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Joo Young Lee Date

STILL ALIVE: SOUTH KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN OF WORLD WAR II

THROUGH THE LENS OF DOCUMENTARY FILM

By

Joo Young Lee

Master of Arts

Film Studies

_____

Michele Schreiber, Ph.D.
Advisor

_____

Matthew Bernstein, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____

David Pratt, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Accepted:

_____

Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

_____

Date

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An abstract of
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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STILL ALIVE: SOUTH KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN OF WORLD WAR II THROUGH THE LENS OF DOCUMENTARY FILM

By

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This thesis examines how documentary filmmakers have represented the history of the World War II "comfort women." "Comfort women" were young women, mostly kidnapped Koreans aged thirteen to twenty, who were forced to be sexual slaves for Japanese military brothels during World War II. Their ordeal became the focus of international attention in 1991 when the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Slavery by Japan filed suit against the Japanese Government. Several feminist artists became politically involved in the "comfort women" issue and used their artistic work to portray their response to it and to oppose the ways in which it was being falsely historicized by the New Right movement in contemporary South Korea. My thesis explores how this marginalized history is represented by non-mainstream documentary filmmaking, comparing the artistic perspectives and approaches of Young-joo Byun's The Murmuring [Najeun moksori, 1995 South Korea], Habitual Sadness (1997), My Own Breathing (1999) and Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women (1999 USA). These documentary filmmakers develop collaborative relationships and artistic companionship with former "comfort women" and there destroy the typical hierarchy between the director and the subject in a manner that ultimately values the former "comfort women" as members of our society and lives.

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Grandmothers

And

My Mother

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Introduction

Studies of the "comfort women" have been widely conducted since 1991 in Asia and in the United States. The term "comfort women" refers to approximately 200,000 young women, mostly kidnapped Koreans aged thirteen to twenty, who were forced to be sexual slaves for the Japanese military.[1] Because related official documents were destroyed at the end of the war, this women's history was marginalized through silence, absence, and distortion.[2] In order to solve this problem, civic scholars and nongovernmental organizations mainly in Japan, South Korea, and the U.S. have tried to "make this story visible."[3] Korean American feminist scholar Bonnie B. C. Oh has argued that making the history and presence of the "comfort women" recognizable is the most imperative step to further the "comfort women" movement, which seeks justice for them. My project starts from a response to the statement of Bonnie B. C. Oh. If a goal of the "comfort women" movement is to render this hidden history perceptible to the public, what forms and methodologies has the movement employed? Who develops this project? Can the movement achieve its goal ethically? Isn't there a danger of making the "comfort women" a subject of the movement? What role can documentary film play in advancing the goals of the movement?

A Brief History of the "Comfort Women" and the "Comfort Women" Movement

Women's history in general has been marginalized through silence, absence, and distortion; consequently, feminists have focused on resurrecting "herstory," women's history, as a platform of feminism. And the women's movement has cooperated with human rights activists and visual artists to manifest women's humanitarian legacies in

history. In addition to feminist efforts to rewrite and reframe women's history, the movement has fought against the idea that rape is a myth. In Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape (1975), Susan Brownmiller see rape as a "conscious process of intimidation" by men to exercise power over women.[4] During war, rape also becomes an effective instrument to show power over an enemy or a defeated nation. These entangled issues between war and rape in history have been addressed in several films such as Befreier und Befreite (1992) on the Russian rape of Germans in World War II or War Babies (2002) on the children of rape in Bosnia and Rwanda.

In East Asia, historians have disclosed the "real" history of WW II, which was hidden and misrepresented by the Japanese government and the Allied Forces. In 1991, seventy-four-year-old Hak-sun Kim courageously revealed her experience as a military sexual slave during World War II on television. Her appearance revealed the veiled existence of the "comfort women" and their ordeal. Subsequently the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Slavery by Japan filed suit against the Japanese government.[5] American scholars and activists established the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. (WCCW) and sponsored the conference on the "comfort women" at Georgetown University in 1996, which fueled international research on the topic within academia and the artistic community. Documentary films have been considered the most influential and effective form among several efforts—such as scholarly research, lectures, testimonies, and other kinds of artistic responses—to make personal memories of the "comfort women" into legitimate history. Several feminist documentary filmmakers from East Asia and the United States became politically

involved in the "comfort women" issue and redressed the historiography, autobiography, identity, and memory of "comfort women" in their films.

