Confucianism has been essential to shaping cultural constructions of family formation in Taiwan, thus shaping the realities and experiences of comfort women survivors and their families, particularly the importance of continuing patrilineal family lines. Male descendants are considered important and preferred in order to carry on the family line (Yang, 1995). In addition, until the 20th century, a woman was considered a "temporary" member of her biological family. When a woman married, her formal tie with her birth family was severed (Wolf, 1972). Unmarried women were excluded from their birth family line. It was only through marriage that a woman was deemed eligible to have a status in her husband's family line, and, importantly, could be worshiped by her male descendants after her death. The importance and significance of a woman getting married and having a male descendant was thus paramount to a woman's survival, status, and wellbeing in this cultural context (Chang, 2000; Yang, 1995). Traditionally, it was acceptable to divorce a wife who failed to provide a male offspring (Chen, 2006). It was only when a married woman gave birth to a child that she could justify her rights in the family (Wolf, 1972). These traditional gendered norms highlight the "expected" path for a Taiwanese woman. Since the 1970s, the feminist movement emerged in Taiwan and prompted many awareness campaigns and legal reforms to emancipate women from these patriarchal structures–campaigns that continue today.

Most of the Han-Chinese comfort women survivors identified by historians and activists came from impoverished families, which prompted them to enter the labor market at a young age, work in entry-level jobs, and become targets of trafficking into the comfort women system (Chu, 2009), highlighting how class oppression was embedded in their lives. These survivors were born and raised during the Japanese colonial era (1895–1945), and most married after World War II (Chu, 2009). While there is a scarcity of research addressing Han-Chinese survivors' experiences of motherhood and family life, Chiang's (1996) study of 33 Han-Chinese comfort women survivors shows the influence of traditional gender norms and their sexual victimization on survivors' marriages and decisions to adopt children. Chiang notes the intense shame of these women due to their sexual victimization and societal perspectives on women's sexuality. Their sense of self-worthlessness led to pessimism about their marriageability, an expected path for women and an essential means for them to gain economic security, particularly at that time. In addition, 60% of the women in Chiang's study were infertile, likely due to repeated rape. In response, many women chose to adopt children from their relatives or acquaintances in order to pass on family legacies, to ensure their economic security in the future, and to have offspring to worship them after their death.

It should be noted that 53% of Han-Chinese comfort women had been, as children, adopted out and raised to provide free labor or become future brides (Chu, 2009), reflecting the patriarchal oppression omnipresent in these women's lives. The unique customs related to adopted daughters (*yang-nü)* and daughters-in-law (*tong-yang-x*i) were prevalent in Taiwan in the 19th and early to the mid-20th century. Usually, girls were adopted into a family, to guarantee a wife for sons in adoptive households, or they served as laborers. If adoptive parents had no male child, adopted girls would be required to have an uxorilocal marriage (*ru-zhui*), a

man would be married into his wife's family, for patrilineal succession (Chang, 2000; Wolf & Huang, 1980). Usually, the husband assumed at least partial duties of a son and supported his wife's parents. It was typically agreed that the first child must take the maternal surname (Li et al., 2020; Wolf & Huang, 1980). Chen (2021) suggests that these adopted daughters/daughter-in-law girls lacked care and nurturing from their own biological mothers which may have led to a complicated perception and meaning of "motherhood", impacting their subsequent child rearing and interactions with their own children. Since many comfort women survivors frequently lived in abusive and exploitative adoptive families as adopted daughters/daughters-in-law, these early-life experiences provide an important context for understanding the complexity of their experiences of motherhood.

Mothering and Family Life in the Aftermath of Conflicted-Related Sexual Violence

Research from the field of CRSV and war-related experiences suggest that a history of trauma has been shown to place people at risk for the persistence of psychological and mental distress such as depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PSTD) (Kuwert et al., 2014; Schnurr et al., 2003; Kellermann, 2001a). One study on 20 aging Korean comfort women survivors showed a high rate of current (65%) and lifetime (90%) prevalence of PTSD (Lee et al., 2018). Moreover, research in the context of the Holocaust (Kellermann, 2001b), war-related sexual violence (Roupetz et al., 2023), interpersonal violence, and childhood maltreatment (Bailey et al., 2012; Banyard et al., 2003) has highlighted that trauma can affect not only the primary trauma survivor, but also subsequent generations in complex ways, including parent-child relationships (Bachem et al., 2021; Kellerman, 2001b). Furthermore, research has shown that PTSD is related to increased levels of parenting stress, less optimal parent–child relationships, and more frequent use of negative parenting practices, such as overt hostility and

controlling behavior (Christie et al., 2019). In turn, these can negatively impact the health, development, and attachment security of subsequent generations (Lambert et al., 2014; Udita et al., 2014; Wachs et al, 2009). Lee et al. (2019) identified a correlation between comfort women survivors' early-life trauma and the transmission of intergenerational trauma and psychiatric disorder symptoms to their offspring.

These interfamilial and intergenerational realities highlight the possibility that in the aftermath of CRSV, survivors' mothering and family life may be both complicated and challenging. Most research on the motherhood experiences of CRSV survivors has focused on women with children born of CRSV. For example, mothers of children born of CRSV bear the burden of being excluded by their communities; survivors and their children often face high levels of stigma, and the children can be at risk of abuse, abandonment, and marginalization (Denov et al., 2018; Woolner et al., 2019). Studies on women who bore children as a result of wartime rape have revealed that mothers and their children often experienced ambivalent relationships. Here, the children often served as powerful reminders for mothers of their suffering from the rape (Denov et al., 2018; Kahn & Denov, 2022; Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2008; Woolner et al., 2019). Nevertheless, despite the challenges of raising children born of CRSV, motherhood can also be a source of strength for many survivors of CRSV. In many cases, motherhood was perceived by survivors of rape as a positive and meaningful resource to overcome the effects of genocidal rape, fostered positive emotion, provided a reason to live, and to imagine and shape possibilities for life post genocide (Kantengwa, 2014; Zraly et al, 2013).

This literature review has highlighted the socio-historical, cultural, familial contexts, and patriarchal norms and constructions of gender and motherhood in Taiwan and beyond,

particularly in the aftermath of war and CRSV. These contexts and norms frame the lives and realities of the families of comfort women survivors, who are the focus of this study.

Methodology

This qualitative study was embedded within a larger research study, conducted between November 2021 and June 2022, exploring the impact of early life conflict-related sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors and how family members perceived survivors' experiences of sexual victimization. The findings for this analysis are based on in-depth interviews in Taiwan with the families of three deceased Taiwanese Han-Chinese comfort women survivors, examining family members' perspectives on survivors' mothering, family life, and intergenerational realities.

We used a narrative inquiry approach to our analysis, which draws on stories where "events and happenings are configured into a temporal unity by means of a plot" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.5) to describe the complexity of human actions. Narrative inquiry is particularly relevant for this study as it facilitates the exploration of participants' lives, while reflecting on the context in which their narratives are embedded (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It also facilitates a focus on a smaller number of individuals, while gaining a deeply nuanced understanding of the narrators' life experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). We collected stories of personal experiences through the lens of the three-dimensional narrative space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), attending to temporality, place/situation, and social interaction of the events and experiences participants described. This approach can illustrate and illuminate the connections between individual narratives and the systems of domination that impinge upon the everyday lives of comfort women survivors and their families, as well as the intergenerational effects.

Recruitment

At the time of recruitment, only one comfort woman survivor was known to be living in Taiwan. Given the limited number of surviving comfort women in Taiwan, it was decided to interview deceased survivors' families to understand more about their experiences and perceptions of family life. In total, three Han-Chinese families, consisting of eight family members including both second and third generations, were recruited through those associated with the survivor redress movement for the present study. The second generation included four females ranging from age 60 to 74 years, composed of three daughters and one daughter-in-law of the survivors. The third generation represented the survivors' grandchildren, including three men and one woman ranging from age 36 to 49 years.

Ethical Considerations

This study received approval from the Research Ethics Board of McGill University. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, the voluntariness and anonymity of their participation, and their withdrawal rights. They were also informed that in case of any emotional discomfort caused by the interview process, they would be provided a referral to an appropriate resource to discuss their emotional reactions. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Interview Procedure

The interview protocol included questions regarding what participants knew about their mother/grandmother's life story, how sexual trauma may have affected their mother/grandmother's gendered roles (e.g., daughter, wife, mother), and in what ways had their mother's/grandmother's life story affected their own lives. Interviews were conducted by the first author, who speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese. Seven participants' first interviews were in-

person, while one requested a telephone interview. After the first author transcribed the participant's first interview, if there was additional information needing exploration, a second interview was conducted. Two participants were interviewed once, while six participants, were interviewed twice, which amounted to 12 interviews. Participants were interviewed individually or in a group from the same family if the participant requested to be interviewed with his/her family member. Each interview lasted between 90 and 180 minutes. The interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed for coding and analysis.

Data Analysis and Presentation of the Data

We used holistic-content analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998) to facilitate a holistic understanding of the data. The raw data were analyzed in Chinese by the first author to ensure that the original meaning was not lost during translation. The data analysis began with reading interviews numerous times, followed by line-by-line coding. The global impression of the three families were documented and the transcripts were color-coded according to unfolding events, epiphanies, and turning points in participants' accounts. Then, both authors engaged in many discussions, through in-person and Zoom meetings related to the analysis, to discuss the interpretation of the narratives, and themes generated from the stories to contribute to the study's trustworthiness. A collection of quotations representing the themes or particularly significant findings were selected from the transcripts and translated into English for data presentation. The translation was proofed by a Taiwanese fluent in both languages to ensure the trustworthiness of the translation.