It is necessary to review the central issues that the academic and film communities have discussed regarding the history of the "comfort women" in order to understand feminist filmmakers' political and artistic aspirations. The "comfort women" and its history are among the most distinctive tragedies of imperialism, militarism, sexism, classism, and racism in the 20th history. According to Oh, Japan was one of few countries with military sexual slavery and institutionalized prostitution, which was called *karayuki* under its patriarchal government during the nineteenth century.[6] Along with Japan's imperial expansion during World War II, the Japanese army ordered the recruitment of sexual slaves, and recruiting officers abducted around 200,000 Asian young girls of the rural working classes to put into brothels called "comfort stations." The Japanese government argues that those women received money for their work. Survivors, however, maintain that women were raped and killed every day in brothels, and then all of them were abandoned in brothels at the end of the war with no possessions. Furthermore, while some Japanese think that the "comfort women" system was necessary to keep soldiers from raping native women in the Pacific Islands, female Pacific Islanders have testified that they were robbed and raped by Japanese officials and soldiers during the war.

While this marginalized history has alienated and isolated the "comfort women" through enforced silence, they have suffered from ableism, classism, sexism, and ageism since Korean independence from Japan. After the war, not only the Japanese government and the Allied Forces but also Korea's patriarchal society and culture devalued and

abandoned surviving "comfort women." Therefore, scholars, activists, and artists have tried to reveal how these surviving "comfort women" have gone thorough economic hardships with physical and emotional wounds.

Personal Memories and Public Consumption: Documentary and the "Comfort Women" Movement

Documentary films have been criticized for their revelation and manipulation of personal lives and emotions for the sake of the public's desire for knowledge. In Representing Reality (1991), Bill Nichols argues that Laura Mulvey's "concern with the eroticization of the gaze and the gender hierarchy that classical narrative imposes" is related to documentary ethics.[7] While fictions perpetuate the gaze of fetishism and voyeurism, documentary "creates a gaze aimed at the historical world" and "an object (the desire for and promise of knowledge), thereby producing an argument cut to ethical, political, and ideological measure."[8] In other words, documentary tries to fulfill its purpose of distributing and showing certain knowledge because the spectator desires to learn something by watching it. And documentary employs several aesthetic devices in order to maximize its rhetoric of authoritative knowledge as well.

When traumatic history and the victims of that history are represented in documentary films, the spectator also expects to watch "appropriate" emotional expression related to their personal accounts. In order to fulfill the spectator's expectations, documentary films highlight certain sentimental aspects of victims and perpetuate a victimized identity. This problem has been the topic of an ongoing debate amongst documentary scholars. Documentary films, which are primarily concerned with

personal lives and history, cannot evade the accusation against emotional politics to satisfy public desire for knowledge.

According to ethnomusicologist Joshua Pilzer's 2006 dissertation My Heart the Number One": Singing in Lives of South Korean Survivors of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery, public discussion of the "comfort women" through the media—such as news, television drama, fictional films, and documentary—in postcolonial South Korea has highlighted and perpetuated the victimized identity of the "comfort women," while neglecting their powerful survivor narratives. He argues that survivors of Japanese sexual slavery created music, not visual materials, to cure their trauma naturally and that the former should be highlighted in any account of their ordeal.[9] However, it is necessary to note that several civic scholars and visual artists have protested since 1991 against this manipulative and emotional discourse that Pilzer criticizes. The revisionist "comfort women" movement that Pilzer has been associated with does not recognize the valuable progress made by the "comfort women" movement since then. My project is to explore the interdependent efforts of survivors on the one hand and documentary scholars and artists on the other to rewrite the true history of the "comfort women" and to resurrect survivors' legacies.[10] Before I delve into my arguments, it is necessary to examine different aspects of the public perception of the "comfort women" and the different names that are associated with them. This examination will reveal the logical fallacies of recent revisionists' arguments.

"Comfort Women," Military Sexual Slaves, and Grandmothers

Since the beginning of the "comfort women" movement, the very term "comfort women [*wianbu*]" has been contentious in academic and political circles. "Comfort women" is a euphemism for sexual slaves. This euphemism reveals the social norms of South Korea, in which people avoid using the terms "sex" and "slave." And the term self-consciously has been used by domestic and international activists and scholars. Civic scholars—who participate in both academia and activism—and filmmakers call survivors grandmothers [*halmeoni*]. In this paper, I am going to use four terms—"comfort women," military sexual slaves, grandmothers, and survivors—since these four terms have different historical and political significance that are related to domestic and international public perceptions of survivors' images. While the term "comfort women" will be used in general, the term "military sexual slaves" is effective to emphasize historical fact that it was a slavery system. The term "grandmothers" will appear when the paper deals with their relationships with civic scholars and filmmakers. To highlight the legacies of surviving "comfort women," I will employ the term "survivors."

The fact that the term "comfort women" is a euphemism for sexual slaves indicates sexism, which survivors have to fight against, in postcolonial South Korea. It is true that some survivors are complicit in the use of this term, but their complicity also reflects their fear of being perceived sexually by Korea's patriarchal society. Against the argument of the Japanese government and war criminals that the surviving women were "prostitutes," it was imperative to find an appropriate term. While activists and scholars acknowledge that this was a system of sexual slavery, survivors refused to be called sexual slaves because the term was too explicit. Women were afraid of sexist rhetoric that

perpetuated "sexual slaves" as derogatory remarks when they appeared to tell their stories in public media.

The resurrection of the term "sexual slaves" since the late 1990s has been a result of two factors. On the one hand, researchers hoped to reveal the true history of the system by using this term; on the other hand, the term could signify the agonies of the survivors. Several scholars such as Etsuro Totsuka argued for a shift from the term "comfort women" to sexual slaves, believing the latter term literally conveys these women's true history. Furthermore, the term "sexual slaves" also can reflect survivors' lives after the war; how they were victims of classism, sexism, and ableism. However, this argument was, in turn, vulnerable to criticism. In her article "Prostitutes Versus Sex slaves: The Politics of Representing the 'Comfort Women,'" Korean American anthropologist Chunghee Sarah Soh notes that the use of the term "sexual slaves" is "symbolism" for "the social meaning of the suffering endured by the survivors."[11] Her recent book The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan (2008) asserts that the term makes the public perceive survivors as living slaves. This labeling could limit survivors' liberation from the past trauma.[12]

While scholarly studies use two terms, the "comfort women" and sexual slaves, some civic scholars and filmmakers commonly call survivors grandmothers. Pilzer notes that grandmother is "the standard term of respect for old women in Korea; the word does not connote that a woman has grandchildren. But most Koreans feel beholden to elders in a similar fashion as they would to those to whom they have a direct family relation."[13] However, he problematizes the term as used by filmmakers such as Young-joo Byun and Dai Sil Kim-Gibson. In films, the images the spectator sees are old women who are

called grandmothers, but they tell stories about their lives as young women who were victimized by the Japanese government. By watching these temporally asynchronized images and stories in the films—young girls in colonial Asia-Pacific vs. old women in postcolonial South Korea, the spectator might polarize their identities into two spectra: raped young girls and powerless old women. Pilzer warns of the danger of representing the survivors as mere victims. While I respect his approach to the term, his argument is limited by cultural differences. As he clearly stated, the term grandmother is used to express respect for the elder women. Filmmakers consciously use the term to express their admiration for survivors.

Pilzer also misses another crucial reason that filmmakers repetitively call the survivors grandmothers in their films. The term "grandmother" mirrors filmmakers' efforts to provide an alternative to a documentary filmmaking practice which alienates its subject. Claire Johnston's 1973 essay "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema" questioned the documentary director's non-interventionist position that detaches the filmmaker from the subject. She argues that "cinema involves the production" plan and realization, so "the idea of non-intervention is pure mystification."[14] Johnston consequently argues for the abandonment of realist notions and documentary films as a whole. Diane Waldman and Janet Walker argue that feminist documentary filmmakers should undertake long-term research and maintain relationships with subjects before and after making their films to deconstruct previous documentary practice and to reveal the silencing of women's history and voices.[15] We can appreciate what Dai Sil Kim-Gibson and Young-joo Byun, the filmmakers I am going to extensively discuss in chapter 2 and 3, do in light of these feminist critiques of documentary. They devoted themselves to the issue of "comfort

women" by building relationships with the survivors and presenting them as important members of Korean society. Filmmakers have shown their involvement in the issue not only for the films but also for the "comfort women" movement overall. In her reflection on filming Silence Broken, "They Are Our Grandmas," Dai Sil Kim-Gibson warns scholars of placing survivors "on an inaccessible lane."[16] Because the media objectified survivors, the public was "buying" survivors' private memories. Kim-Gibson argues that by calling survivors "grandmothers," we can avoid objectifying them. The term "grandmother" functions to make them our grandmothers in the society. Therefore, diverse terms have been used to describe these women based on how the public see or identify survivors.