To present the findings, we used composite narratives, which synthesized research participants' accounts to present them as a single narrative (Taber, 2013; Willis, 2019). Composite narratives are used to protect the anonymity of research participants including public

figures (Willis, 2018) and vulnerable populations (Sikes & Piper, 2010). The use of composite narratives is relevant for this study, as some of the deceased survivors discussed in this study were involved in the comfort women redress movement and their stories were widely publicized in Taiwan and internationally. As such, simply using pseudonyms or altering survivors' personal characteristics could still identify family members. We chose composite narratives, which masks individual stories, as a vigorous approach to protect the participants' anonymity and confidentiality. We applied the approach Willies (2019) proposed using third-person narratives with composite characters to present data from several interviews as if it were from a single individual. All the quotes in this article are direct verbatim from the original transcripts, and all contents of the composite narratives are from the original interviews, not fictitious ones.

A composite narrative was created combining the three families' accounts into a single family narrative (*Ling's family)*. This was accomplished using the five-element problem-solving approach of narrative structure: 1) characters, 2) situations, 3) problems, 4) actions, and 5) outcomes, all of which are used as plot elements to weave the storyline (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). It should be noted that Ling's early life background is modified from the oral history of Huang A-tao (Chu, 2008; Lai et al., 2005; TWRF & Hsia, 2005), the first Taiwanese comfort women survivor who publicized her identity, to present the multiple structural oppressions in Han-Chinese survivors' lives. Ling's daughter Hui is a composite of three second-generation daughters, while Ming and Yu represent the composites of four third-generation participants.

Findings: Ling's Family Story—Hui, Ming, and Yu

Ling is a deceased Taiwanese comfort women survivor. Her adopted daughter, Hui, alongside her two grandsons Ming and Yu, shared their family story. At the time of the

interviews, Hui was in her early 70s, while Ming and Yu were in their 40s. They elucidated how Ling's motherhood was shaped by sexual trauma and cultural gender norms that further impacted the lives of second and third-generations.

Multiple Structural Oppressions Leading to Ling's Comfort Woman Victimization

As a girl with many siblings in a poor family, Ling was adopted out in childhood. Given the adoptive family's maltreatment and abuse, her birth father brought her back home at age 11. Ling received one year of schooling and quit school when she was 13 due to economic hardship and her parents' opinions that education was unnecessary for girls destined for marriage despite the fact that Ling enjoyed school. As a girl, Ling stayed home caring for her siblings and doing chores. She later worked as a maid to support herself and her family. At the age of 20, Ling went overseas to what she thought was a nursing job. However, Ling was deceived and instead was enslaved in a comfort station in Indonesia where she suffered from repeated sexual violence and the brutalities of warfare.

The comfort station was under the Japanese military's surveillance. The manager gave Ling the Japanese name "Setzuko" and she was required to have sexual intercourse with 20 soldiers from morning until evening. Enslaved for more than a year, Ling contracted malaria, had appendicitis, and her right eye was blinded by shrapnel. She once considered escaping from the comfort station but was caught by a Japanese military policeman. She considered committing suicide several times but later gave up the idea in the hope she could survive and return to Taiwan to see her family. In 1945, Japan was defeated and with the support of a Taiwanese association in Indonesia, Ling returned to Taiwan.

Ling's Post-war Silence and Shame

After returning home, Ling never revealed her comfort woman experience to her family. Ling did not expect to get married due to feeling sinful for losing her virginity. However, in her late 30s, through a friend's introduction, she married a retired soldier from China while hiding her sexual trauma from him. The couple adopted two girls because of Ling's infertility from her comfort woman experience.

Ling never revealed her comfort women's experience to her family until her participation in the comfort women's redress movement in the 1990s, when she was in her 70s. During interviews, Ling's family made links between her sense of inferiority, her comfort women experience, and her infertility. Ling's grandson Ming expressed that his grandmother's strong sense of inferiority prompted her to worry that her family would look down upon her. As Ming explained, this worry was not in vein:

> The only people who knew she had experienced [comfort women system] was my grandma's sister … When quarreling, she sometimes used this to provoke my grandma, "Ah, you were a prostitute!"

Ming explained that due to shame and her fear of insults, his grandmother would invoke a domineering presence with others:

> She might be more aggressive and even oppressive when communicating with others. But when others were not present, she was actually terrified … She was scared of being gossiped about. No matter what kind of gossip, she could get mad at trivial things …

Ming's younger brother Yu's accounts of Ling's marital relationship served as a backdrop to understanding Ling's struggles. Although Ling's husband reportedly provided essential economic family support, he had a long-term affair. While aware of the affair, Ling

focused diligently on caring for her family. Yu thoughtfully recounted what life was like for his grandmother, linking her choices and ongoing pain to her experience as a comfort woman. Yu described how he, as a child, became implicated in the story:

> … my grandma could not give birth, so grandma felt guilty…this is also one of the tangled issues in her heart … So, when this man went out to do such a thing [extramarital affair], she would carry me to the mistress's house and [my grandmother] could only stand outside watching them. After looking for a while, she just went home and didn't dare to do anything … I wonder how she could painfully endure this. She never told anyone [about her comfort women experience], and no one in her family knew; how did she hold on? In addition, she didn't dare to say a word about her husband's betrayal. Was it because of her sense of inferiority …?

Motherhood and Intergenerational Realities: Navigating Sexual Trauma and Cultural Gender Norms

Ling's experiences of motherhood appeared to be shaped by the interplay of sexual trauma and traditional Han-Chinese cultural gender norms—particularly, the necessity for a woman to have male offspring for family inheritance. As Ming described, the destruction of her reproductive health because of her comfort women's experience brought Ling significant trauma:

> She thought a mother is the core and pillar of the whole family. So, to make her life complete, she should have a child to care for and not let people doubt her personality or abilities because of it [infertility] … She was a person who cared about other people's perceptions, so when family, the most significant part of her life, was deprived from her, I think the trauma wrought on her was huge.

Ling adopted Hui for family inheritance. When Hui grew up, Ling requested that Hui have an uxorilocal marriage. Hui would thus remain with her adoptive family under the condition that her first son must carry the adoptive family's name. Hui later gave birth to three male children (Ming, Yu, and their older brother) and one daughter. As promised, Hui had a first male child to inherit the family name, forging intergenerational ties.

According to her family, Ling's comfort woman trauma impacted the second and third generations, through ambivalent mother–daughter relationships, conflictual relations due to male preferential treatment, and the intergenerational impacts on marriage and parenting.

Ambivalent Mother–Daughter Relationships. Hui reported an ambivalent, conflictual, yet simultaneously affectionate and sympathetic, mother–daughter relationship with her mother Ling. Hui explained how she perceived her mother's experiences of sexual victimization to have impacted their relationship. Ling was reportedly unable to establish trusting relationships with others, including her two adopted daughters. Hui's older sister reported leaving home early because of what she perceived as Ling's "over-controlling mothering", while Hui stayed with Ling in an uxorilocal marriage that Ling herself had arranged. Hui explained why she could not just leave home, "I can't be cruel. I would worry that no one will take care of them [my parents]."

At a young age, Hui recalled that she was compelled to be obedient and take care of the family chores:

> … As a thirteen-year-old child, I don't know how I learned how to cook … I purchased meat … and two or three kinds of vegetables, cooked and ate at noon, and went to evening classes after three o'clock. Sometimes I raised chickens and ducks; I raised all of

them by myself … She did her things, and I made lunch [a wry smile]. I was pretty dutiful to my role …

Ling's controlling mothering style reportedly influenced Hui's life profoundly, including her social network, marriage, and psychological well-being. Hui expressed the long-term tense mental pressure as a child that led to her later depression:

> I was very timid, afraid of doing things wrong, and fearful of being beaten or scolded for it ... Every morning when I got up, I would gauge what kind of mood he was in, and be compliant. Do you see how nervous I was? I was depressed for a while ... I told myself I needed to stand up. If I continued to be depressed, this family would fall apart.

Ming highlighted the ways in which his mother Hui still lived in his grandmother's shadow of emotional abuse caused by Ling's past trauma, even if Ling was no longer living:

> Although grandma is gone, my mother is still here. However, the influences left by my grandmother still bore on my mother's emotional state, why does my mother have to bear these things? … My mother would feel that everything was her fault. Isn't that being the same as my grandma?

Despite the long-term tense family relationships, Hui ultimately respected her mother's devotion to the family and was highly sympathetic to her mother's complex life course. She described her mother as the person to hold the family from falling apart:

> She held the family together; she didn't let it break apart. She was also hardworking. Without her, this family would disperse. She was very strict with us, but she was a good mother. She had fulfilled her responsibility as a mother. So, I would be considerate of her position. Because her husband would not give her peace of mind, she had to fight on her

own [to raise this family]. It was very hard. It was not easy for a woman to sustain a family like this.

Conflictual Relationships Resulting from Male Preferential Treatment. Hui described her ongoing conflict with Ling because of Ling's unequal love toward her four grandchildren, favoring the one carrying the family name. Hui described that she was often caught between Ling and her children, creating conflictual relationships. "When I was teaching the children, grandma would add fuel by the side. Then when I didn't discipline them, she would scold me, saying that I didn't know how to discipline children." Yu, the grandson concurred, indicating that his grandmother's over-indulgence of his eldest brother led to his brother's misbehaviors and created family tensions:

> My brother behaved badly … If he wanted money, grandma would give him money. If he misbehaved, she would put the blame on my mother. She would say, "Why don't you discipline this child?"