In the following chapters, I will examine how different modes and styles of documentary represent survivors. In chapter 1, I will focus on the parallel challenges facing the "comfort women" movement and documentary filmmakers to avoid misrepresenting the history of the "comfort women" and portraying the survivors as mere objects or denying the survivors' subjectivity. In chapter 2, I examine Kim-Gibson's innovative documentary, Silence Broken, which uses reenactment to make makes hidden history visible with reenactment. In chapter 3, I argue that Byun's documentary trilogy manifests new modes of documentary filmmaking that both break the boundaries between the filmmaker and the subject through their double authorship and eliminate the border between documentary and other forms of arts including painting, music, and literary works.

Chapter 1

Documenting the History of the "Comfort Women" and Screening Survivors

The history of the "comfort women" lacks tangible evidence because the Japanese government destroyed almost all possible paper documents. Furthermore, after Japan lost the war, the Korean government could not track down war criminals nor did it compensate victims. There are two main reasons for these failures. First, Korean people who helped the Japanese occupation kept their position as governmental officials after Korea's independence from Japan. The legal action against war criminals started in 1996 when the Right Wing lost the presidential election for the first time. The search for war criminals still continues now. Second, the Allied Forces, composed of American and Russian military, was responsible for East Asian territory and did not handle issues of war criminals because they focused on the Cold War politics. Korea was soon divided into two—South and North—by America and Russia respectively. Enmeshed in the Korean War right after achieveing independence, the Korean governments could not keep the every record under the Japanese regime. Therefore, survivors' memories are the only proof of their ordeal. Their stories have taken many forms: written testimonies, autobiographies, paintings, photographs, fictional drama, experimental films, and documentaries, all of which record personal memories and testimonies as evidence of traumatic history. Some of these works were directly produced by survivors, while others were created by researchers, activists, artists, and religious leaders. Among these many texts, I pay a specific attention to documentary films because challenges in contemporary documentary parallel political issues of the "comfort women" movement. Both of them have faced criticism for their modes of representation that manipulate "factual" history

and mystify their subjects. This chapter traces these shared problems that have been discussed and challenged by documentary theorists and revisionists in the "comfort women" movement.

My study of documentary and the "comfort women" movement will examine their historical, ethical, and artistic aspects. While I will interrogate troublesome aspects of documentary as a genre and the "comfort women" movement, I ultimately hope to highlight the positive aspects of documentary's function for the "comfort women" movement. In this sense, my investigation is aligned with Thomas Waugh's urge for "commitment." He writes, "By 'commitment' I mean, firstly, a specific ideological undertaking, a declaration of solidarity with the goal of radical socio-political transformation. Secondly, I mean a specific political positioning: activism or intervention in the process of change itself."[17] I strongly agree with Waugh that documentary can be both ethical and artistic as the filmic mode that represents history particularly that of the "comfort women" and survivors. Nevertheless, it is necessary to examine documentary history and criticism first. I follow this with a case study of two documentary films, Senso Daughters (1989) and Comfort Women (1995) made by Noriko Sekiguchi and the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. respectively.

1.1 Representing Reality and Truth(s)

The definition of documentary is a highly contested one. On the one hand, documentary has been considered as a realist form *par excellence*; on the other hand, documentary is seen as a form that is as manipulative and emotional as fiction film. This issue of realism is primarily based on the camera's complex qualities that connote both

objectivity and subjectivity. The Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov believed that the camera can mechanically reproduce reality as he argued in the 1920s. Vertov believed in "truth through the means and possibilities of film-eye. Not 'filming life unawares' for the sake of the 'unaware,' but in order to show people without masks, without makeup, to catch them through the eye of the camera in a moment when they are not acting, to read their thoughts, laid bare by the camera."[18] During the same historical period, anthropological filmmakers produced visual ethnography. Ethnographers such as Robert Flaherty believed in the camera's ability to capture the reality of "other" culture.

Since documentary has been considered as a form of journalism, audiences were possible to be persuaded by it. Documentaries in the 1930s and 1940s were consequently used as a propagandist weapons for political and ideological reasons by manipulating documentary's credibility. Specifically the 1930s documentary in the Unites States and Britain focused economic and political upheavals such as the Great Depression. Early 1940s films focused on World War II. The postwar 1940s and 1950s documentary in the West was used to ignite people's anxiety against communism. The 1960s witnessed the birth of cinema vérité and direct cinema in France and the US respectively. Technological innovations of the time, including lightweight16mm cameras and synchronized sound, made it possible for documentaries to be made more spontaneously on location.

Documentary filmmakers' eagerness to deconstruct constructed reality and capture truths has created diverse documentary filmmaking methodologies and aesthetics in the 1960s and 1970s. Independent filmmaking outside Hollywood reached its peak, and the production, distribution, and exhibition of films through educational and nonprofit organizations, along with the technological advances of 16mm, provided a

creative environment resulting in the cinema vérité/direct cinema movements. These non-interventionist realist traditions—observational and journalistic documentary of American direct cinema or French cinema vérité—tried to find multiple truths beyond reality by letting the camera capture events that were happening in front of it. Furthermore, the political and social turmoil such as the women's movement, anti-war protests, cultural revolutions, and institutionalized film programs of the 1960s inspired diverse individuals and minority groups to express their personal and collective visions through documentary.[19]

During the 1970s, however, structuralists such as Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, and other film scholars inspired by the ideas of Karl Marx and Louis Althusser, criticized cinematic realism and asserted that even the documentary camera distorted reality and perpetuated ideology. Eileen McGarry argued that "reality itself is already coded, first in the infrastructure of the social formation (human economic practice), and secondly by the superstructure of politics and ideology;" therefore, "the filmmaker is not dealing with reality, but with that which has become the pro-filmic event: that which exists and happens in front of the camera"[20] According to McGarry, the pro-filmic event captured by documentaries is a constructed reality, not reality. E. Ann Kaplan notes that these scholars of the 1970s are "concerned with demystifying representation" so as to make people "aware that texts are producers of ideology, and that we live in a world of constructions rather than of solid essences."[21] These polemic opinions have been prevalent among critics since then.

In addition to these political debates, Bill Nichols has classified six distinctive modes of documentary to examine documentary's relation to reality: poetic, expository,

observational, participatory, reflexive, and performative.[22] But, none of these documentary modes, Nichols argues, can adequately convey reality because any mode contains rhetorical discourse. For example, Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will (1938) notoriously combines a record of a political rally with abstract moving images of human bodies that serve a fascist ideology. While Germany governed by the Nazi was committing atrocities, Riefenstahl's film celebrated the beauty of human beings and the world through poetic images. Along with poetic documentary, expository documentary of the same period expands the historical world, but it cannot avoid the similar criticism for its distorted reality. For instance, wartime news and documentaries usually propaganda, used an authorial voice to instruct people. Producers of those news and documentary such as Why We Fight series (1942-45) assembled footage, which is not necessarily related to the topic but contribute to their ideological purpose. These assembled images are narrated by an authorial voice that can be considered as credible and ethical. In this way, audiences can be manipulated by their rhetoric and are possible to believe in the images they were watching. Against this expository mode, observational documentary—French cinema vérité and American direct cinema—such as that seen in Primary (1960), via titled and fragmented images, filmed events as they happened in front of the camera. This kind of practice was based on filmmakers' belief in the camera's objectivity. However, observational documentary cannot provide the context or history of the images and events it records. As McGarry argued, and as noted above, what this "objective" camera pictures, represents, and shows is "pro-filmic event," which is already constructed and manipulated by the larger social structure.[23]

Nichols's arguments regarding realism, of course, are similar to, even derived from, those of semiologists of the 1970s. But, Nichols further contributes to the discussion of documentary and its relation to reality and truth(s) when he conceptualizes documentary modes that became prevalent since the 1960s such as participatory, reflexive, and performative documentary. Participatory documentary incorporates interviews with subjects and archival footage to resurrect past history. Since this mode has a deep faith in witnesses and interviewees, it is possible to design history for the sake of their political and social activism. Furthermore, the filmmaker's own political view becomes instructive for the spectator. The first example of participatory documentary is Vertov's The Man with a Movie Camera (1929). In this film, we can see the filmmaker, film crew, and editor. Their physical presence within the film is a crucial aspect of the participatory mode, and this film also becomes a cornerstone for reflexive mode that I will explain in the next part. Barbara Kopple's Harlan County, U.S.A. (1977) is another example. The film shows the struggle of coal miners in Kentucky, and the filmmaker Kopple herself participates in the strike after spending a great deal of time getting to know the miners. Those two documentary films have the specific political aim as the "comfort women" films, which is to show people's struggles and their history. While they are the most effective way to portray historical and political issues, these participatory documentary films are always vulnerable to criticism for being subjective and biased according to the filmmakers' personal beliefs. Such critiques ignore the fact that political documentaries have always expressed a filmmaker's point of view.