Hui noted that her mother, being influenced by cultural tradition, considered her eldest grandson to be the person to worship her after she died and, therefore, doted on him. Hui described an incident that exemplified Ling's preferential treatment and family conflict:

> He [the eldest son] was in army service and came back on leave. My mother made chicken stew for him … It just happened that Yu came back from work, but she didn't mention that she had cooked stewed chicken, and did not let the brothers eat together; she didn't say anything. I was at home just that day, and I said [angrily] "…You should give Yu a bowl [of chicken stew] … Are you fair? Isn't he born from me? … Otherwise, why don't you let him eat?" At that time, I was young, and the way I talked was very rough and rude.

Marriage and (Grand)Parenting. According to family members, the interplay of Ling's sexual trauma and cultural gender norms also appeared to impact the marriages of the second and third generations. Hui described the events leading up to her own uxorilocal marriage arranged by Ling: "This [my marriage] was what they [my parents] arranged. Not by my will. I got married just for the sake of getting married ..." Hui was torn between her husband and Ling due to the conflicted relationship between the two. As a result, Hui divorced her husband after a few years of marriage, never remarrying because she wanted to avoid future intra-familial suffering:

> One was my husband, and the other was my mother; what should I say? … I won't get married again … If a man has to live under the rule of his wife's family, he would become scorned because of me ... so why bother? I could bear it alone; I didn't want anyone to suffer like me.

Despite the conflicts between their mother and grandmother, both Ming and Yu reported their grandmother's deep love for them and their appreciation for their grandmother. Ming pointed out that being a grandmother could be a "redemption" for his survivor grandmother, who suffered profoundly from her past sexual trauma:

> If someone wants to help her, if it were me, I would do it this way: I would tell her [my grandma] you are a wonderful, you know how to be compassionate, you also know how to love, and you don't have an inferiority complex, so there is no wall between you and your grandchildren. So, just interact with other people in the same way.

Nevertheless, despite there being no direct tension between themselves and their grandmother, Ming and Yu reported that they felt their personalities had been influenced by their grandmother, the efforts to protect their mother from their grandmother, their spousal choices,

and perspectives on marriage. Ming expressed that to protect his mother from his grandmother's volatile temper, he followed his grandmother's expectation to study hard:

> … We didn't want her [my mom] to have such a hard time every day. So, we tried not to make grandma angry; and tried to live up to grandma's expectations … She expected me to study hard. Therefore, I studied hard so she wouldn't get angry ...

Ming further stated that his grandmother had a "reverse influence" and that he sought to engage in different behavior from what his grandmother would do. Ming strongly identified with his mother, choosing a spouse similar to his mother, "Unconsciously, I chose a person whose personality is more similar to my mother's … Basically, [a person] being dominant will not be a good match for me". Similarly, Yu described how witnessing Ling's struggle in her marriage strengthened his belief that he needed to protect his wife and his family, "I don't want grandpa's… shadow … having a mistress outside [of marriage]."

Looking to how Ling's trauma may have influenced the parenting of second and third generations, Hui reported how she felt that her relationship with her children was affected: "I felt that I restricted them [my children] too much ... I have been gradually adjusting myself, stopping interfering with what young people want to do …". Ming noted that Hui supported him and his siblings: *"*She [my mother] is somewhat influenced by grandma, so she doesn't want to be like grandma. She wants to be a mother who is more willing to relate to children."

Yu was raised by Ling when Hui was busy with work to support her four children, as well as Ling. Yu noted that when he was young, he wondered why Ling favored his eldest brother: "'Is it because he is your inheritance?'...It was only after I grew up that I realized she was influenced by the concept of the bloodline ... She did not mean to be so good to my brother and treated me as inferior." Now, being a father of two children, Yu noted his responsibility as a

parent, “When I married and had a child, I knew that raising a child is not easy, and you must educate him.” He was aware that he was struggling with his parenting, he worried he would replicate Ling’s parenting, “I’ve always told myself that I can’t repeat the same mistake. Like my grandma’s situation, the indoctrination [of materialism] on children. But until now, I haven’t been able to break through this point …”

Walking Out of the Shadows: Change, Activism, and Resilience

Although Hui, Ming, and Yu were deeply affected by Ling’s sexual trauma, they demonstrated their longing and capacity for change and resilience. Participants’ attempts to “walk out of the shadows of conflict-related sexual violence” was revealed in their efforts to “break the family curse”, and their participation in the comfort women redress movement.

Breaking the “Curse”: Efforts by the Second and Third Generations. Hui, Ming, and Yu recalled that in the latter period of Ling’s life, the conflictual family relationships intensified, yet eased when Ling passed. Ming noted, “After grandma passed away, we lost something, but also gained something…She [my mom] is still adjusting to her new life, and although she still has some shadows from her childhood, she is moving toward a new positive direction.”

Hui discussed Ling’s legacy and the importance of halting the intergenerational transmission of negative influences: “I don’t want to transfer the stress I’ve suffered to my children, so I try to keep my children out of the way as much as possible.” From Ming’s perspective, his mother Hui has been very supportive. Ming completed his college education and had been working diligently to support the family: “I wanted to grow up and make money for my mother so she would not need to work so hard.” He also noted what he perceived he had gained from the tense family dynamics: “… People say that children in adversity would grow stronger.

That's it. I won't let my family worry about me." The grandchildren saw their family's business venture as an effort to break the family "curse" of being conservative and risk-averse:

> Because of my grandmother, my mother always behaved cautiously, and was extra-careful to avoid anything that could upset the peace. Her behavior had a significant impact on me … I later became the kind of person who refused to take risks because you didn't know when grandma would lose her temper again….
>
> I think for our whole family starting a business was like a collective decision to escape from the framework [of daring to risk]. Yes, that feeling was like "breaking the curse." As I said, our family is so conservative. No one would dare start a business … But when there was an opportunity, when there was just a spark of opportunity, unexpectedly, everyone supported it and participated … everyone collectively wanted to break out of the old framework.

Participation in the Comfort Women Redress Movement. With her family's support, Ling participated in the comfort women's redress movement for 20 years, enriching her later life. As Ming noted, **"**When she entered the Foundation [TWRF],[25] I gradually felt that they drew out her memories, not only the bad ones but also the wish for the happiness she had longed for." Hui added that "She [my mother] said everyone [in TWRF] would call her 'Grandma'. She was pleased." Her family highlighted how TWRF healing activities supported their (grand)mother's recovery:

[25] Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF) is the only non-profit organization dedicated to the comfort women issue in Taiwan. It supported the survivors' redress movement against the atrocity of the Japanese government and military while providing 16-year-long supportive group activities for survivors' trauma healing (Kang, 2021).

> She attended some [healing] courses, and the guidance teacher [counselor] would counsel her. When she returned home, she would tell us what courses she went to and what the teacher taught her … So, we realized that there was a feeling of relief [from the past regrets] in her mind …

Demonstrating their own activism, her family participated in the redress movement: "I accompanied grandma [my mother] … [because] she said 'if you can be my company, I would be feeling more courageous". Ming felt gratified to contribute to the comfort woman issue. He helped organize his grandmother's possessions after her death to honor and memorialize her struggles:

> Because grandma has passed on now, there is no one to ask [about their stories for advocacy]. Therefore, I dug up some photos and other things that grandma did not make public … Fortunately, I have participated in this clearing her things. So, those willing to continue discussing this topic in the future can have a context [of the issue] or a record for reference.

Ling's family further expressed that the government's and TWRF's support relieved their financial burden: "My family has been in economic hardship … we received much support from the society." "I felt relieved [by the government's monthly stipend for Ling]. It was also a relief for my mom. We didn't need to worry about her [living and medical] expenses."

Through this composite narrative, the complexities of motherhood, parenting, and the intergenerational impacts of the comfort woman system are revealed. Ling bravely bore multiple lifelong traumas from war, sexual violence, and a patriarchal culture that shaped her experiences. Hui endured lifelong stress and hardships that appeared to emerge from Ling's suffering. Nevertheless, Hui's empathy for her mother, support for and from her children, and her self-

awareness enabled the family to walk towards a new life chapter, out of the shadows of conflict-related sexual violence. The third-generation could not undo the intergenerational relationships influenced by Ling's life experiences. However, empathy, understanding, and deep love for Ling and Hui filled their profound accounts.

Discussion

Ling's family represented the family of three deceased Chinese-Han comfort women survivors. Their experiences reflected the deep intertwining of the comfort women experience and structural factors, alongside the ways in which family members—although not direct victims—lived in the shadow of the comfort woman experience. Despite those challenges, the family demonstrated their agency, walking out of those shadows, embodying strength and resilience.

Ling's comfort women's experiences appeared to interplay with survivors' sexual trauma, reproductive health, and gendered structural pathways, and oppression. This interplay reportedly led to long-term psychological distress, shame, and sense of inferiority, further impacting her interpersonal, spousal, and family relationships. Under these constraints, Ling adopted children to enable motherhood and actively arranged an uxorilocal marriage for her adopted daughter to ensure their family legacies and establish intergenerational ties. Ling's experiences of motherhood and intergenerational family ties highlight comfort women survivors' struggle within the intersection of sexual victimization and the structural constraints embedded in their lives, while demonstrating her "agency within structure" (Settersten & Gannon, 2005, p.36) and her social navigation skills and autonomy to construct their life course (Elder, 1994).

Ling's mothering impacted the lives of her offspring. First, the ambivalent mother–daughter relationship between Ling and her daughter Hui appeared to be influenced by Ling's

sexual trauma and psychological distress, ultimately impacting Hui's marriage, social network, and psychological well-being. Moreover, Ling's preferential treatment of male offspring was reported to contribute to family tensions, leading to conflictual relationships between Ling, her daughter, and the grandson who inherited the family name. While Hui reported long-term conflictual relationships with her mother, she also described deep affection, sympathy, and respect toward her survivor mother, and respected Ling's dedication to her family. These simultaneous realities of struggles and compassion characterize their ambivalent relationship in the shadow of sexual violence.

The third-generation participants Ming and Yu reported being affected by family dynamics influenced by Ling's comfort women's experience, particularly through (grand)parenting. Ming and Yu reported that their spousal choices, attitudes regarding marriage, and personality were affected by conflictual family relationships. Ming reported using strategies to mitigate his family conflicts, including behaving well to protect his mother, and identifying with his abused mother. Ming's reactions appeared to be similar to children witnessing family violence, worrying about their parent's well-being (Graham-Bermann, 1996) and use opposing strategies to cope with family conflicts (Allen, et al., 2003; O'Brien et al., 1991). Moreover, Ling's parenting styles appeared to influence those of her daughter and grandson, which is consistent with research findings that parenting styles are often intergenerationally transmitted (van Ijzendoorn, 1992; Serbin & Karp, 2003).

In contrast to the ambivalent mother–daughter relationship of the second generation, Ling's relationship with her grandchildren was reportedly caring. Grandparenting was a significant channel for Ling to express her love, especially since she had encountered difficulties in interpersonal and family relationships due to profound sexual trauma. This finding is

consistent with studies in Chinese cultural contexts where grandparenting is associated with better mental health status (Guo et al, 2008; Tsai et al., 2013; Xu, 2019) and life satisfaction (Xu et al., 2012), especially in multigenerational households in which adult children were present (Ku et al., 2013).

Ling's family demonstrated their desire and capacity to walk out of the shadows of Ling's sexual trauma. Hui was determined to stop the intergenerational impacts by being a supportive mother, while her grandsons strove to break up the conservative family culture influenced by conflictual family dynamics. In addition, Ling's family reported that the supportive psychosocial activities provided by NGOs allowed Ling to heal, consistent with Hung (2010) that therapeutic activities assisted Taiwanese comfort women survivors in reconciling their traumatic experiences. Moreover, the government's support relieved the economic burdens of Ling's family, which was under an intergenerationally accumulated economic-disadvantaged status, illustrating the importance of government policies or support from NGOs for CRSV survivors' families.

Conclusion and Implications

To our knowledge, this is the first study to explore motherhood and intergenerational implications of comfort women survivors' and their families. The study has important implications for policy, intervention, and research with comfort women and the families of CRSV survivors. First, including survivors' families in assessing service needs is essential. Over the past three decades, activists, NGOs, and governments, like Taiwan and South Korea, have sought to achieve legal justice against the Japanese government, raise public awareness, and support comfort women survivors' economic and psychological distress. These important efforts helped to restore dignity for many survivors whose families and societies disparaged them, yet

the impact on survivors' families has remained insufficient. Examining the family narratives shows how comfort women experiences can have intergenerational consequences. The lives of the second generation, now aged 60 to 80 years, were directly impacted by their mothers' sexual trauma, requiring attention and support, while the third generation also requires resources to cope with the legacies left by the negative interaction between survivors and their parents.

Second, culture, gender, and family norms play an important factor in influencing survivors' motherhood and family lives. Addressing vital cultural factors in the intervention with comfort women and other CRSV survivors and families is essential. This is consistent with research (Denov & Piolanti, 2019) advocating the importance of including a culturally appropriate family approach to address the shared trauma, ambivalence, and challenges in the mother–child relationships when assisting CRSV survivors and their children born of rape.

Our findings indicate the positive effects of healing activities, social activism, and the need for a culture-sensitive family approach to assist survivors of CRSV and their families. A comprehensive service model for comfort women and their families requires a culture-driven multilayered approach at individual, familial, community, and societal levels. Individual and family counseling/therapy on trauma recovery, intergenerational relationships, and parenting issues would be important to support individual and family well-being. Government policy to recognize the needs of comfort women survivors and their families and social education and policy reform for violence against women would be necessary for survivors' families to continue to walk out of the stigma and shadows of CRSV. Moreover, to assist survivors and their families effectively, it is important for helping professionals be cognizant of the complex interplay of history, culture, structural and intersectional factors and the ways in which they shape survivors and their families.

In terms of research limitations, no comfort women survivors, and no second-generation men participated in this study, rendering their perspectives unavailable. Despite these limitations, the in-depth information revealed by participants provided an intergenerational view of the families of comfort women survivors. Further research of families of comfort women survivors can help to support the design of a comprehensive service model to other CRSV survivors and their families. Also, the second and third generations should be consulted about their service and policy needs.

Comfort women remain a profound stain and shame in most Asian victimized countries, with survivors not revealing their victimization to their families or having experienced rejection if they disclosed their past. These factors increase the challenges in reaching out to survivors' families regarding research in Taiwan and South Korea (Lee & Lee, 2019). Our composite narratives serve as an ethical approach for researchers to engage comfort women's families in research to protect their privacy and anonymity. We also urge the governments in countries affected by the comfort women system to work with and support researchers and activists to increase the feasibility of reaching out to survivors' families and providing necessary support.

Wartime sexual trauma has lasting effects on individuals and their families. Our intergenerational study of three deceased Taiwanese comfort women survivors' families highlights the ways in which survivors' sexual trauma impacted their motherhood and led to long-term effects for their offspring. Our study underscores that the trauma of comfort women's experiences deserves ongoing attention and service provision with a culture-sensitive multilayered intervention frame to mitigate intergenerational impacts and foster resilience.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have explored how Taiwanese comfort women survivors' early-life sexual trauma interplayed with the multiple social locations along their life trajectories, giving rise to complex intergenerational effects on their families. In this concluding chapter, I highlight my key findings, discuss their main implications for policy and practice, and indicate some directions for future research.

Sexual Trauma Within Structural Contexts in the Post-War Era

I integrated the concept of intersectionality and the life-course perspective into a comprehensive theoretical framework to investigate how Taiwanese comfort women survivors' sexual trauma interplayed with the multiple sources of structural oppression embedded in their life trajectories. I found that cultural and gender norms played a vital role in shaping Han-Chinese and Truku Indigenous comfort women survivors' life trajectories in the post-conflict context. To be sure, these two groups of survivors faced different cultural and gendered realities. As explained in Chapters 5 and 6, many of the Han-Chinese survivors, early on in their lives, became adopted daughters/daughters-in-law, thereby experiencing cultural and gendered prejudice against girls, lacking education opportunities, and entering the job market at a young age and in poor economic circumstances. These adverse, oppressive conditions, present from their childhood and young adulthood onwards, made them vulnerable to exploitation in the comfort women system. After the war, Han-Chinese survivors' sexual trauma led to psychological distress and poor reproductive health, exacerbated by several structural factors: gendered structural pathways influenced by Han-Chinese cultures, such as marriage as a destined path for women; the necessity of having male offspring for ensuring the family legacy; gendered norms and taboos on women's sexuality and sexual victimization. These interconnected factors

led to survivors' subsequent silence and shame in the post-WWII era, further shaping their marriage, motherhood, mothering, family formation, and intergenerational family lives (as demonstrated in the next section).

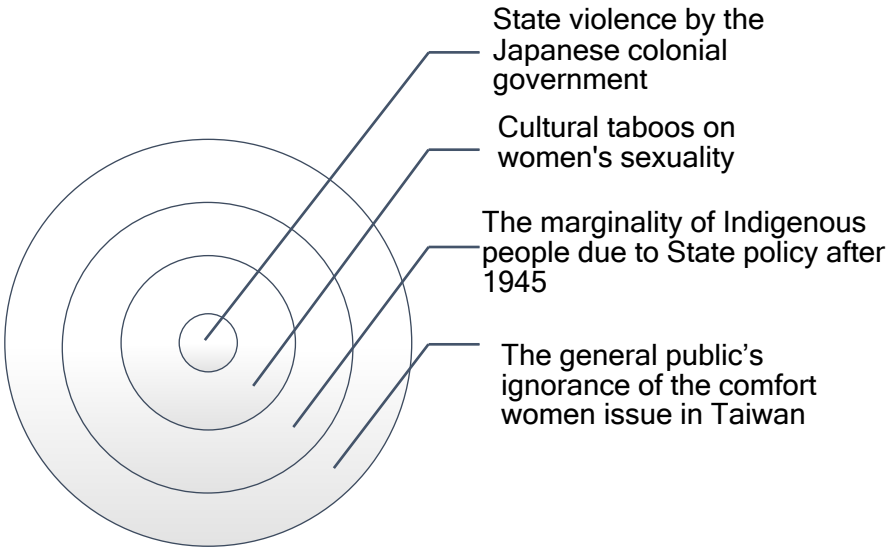
Truku comfort women survivors' sexual trauma (analyzed in Chapter 4) interplayed with structural forms of oppression from colonialism, ethnicity, class, gender, and the Truku culture itself, influencing survivors' life trajectories within the social contexts and historical traumas of the Truku community. Following *Gaya*, the Truku traditional belief as a mechanism for maintaining daily order and gender norms under Truku's emphasis on collectivity, the community tended to deny the colonial Japanese State's role as a perpetrator of women's sexual victimization, instead blaming the victims. As a consequence, comfort women survivors experienced secondary victimization due to stigmatization, rejection, or exclusion from the Truku community. Furthermore, this social exclusion put Truku comfort women survivors at a disadvantage, both culturally and economically, vis-à-vis the dominant Han-Chinese mainstream society.

The marginality and historical trauma resulting from Japanese colonialism before 1945, followed by the assimilation policy of the Taiwanese government towards the Truku and other Indigenous peoples post-WWII further oppressed these survivors and exacerbated their difficulties. In Chapter 4, I demonstrate that, compared to Han-Chinese survivors, Truku women experienced four distinct sources of structural oppression from their State, society, and communities. The first source of oppression came from the State violence by the Japanese colonial government, which mobilized of Japanese police officers stationed in the Truku community to force Truku women into military sexual slavery. The second source of oppression stems from restrictive Truku cultural views (*Gaya*) regarding female sexuality, inducing

survivors to feel shame and stigmatization about their comfort women experiences. The third source of oppression resulted from in the Taiwanese government's assimilationist policies toward Indigenous peoples following 1945, which relegated Indigenous peoples to a disadvantaged social-economic-political status. This marginality further impeded Truku comfort women survivors in divulging their stories even within their own group, lest shame fall on their community. The final source of oppression stems from the general public's ignorance of the comfort women issue in Taiwan, resulting in a weak social support system for Truku survivors who sought to participate in the redress movement. I argue that all these factors—which differ from those affecting the Han-Chinese survivors—contributed to Truku comfort women survivors' difficult position in the aftermath of war, perturbing their entire subsequent life trajectories. But despite these structural constraints, the two Truku survivors I studied employed unique coping strategies (such as conversion to Christianity or interracial marriages), to assert their agency and to resist the collective shaming.

Figure 1

Truku Survivors' Sexual Trauma Interplayed with Four Layers of Structural Oppression



Finally, Han-Chinese and Truku survivors' older adulthood intersected with local and global forms of feminism and other social changes, prompting survivors to participate in the transnational comfort women redress movement. The Taiwanese branch of this movement, which emerged in the 1990s, was influenced by the wave of transnational comfort women's redress movement initiated in South Korea and was also facilitated by a more liberal social-political context after the lifting of martial law in Taiwan. Survivors' decisions to participate in the redress movement unveiled their past sexual trauma—which had been hidden for decades—linking their younger identity as comfort women to their later identity as mature adults, setting their lives on a new path.

I argue that all these structural factors, including the aforementioned cultural, global, and local social-political contexts, became embedded in survivors' lives, interplaying with their sexual trauma and profoundly impacting their life trajectories.

Survivors' Intersectional Roles and Family Responses

A common theme in this dissertation is the idea that the sexual trauma experienced by Taiwanese comfort women survivors intersected with their multiple social locations, including their sexual exploitation, their motherhood, their participation in the comfort women's redress movement, and their old age. As emphasized in Chapter 5, all the survivors studied hid their status as comfort women from their families, concerned that their sexual victimization would be disregarded or that they would bring shame and stigma to their descendants. But as I demonstrate, several factors countervailed. First, the comfort women's redress movement decisively encouraged survivors to break their long-held silence in their older adulthood. Second, the easing of pressure from social and familial constraints, such as the death of key loved ones, facilitated survivors' public disclosures in their twilight years. Nevertheless, the comfort women

issue remained a difficult topic at home for many survivors, even after they had resorted to redress movements and revealed their identities to the public. Clearly, the complex taboos surrounding the comfort women issue continued to impede dialogue between survivors and their families. As a result, some of their offspring only learned of survivors' stories via indirect routes such as the internet, news coverage, or their involvement with the TWRF.

According to my interviews with family members, survivors enriched their experiences in older adulthood, as they travelled, participated in activism, and engaged in healing activities for the first time. Some survivors went abroad for lawsuits or activism, while others developed their artistic talents in arts-based support groups or formed a sisterhood with other survivors to share the stories that were hard to reveal to family members and those close to them. Nevertheless, disclosing their sexual trauma also impacted their family and community relationships in various ways. Some survivors gained support from their families, as I document in Chapters 5 and 6, while others faced pressure from their communities, as in one of the Truku survivor's stories presented in Chapter 4. All these factors speak to the complexity of identity and family relationships for comfort women in their twilight years.

Most participants in this study expressed sympathy, understanding, and support for comfort women survivors. Notably, the third generation recognized survivors' suffering in light of multiple structural factors, esteeming survivors' participation in the redress movement as admirable and respectful. Importantly, learning what their (grand)mothers had gone through enabled families to view the survivors' negative behaviors as caused by their sexual trauma—a perspective which helped to restore family relationships. In general, families' actual reactions challenged survivors' expectations that their families would despise and reject them. This acceptance also conflicted with some researchers' arguments about comfort women's re-

traumatization due to families' hostile attitudes (Peng, 2012; TWRF, 2006) as well as the findings of familial and community rejection toward Truku survivors demonstrated in Chapter 4. Therefore, my study suggests promising avenues for working more positively with other conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivors' families.

I conclude that family members' understanding of comfort women's issues in this research appear to result from two significant factors. First, family members' involvement in the redress movement appeared to shape their understanding of their (grand)mothers. Indeed, many of the family members I interviewed had accompanied survivors to activism events and healing activities or had heard survivors recount their participation in TWRF's activities. As a result, family members' perception of survivors echoed, in many ways, the human/women's rights discourse discussed in Chapter 3. These discourses resonated with family member's images of their (grand)mothers, making them feel proud and connected. Second, the rapid societal changes concerning gender and sexuality in Taiwan over the past few decades may have influenced the younger generation's attitudes toward gendered violence and survivors' sexual victimization. In my view, all these factors highlight the importance of a supportive social context for CRSV survivors' recognition by their families and society, while involving families in survivors' recovery and healing activities.

There were some notable differences between the second and third generations' perceptions of survivors' public disclosures. Although all showed support and sympathy, the second generation presented varying degrees of ambivalence, avoidance, and denial regarding survivors—feelings which were less apparent in the third generation. In Chapter 6, I suggest that the second generation's close, direct relationship to the survivors was sometimes accompanied by tension, such as parenting issues, survivors' unspoken sexual trauma, and complex family

dynamics—notably ambivalent mother–daughter relationships. Compared with the second generation, the third generation appeared to suffer fewer direct negative effects from survivors' early-life sexual trauma. Thanks to positive influences from the comfort women discourses and new perspectives on gender norms described above, the third generation generally held less ambivalent, and more positive, views of survivors' public disclosures.

Intergenerational Impact and Resilience

In this dissertation, I used family member's accounts to explore how three Han-Chinese women (now deceased) navigated the sexual trauma of their time as comfort women and how their experiences shaped their (grand)motherhood as well as the lives of their descendants. As emphasized in the life-course perspective, family members live interdependently; historical and social structural influences on individuals and families are expressed through this interconnectedness, as opportunities or as misfortunes (Bengtson et al., 2012; Bengtson & Allen, 2009; Elder, 1994; Gilligan et al., 2018). Indeed, my findings illustrated the concept of *linked lives*, insofar as comfort women's trauma, experienced in a context of embedded traditional gender norms, profoundly influenced their second and third generations of offspring.

In Chapter 6, I report that Han-Chinese comfort women's experiences produced psychological distress along with a sense of shame and inferiority in survivors, further affecting their spousal relationships and gender roles. Sexual trauma contributed to survivors' poor reproductive health and/or infertility, severely affecting a woman's identity and status in a culture that prized a woman's maternal role in the family legacy. Nevertheless, these comfort women survivors formed their families and entered motherhood by either adopting or raising children, exhibiting their agency even under heavy structural constraints. In addition, many arranged adopted daughters' uxorilocal marriages to have male offspring for the family

inheritance. Thus, survivors intertwined their mothering with their past trauma, with matrilineal family structures, and with gender norms, directly influencing the second generations' marriages, psychological well-being, parenting styles, and ambivalence towards mother–daughter relationships. In some cases, survivors' preferential treatment of grandsons inheriting family surnames often led to complex triadic relationships between three generations, weakening the second-generation's mothering role.

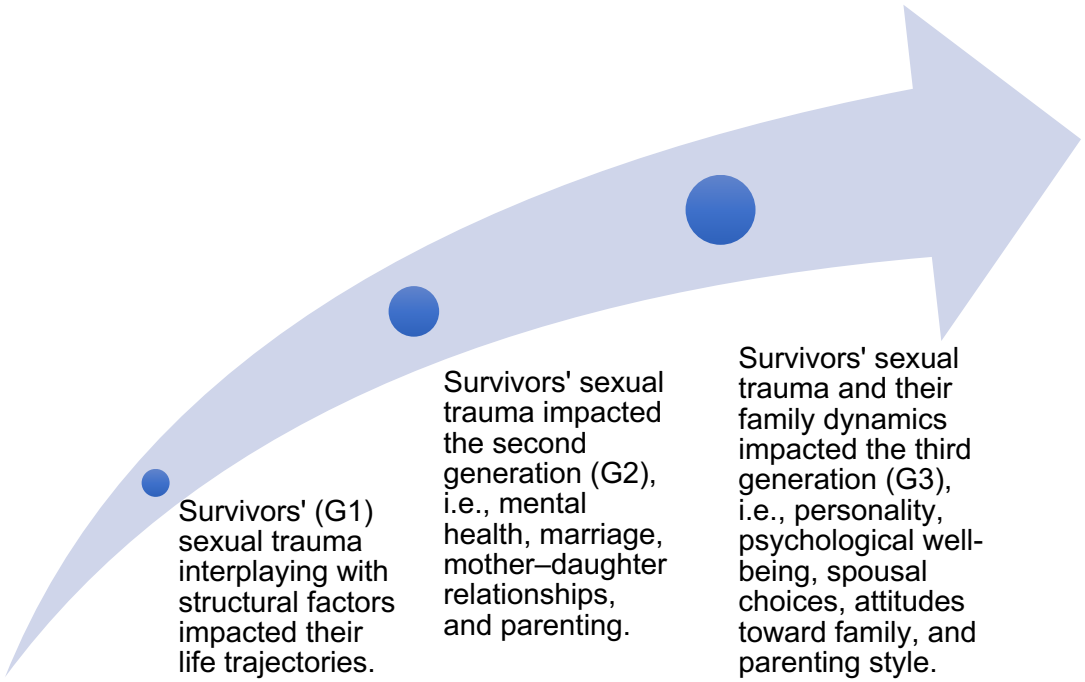
While most third-generation offspring reported not being directly impacted by survivors' parenting, the dynamics between the survivors and the second-generation reportedly impacted their lives regarding personality, spouse choices, parenting styles, and attitudes regarding marriage. Some grandchildren reported using strategies to mitigate family challenges, including behaving well to protect the second generation, and identifying with their mistreated mother. Nevertheless, all grandchildren in this research stressed that the grandmother-grandchildren relationship was caring, regardless of the grandchildren's gender. Most of the survivors in this study lived in multigenerational households. I concluded that grandparenting in a context which emphasizes family inheritance, with some survivors even taking on the mothering role, encouraged positive emotional expression, especially for those who encountered difficulties in interpersonal relationships due to sexual trauma.

Although the sexual trauma endured by comfort women survivors impacted their families, participants nonetheless revealed several factors that fostered their desire and capacity for resilience. First, *inner strength* designates an individual's strength, such as self-awareness, which can determine a person to stop negative intergenerational impacts. Second, a *family support system* plays an essential role in supporting many participants to get through difficult times and to mediate family issues. For example, one family started a business venture together

to counteract their conflictual family dynamics rooted in their (grand)mother's sexual trauma. Third, a *formal support system*—such as psychosocial support to survivors provided by NGOs, or monthly subsidies and medical resources funded through a government policy for comfort women survivors—helped to alleviate the financial burden weighing on survivors and their families, especially since many of these families were already in an economic-disadvantaged state which had worsened intergenerationally. Significantly, the resilient factors identified by the survivors' families are consistent with the three types of protective factors for fostering the resilience of children/youth at risk: individual attributes, family support systems, and environmental support systems (Brooks, 1994; Werner, 1989). This concordance suggests promising strategies for an effective service model dedicated to CRSV survivors and their families.

Figure 2

The Impact of Comfort Women Survivors' Sexual Trauma on Subsequent Generations



In conclusion, the comfort women system had lasting effects on the survivors and their families. Survivors' sexual trauma intersected with multiple oppressions from structural factors—such as colonialism, ethnicity, class, and patriarchy—that shaped their life courses and influenced intergenerational family lives. Many family members in this study perceived their (grand)mothers as more than sexual violence survivors, recognizing their multifaceted identities as wives, mothers, grandmothers, and activists. For the most part, second-and third-generation family members showed support and empathy for their (grand)mothers' sexual victimization. Yet the second generation also expressed varying degrees of ambivalence regarding survivors' public disclosures. Moreover, direct effects on the second generation's psychological well-being and marriages were particularly apparent. As for the third generation, while they expressed less ambivalence regarding their grandmothers' public disclosures, they were not unscathed by the conflictual family relationships caused by survivors' sexual trauma. And while all family members were affected, often silently and invisibly, by this past of sexual violence, they also demonstrated the great strength and skills needed to navigate their lives under challenging circumstances. My findings highlight the importance of policy and intervention to address these families' needs and to facilitate their resilience.

Study Limitations

To my knowledge, this dissertation is the first qualitative research project focused on the impacts of sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors' multiple identities and intergenerational realities, including second and third generations. Based on families' accounts, I argue that the survivors' life trajectories were influenced by the interplay of sexual trauma and structural factors, while noting the particularities confronting the Han-Chinese and Truku Indigenous survivors, respectively. Through my interviews, I gave voice to the second and third

generations, who testified to the ways in which their (grand)mothers' history affected their own lives, providing insights into the intergenerational ramifications of conflict-related sexual trauma.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, none of the comfort women survivors participated directly. When this research project was conducted in 2021-2022, many of the women had already passed away or were in a state of advanced decline, and I was hampered by travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the survivors' own voices are missing, making my account of their perspectives indirect. For instance, my study of the two Truku women in Chapter 4 is based on limited information in the available literature about how these survivors viewed the effects of sexual trauma on their life-course, how they responded to the structural oppressions they faced, and how they chose to assert their agency and resistance.

Moreover, no second-generation males or Indigenous Truku participated in this study; consequently, their perspectives about their relationships with survivors in their family lives are unavailable. In addition, all four families in this research were involved with the redress movement to varying degrees. Family members who did not participate in the redress movement, or who rejected survivors' disclosures were not interviewed. More research on their contrasting perspectives will be essential to understand their concerns, dilemmas, and challenges. Despite these limitations, the rich, in-depth information revealed by people who did participate provides rare insights into the intergenerational realities of comfort women survivors' sexual trauma.

Conclusions and Implications

In this dissertation, I explored the intergenerational impacts of early-life sexual trauma on Taiwanese comfort women survivors and their families (second and third generations), revealing how the interplay between survivors' sexual trauma and various structural factors impinged on their life trajectories and those of their descendants. Understanding and acknowledging the lived

experiences of Taiwanese comfort women and their families, I argue, can and should inform the development of policies, practices, and future research to address the needs of CRSV survivors and their families.

Comfort Women Survivors' Families Required Attention and Support

While only a few of the original comfort women remain alive, the impact of their experiences can ripple across generations. In order to adequately assess their service needs, it is therefore essential to consult comfort women survivors' families today. The family narratives in my study show that comfort women's experiences can have intergenerational effects on marriage, psychological well-being, family dynamics, and personal and family development. The second generation, now in their older adulthood, was directly impacted by their mothers' sexual trauma, requiring resources for support. For instance, some members of the second generation who were born from rape have suffered from long-term discrimination by their family and communities (Guo, 2014; TWRF, 1999). Moreover, survivors' legacies also extended into the third generation, whose particular challenges require further attention. Nevertheless, policy and service interventions dedicated to the families of comfort women survivors are lacking. Although in the past three decades, activists, NGOs, and the governments of some victimized countries have directed great efforts to advocating for survivors' justice and alleviating their psychological distress, less emphasis has been put on the second and third generations of survivors' families. In addition, noted in Chapter 6, reaching out to survivors' families regarding services or research can be challenging, due to the taboo surrounding the comfort women issue. I suggest that the governments of victimized countries and advocacy groups work together to support extensive research on understanding the needs of comfort women survivors' families in view of providing them with appropriate services.

Including Families in the Process of CRSV Survivors' Recovery

Interviewed family members involved in the redress movement were sympathetic to and supportive of survivors, as they were highly aware of the structural elements shaping their (grand)mothers' past sexual trauma. For example, family members accompanied survivors to healing activities or listened to them sharing their experiences in TWRF's activities. Family members' exposure to public discourses on the issue of comfort women and the rapid societal change in norms concerning violence against women appeared to influence their perceptions. This phenomenon carries important implications for working with CRSV survivors and their families. First, I wish to underscore the need to address and incorporate macro-level changes to support the families of CRSV survivors who face traditional gender norms and taboos around women's sexuality and sexual victimization. Effective social activism can increase support for CRSV survivors. Moreover, it is important to consult the families of CRSV survivors to understand the complex impacts of survivors' sexual trauma and to involve family members in supporting the survivors' recovery. Furthermore, my findings indicate that the relationships between family members and survivors can influence responses to survivors' disclosures. Correspondingly, improving CRSV survivors' relationships with their families goes hand-in-hand with involving them in CRSV survivors' recovery and activism activities.

A Culturally-Driven, Multilayered Approach to Supporting CRSV Survivors and Their Families

My study highlights cultural gender norms regarding women's life paths, sexuality, and sexual violence as important factors shaping survivors' psychological well-being, motherhood, and family lives. It is therefore essential to address these strong cultural factors in interventions with comfort women and other CRSV survivors and their families. This finding is consistent

with research advocating for culturally appropriate, family-based approaches to assisting CRSV survivors and their children born of rape with issues of shared trauma, ambivalence, and fraught mother-child relationships (Denov & Piolanti, 2019). Indeed, my findings indicate that a comprehensive service model for comfort women/CRSV survivors and their families requires a culture-driven, multilayered approach which links the individual, familial, community, and societal levels.

At the individual level, the provision of psychological support services (such as counseling/therapy, support groups, and comprehensive case management), together with the adoption of suitable government policies (such as economic and medical support), can address individual survivors' and family members' psychosocial needs and promote individual resilience from trauma.

At the familial level, providing family members with appropriate psychosocial education about sexual violence can facilitate their support of survivors' healing. Moreover, family counseling/therapy on trauma recovery, mother-children/intergenerational relationships, and parenting issues would foster positive mother-child relationships, among others.

At the community and societal levels, it is vital to develop campaigns, social education, and policy reforms addressing the issue of violence against women that duly consider the relevant gender norms and structural factors. In this vein, the efforts of the transnational comfort women redress movement provide praiseworthy examples of social advocacy for CRSV survivors and their families. Actions such as recognizing comfort women survivors' suffering through collective activism, obtaining official acknowledgment from the government, and developing various social and educational activities (such as museum exhibitions/historical memorials and sexual violence prevention education) can improve public discourses about

violence against women. All these macro-level efforts can help CRSV survivors and their families move past the harms of sexual violence and encourage them to assert their rights in the present and future.

Additional Research Avenues

To complement the research undertaken in this dissertation, it would be pertinent to interview the remaining comfort women survivors and their families across Asia. A comprehensive approach—e.g., directly interviewing these survivors (whose voices are missing from my study) while situating them and their families in their specific social, cultural, and political contexts—would shed greater light on the interplay of individual sexual trauma with structural factors. Moreover, as I have stressed throughout this dissertation, although many victims of the comfort women system have passed away, their families still require support as they wrestle with the legacy of sexual violence. Therefore, it is never too early to undertake more research on the intergenerational trauma and resilience of comfort women survivors' families.

Final Reflections

Writing this dissertation was a challenging, yet precious and fruitful project. As a social worker activist who has been involved with the issue of comfort women for about a decade, this project enabled me to take on a new role—to shift from practitioner to researcher. Accordingly, I adopted a new lens to view the issue, situating these survivors within the broader social, historical, and cultural contexts while exploring the nuances of their families' intergenerational narratives. I am thankful to dialogue with the deceased victims' families across different generations to understand their perspectives, a lens absent from my past activism. To meaningfully converse with them and reflect upon their respective family journeys was a

privilege. Through our dialogue, we both opened a new perspective on the profound experiences in our lives—their and my stories with the survivors.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to conducting this research project. Due to the severe outbreak and the corresponding travel restrictions, I was unable to visit other Asian countries to interview survivors. As a result, I could not include survivors in my study directly, and I was compelled to shift my research focus to the intergenerational families of comfort women who were already deceased. Nonetheless, I was impressed by many participants' fortitude, despite the enormous intergenerational challenges they faced, and I became fascinated with their efforts to get out from under the shadows of their (grand)mothers' trauma. I wish to conclude this dissertation with an excerpt from my research journal following an interview with one family in particular: "Today, the scene leading to their house was still the same, but Grandma had gone. However, her offspring remain in this world with strong vitality despite what they have gone through. I want to depict their life strength in my dissertation." (Nov 26, 2022)

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Appendix A: Participant Recruitment (Flyer in English)

McGill

Inviting sexual violence survivors of the Japanese military in WWII and their families to share how early-life trauma impacts experiences of aging

Women who have undergone the sexual violence of the Japanese military in World War II （the so called "comfort women"） and their family members are invited to participate in this study *Exploring the Impact of Early-Life Conflict-Related Sexual Trauma on Surviving Comfort Women. We are interested in learning about your experiences and your aging processes.*

This study seeks to understand how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts older comfort women survivors' aging experiences. By participating in this study, participants will have the opportunity to share their life stories and discuss relevant events in their life experiences.

All participants' identifiable information will be kept confidential and anonymous. Furthermore, participants will receive compensation of TWD 500/CNY100 for each interview session.

For more information or to participate in this study, please contact the primary investigator or her supervisors at the following contact information.

Primary Investigator:
Shu-Hua Kang, Ph.D. Candidate
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Tel: 0961-000-039 (Mobile, Taiwan)

Supervisors:
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Dr. Myriam Denov, Professor
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Appendix B: Participant Recruitment (Flyer in Chinese)

McGill

邀請曾在二次大戰期間遭受日軍性暴力的倖存者及其家屬，分享早年的生命創傷如何影響老化的經驗

我們邀請曾在二次大戰遭受日軍性暴力的女性長者（俗稱「慰安婦」）及其家屬，參與「探討生命早年的性創傷對於慰安婦倖存者老化歷程的影響」之博士論文研究，分享生命的故事以及老化的歷程。

本研究想要了解早年與戰爭相關的性創傷如何影響倖存者的老化經驗。藉由這個研究，參與者將會有機會分享他們的生命故事，以及討論生命中的相關事件。

所有參與者的身份都會保密處理。此外，本研究提供參與者每次訪談加幣 20 元（新台幣 500 元或是人民幣 100 元）的酬勞，以作為致謝。

如果想要對此研究獲得更多的資訊，或是想要參與此研究，請與本研究的負責人或是她的指導教授聯繫。聯絡資訊如下：

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Appendix C: Consent Form for Survivors (English Version)

Interview Consent Form (Comfort Women Survivors)

Purpose of this Research Project

I am a candidate in the Doctoral program at the McGill School of Social Work. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation study *Exploring the Impact of Early-Life Conflict-Related Sexual Trauma on Surviving Comfort Women.* In this dissertation study, I seek to understand how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts the aging processes of Comfort Women survivors. By participating in this study, you will have the opportunity to share your own life stories and the impact of these experiences through your lifespan, with a particular emphasis on your experiences as you have aged.

Major Procedures

You will be asked to participate in 2 to 4 interview sessions; each session will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. With your consent, the interviews will be digitally recorded and later transcribed for coding and analysis. Your involvement is purely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any moment. You also have the right to skip or not answer any questions, as you prefer, and ask the portion of the interview to be excluded from the dissertation study.

Benefits

There is no expected direct benefit to your participation in this research.

Honorarium

You will receive $20 honorarium for each interview session conducted. Moreover, the results of this study can offer us an opportunity to understand more about how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts survivors' life trajectories and life-long adjustment.

Risks

Although every effort has been made to prevent it, you may find that some of the questions cause emotional discomfort. I will provide you with a referral to an appropriate resource with whom you can discuss your reactions.

Confidentiality

I will do the transcription of your interview. The transcript from your interview will have all identifiers removed by me; the tape recordings and transcripts will be kept in a password protected electronic file to which only my supervisors and I will have access. All recordings and transcripts will be retained for seven years after defense and publication of the dissertation. Moreover, your name or identity will not be revealed in the dissertation, and no information published will be treated in such a way that you are identifiable.

Dissemination of the Results

I expect to disseminate the results of this study through publications in peer-reviewed journals (for example, International Social Work, Journal of Gerontological Social Work). Moreover, I will also engage in several knowledge exchange activities, including presenting at academic conferences, community workshops, and giving lectures in Canada, Taiwan, China to academic and lay person audiences.

Please sign below if you agree to participate in the study:

- I agree to have the interview audio-taped for analysis purposes _____ Yes _____ No
- I also understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw from this project at any time and/or request that tapes be erased without penalty. However, once the information has been published, it will not be possible to remove my data in its entirety—it can only be removed from further analysis and publications.
- I have received a copy of this information and consent form and I have read it. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and these have been answered to my satisfaction. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of my rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date _____

Please note that two consent forms will be signed. The principal researcher will keep one copy, and the second copy will be provided to you.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the principal researcher (Shu-Hua Kang) and her supervisor Dr. Heather MacIntosh. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns

regarding your rights or welfare as a participant in this research study, you may contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

Thank you for your participation.

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Appendix D: Consent Form for Survivors (Chinese version)

訪談同意書 （給慰安婦倖存者）

研究目的

我是加拿大麥基爾大學社工學院博士班的博士候選人。我想要邀請你參與我的博士論文研究「探討生命早年與戰爭相關的性創傷對於慰安婦倖存者的影響」。在這份論文研究，我想要了解早年與戰爭相關的性創傷如何影響慰安婦倖存者的老化歷程。藉由參與這個研究，你會有機會分享你的生命故事，以及這些經驗對你生命歷程的影響，特別是會聚焦於你老化的經驗。

主要訪談程序

你會被邀請參與二至四次的訪談，每一次訪談大約會歷時60至90分鐘。在你的同意下，我會錄音這個訪談，然後會轉成逐字稿，以能進行研究分析。你有權利決定是否要參與這個研究，你也可以在訪談過程的任何時刻決定退出研究。你也有權利跳過或是不回答某個問題，或是要求某一部份的訪談你希望不要被研究。你不會因為不參與這個研究而影響你的權益。

福利

參與本研究沒有直接可以受惠的福利。

報酬

每一次訪談結束後，你會獲得加幣20元（新台幣500元或是人民幣100 元）做為訪談酬勞。此外，這個研究的結果可以提供我們一個機會去更加了解生命早年的戰爭性創傷如何影響倖存者的生命歷程以及長年的調適歷程。

風險

雖然我們會盡力避免，但你可能會覺得有些問題會引起你情緒的不適。我可以轉介你合適的心理諮商資源，讓你可以和人討論你的情緒反應。

保密性

我會負責謄打訪談逐字稿。我會把你的訪談逐字稿上可以辨識出你的資料都刪除。錄音資料和逐字稿都會被存成電子檔案，用密碼保護，只有我的指導教授和我可以看到。所有的資料會在我論文通過以及出版後保存七年。另外，我不會在論文上暴露你的名字和任何可辨識出你的資料，任何被出版的資訊都不會讓你可以被別人辨識出你的身份。

研究結果的分享

我預計會藉由有審稿制度的期刊（如：國際社會工作期刊、老人社會工作期刊）來分享這個研究的結果。此外，我也會參與在加拿大、台灣、中國等地的一些知識性的分享活動，包括參與學術研討會、社區的工作坊及演講等，來對學術界及一般社會大眾分享研究結果。

如果你同意參與此研究，請於以下簽名

- 我同意我的訪談被錄音以為研究分析所用 _____ 是 _____ 否
- 我也了解我參與這份研究是基於自願的，我可以在任何時間點退出此研究，以及/或是要求我的訪談錄音紀錄被撤消掉而不用擔心任何處罰。不過，如果研究資訊一但被出版了，我無法去除在整體研究發現上我的資料所扮演的角色一它只可以在未來進一步的分析和出版上被去除。
- 我已經取得一份研究訪談說明以及同意書，我也閱讀了內容。我有機會詢問研究者問題，而我的問題也獲得了滿意的回答。同意參與此研究不等同放棄我的任何權利或是解除研究者的責任。

參與者簽名: _____ 日期： _____

研究者簽名： _____ 日期：_____

請注意會有兩份表格請你簽署。研究者會有一份，你也會有一份。

如果你有任何問題，你可以和研究者康淑華聯絡，也可以聯繫她的指導教授Dr. Heather MacIntosh 以及 Dr. Myriam Denov。此外，如果你對於你參與此計畫擔任一位受訪者的權益有任何的疑問，你可以和麥基爾大學學術倫理的主責者聯繫，電話是514-398-6831 或是寫電子郵件到 lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

謝謝你的參與！

康淑華
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Tel: 1-514-398-7060

Appendix E: Consent Form for Family Members (English version)

Interview Consent Form (Family Members)

Purpose of this Research Project

I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Doctoral program at the McGill School of Social Work. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation study *Exploring the Impact of Early-Life Conflict-Related Sexual Trauma on Surviving Comfort.* In this dissertation study, I seek to understand how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts the aging processes of Comfort Women survivors through interviewing survivors and their family members. By participating in this study, you will have the opportunity to share your perspective about the impact of your (grand)mother's early-life sexual trauma and her aging process.

Major Procedures

I will conduct 2 interview sessions; each session will last approximately 90 to 120 minutes. With your consent, the interviews will be digitally recorded and later transcribed for coding and analysis. Your involvement is purely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any moment. You also have the right to skip or not answer any questions, as you prefer, and ask the portion of the interview to be excluded from the dissertation study.

If you do not feel comfortable with in-person interviews, you can do telephone interviews or video conferencing. When you choose to do video-conferencing, I will use Zoom and audio-record the interview with my computer.

Benefits

There is no expected direct benefit to your participation in this research.

Honorarium

You will receive $20 honorarium for each interview session conducted. Moreover, the results of this study can offer us an opportunity to understand more about how early-life conflict-related sexual trauma impacts survivors' life trajectories and life-long adjustment.

Risks

Although every effort has been made to prevent it, you may find that some of the questions cause emotional discomfort. I will provide you with a referral to an appropriate resource (Appendix D) with whom you can discuss your reactions.

Confidentiality

I will do the transcription of your interview. The transcript from your interview will have all identifiers removed by me; the tape recordings and transcripts will be kept in a password protected electronic file to which only my supervisors and I will have access. All recordings and transcripts will be retained for seven years after defense and publication of the dissertation. Moreover, your name or identity will not be revealed in the dissertation, and no information published will be treated in such a way that you are identifiable.

Dissemination of the Results

I expect to disseminate the results of this study through publications in peer-reviewed journals (for example, International Social Work, Journal of Gerontological Social Work). Moreover, I will also engage in several knowledge exchange activities, including presenting at academic conferences, community workshops, and giving lectures in Canada, Taiwan, China to academic and lay person audiences.

Please sign below if you agree to participate in the study:

- I agree to have the interview audio-taped for analysis purposes _____ Yes _____ No

- I also understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw from this project at any time and/or request that tapes be erased without penalty. However, once the information has been published, it will not be possible to remove my data in its entirety—it can only be removed from further analysis and publications.

- I have received a copy of this information and consent form and I have read it. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and these have been answered to my satisfaction. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of my rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date _____

Please note that two consent forms will be signed. The principal researcher will keep one copy, and the second copy will be provided to you.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the principal researcher (Shu-Hua Kang) and her supervisor Dr. Heather MacIntosh. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights or welfare as a participant in this research study, you may contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

Thank you for your participation.

Shu-Hua Kang
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Appendix F: Consent Form for Family Members (Chinese version)

訪談同意書 （給家屬）

研究目的

我是加拿大麥基爾大學社工學院博士班的博士候選人，想邀請你參與我的博士論文研究「探討生命早年與戰爭相關的性創傷對於慰安婦倖存者的影響」。在這份論文研究，我想藉由訪談慰安婦倖存者以及家屬，了解早年與戰爭相關的性創傷如何影響倖存者的老化歷程。藉由參與這份研究，你會有機會分享你如何看你的母親或是（外）祖母的早年性創傷的影響以及她的老化歷程。

主要訪談程序

我會進行二次訪談，每一次訪談大約會歷時 90 至 120 分鐘。在你的同意下，我會對這個訪談予以錄音，然後會轉成逐字稿，以能進行研究分析。你有權利決定是否要參與這個研究，你也可以在訪談過程的任何時刻決定要退出研究。你也有權利跳過或是不回答某個問題，或是要求某一部份的訪談你希望不要被研究。你不會因為不參與這個研究而影響你的權益。

如果你不想進行面對面的訪談，你可以選擇用電話或是網路線上訪談。如果你選擇後者，我會用 Zoom 軟體並用我的電腦錄音訪談過程。

福利

參與本研究沒有直接可以受惠的福利。

報酬

每一次訪談結束後，你會獲得加幣20元（新台幣500元或是人民幣100 元）做為訪談酬勞。此外，這個研究的結果可以提供我們一個機會去更加了解生命早年的戰爭性創傷如何影響倖存者的生命歷程以及長年的調適歷程。

風險

雖然我們會盡力避免，但你可能會覺得有些問題會引起你情緒的不適。我可以轉介你合適的心理諮商資源，讓你可以和人討論你的情緒反應。

保密性

我會負責謄打訪談逐字稿。我會把你我會把你的訪談逐字稿上可以辨識出你的資料刪除。錄音資料和逐字稿都會被存成電子檔案，用密碼保護，只有我的指導教授和我可以看到。所有的資料會在我論文通過以及出版後保存七年。另外，我不會在論文上暴露你的名字和任何可辨識出你的資料，任何被出版的資訊都不會讓你可以被別人辨識出你的身份。

研究結果的分享

我預計會藉由有審稿制度的期刊（如：國際社會工作期刊、老人社會工作期刊）來分享這個研究的結果。此外，我也會參與在加拿大、台灣、中國等地的一些知識性的分享活動，包括參與學術研討會、社區的工作坊及演講等，來對學術界及一般社會大眾分享研究結果。

如果你同意參與此研究，請於以下簽名

- 我同意我的訪談被錄音以為研究分析所用 _____ 是 _____ 否
- 我也了解我參與這份研究是基於自願的，我可以在任何時間點退出此研究，以及/或是要求我的訪談錄音紀錄被撤消掉而不用擔心任何處罰。不過，如果研究資訊一但被出版了，我無法去除在整體研究發現上我的資料所扮演的角色—它只可以在未來進一步的分析和出版上被去除。

- 我已經取得一份研究訪談說明以及同意書，我也閱讀了內容。我有機會詢問研究者問題，而我的問題也獲得了滿意的回答。同意參與此研究不等同放棄我的任何權利或是解除研究者的責任。

參與者簽名: _____ 日期： _____

研究者簽名： _____ 日期：_____

請注意會有兩份表格請你簽署。研究者會有一份，你也會有一份。

如果你有任何問題，你可以和研究者康淑華聯絡，也可以聯繫她的指導教授 Dr. Heather MacIntosh 以及 Dr. Myriam Denov。此外，如果你對於你參與此計畫擔任一位受訪者的權益有任何的疑問，你可以和麥基爾大學學術倫理的主責者聯繫，電話是514-398-6831 或是寫電子郵件到 lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

謝謝你的參與！

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Appendix G: Interview Guide

Interview Questions for Survivors:

- I am interested in knowing your life stories and how the comfort women experiences have affected your later life. Can you tell me your life story based on this line?
- Can you add more events to this line?
- Can you elaborate on the impact of these events, be it positive or negative, and the corresponding circumstances in your life story? (Encouraging the participants to share the events from the aspects of how state, gender, race, and class play a role and what the roles and responses of families and communities are in the events.)
- Can you talk about your experiences of growing older?
- How did you react to structural oppressions (colonialism, race discrimination, class inequality, social expectation on gender roles, family's responses, defeats of the redress movement, aging, etc.)?
- In retrospect of your whole life, how would you define yourself?

Interview Questions for Family Members:

- I am interested in knowing how the comfort women experiences have affected the survivors' later life. With this in mind, can you tell me something about your mother/grandmother?
- Could you talk about what you've known about your mother/grandmother's life story?
- Could you tell me about your family? (Encouraging the participant to talk about his/her family composition, family relationship, and family history)
- Could you tell me about your life story? (Encouraging the participant to talk about his/her childhood, youth, and adulthood)
- In what ways has your mother's/grandmother's life story affected you and your life? (Encouraging the participant to talk about his/her aspects of education, employment, family relationships, personal relationships, etc.)
- What is your opinion about how sexual trauma affects your mother/grandma's gendered roles (e.g., daughter, wife, mother)?
- What is the family reaction to the sexual trauma your mother/grandmother has experienced? How does sexual trauma affect your family relationship?
- What is your opinion about community and social reactions to the sexual trauma your mother/grandmother has experienced?
- Do you know how your mother/grandmother reacted to structural oppressions (colonialism, race discrimination, class inequality, social expectation on gender roles, family's responses, defeats of the redress movement, aging, etc.)