Like the participatory mode, the reflexive documentary mode shows the filmmaker and filmmaking process within the film. The reflexive mode of documentary,

moreover, often challenges the documentary format. For instance, Michelle Citron's Daughter Rite (1978) is composed of the filmmaker's autobiographical home video, which challenges the distinction between the real and fiction. The film not only reflects the mother and daughter's relationship, but it also questions home video's presumed function of capturing reality. Mitchell Block's …no lies (1973) is a fiction but uses documentary techniques commonly associated with interviews and handheld camera in order to question the notion of reality. The reflexive mode also can acknowledge the limits of its own representation. Along with the participatory mode, the reflexive mode obviously confronts the problems of the traditional documentary modes—observational and expository—criticized by documentary theorists of the 1970s. While Nichols values the challenges these films offer, he notes that the reflexive documentary mode has a danger of being confused as mere fiction, not documentary. Because the staging of events is eventually obvious, this mode consequently cannot claim its ability to catch the reality or truth if the spectator perceives the film as fiction.

Nichols' last category is the performative documentary that emphasizes the subjectivity of the documentary filmmaker. This mode takes several forms such as autobiography and avant-garde style. Michael Moore's films are often cited as perfect examples for performative documentary. Roger & Me (1989) incorporates autobiographical elements such as Moore's childhood photographs and home video footage to establish his purpose of recording his journey to interview Roger Smith, the CEO of General Motors. The film is not only a depiction of GM's violence over low-class workers but also Moore's own experience as a member of the town. In this autobiographical documentary, Moore is not only a filmmaker or interviewer but a

character of this film along with Roger as the title of the film is Roger & Me as if he is an actor in a fiction film, Moore performs for his documentary. The film's unique autobiographical style makes a larger political point that is often thought to require objectivity through the lens of a personal discourse.

Building upon these participatory, reflexive, and performative modes, documentary films since the late 1970s do not hesitate to reveal their fictional techniques rather than hiding fictional elements to perpetuate the films' political and social messages. Films by Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cheryl Dunye illustrate this hybrid quality. Their films are similar to Moore's in their employment of the modes, but the films of Minh-ha and Dunye are closer to fiction than documentary. Minh-ha's Surname Viet Given Name Nam (1989) depicts Vietnamese women's struggle in Vietnam and in America. Half of the film is fiction and is accompanied by documentary film about the making of the fictional elements. In the first part of the fiction film, we see several Vietnamese women living in Vietnam, but at the end of the film these women are revealed to be Vietnamese women living in America. These actors who played characters in the fiction part of the film are interviewed in the documentary part of the film. Minh-ha notes that she creates fiction because documentary images cannot tell all truths. Dunye even calls her films "dunyementaries," which are a combination of autobiography, fiction, and ethnographic documentary. The hybrid trends, from my perspective, open more spaces for documentary's search for truth(s). Before I return to this discussion about documentary possibilities in chapters 2 and 3, it is necessary to address one more contentious topics in documentary scholarship: historiographic documentary and ethnography.

1.2 Documentary as Historiography and the History of the "Comfort Women"

The ongoing examination of the documentary's presentation of reality or truth becomes even more complicated when the form deals with history and its political/social meanings. As Jack Ellis and Betsy McLane note, "the audience response documentary filmmakers seek to achieve is generally twofold: an aesthetic experience of some sort, on the one hand; and an effect on attitudes, possibly leading to action, on the other."[24] In other words, documentary filmmakers try to achieve not only creativity but also an emotional effect on the spectator. Therefore, documentary films that try to address social, political, and historical issues cannot help having a referential quality. Historiographical documentary films often reassemble evidence, including photographs and archival footage, and connect them to narrate and show people's personal memory about the past. Thus, historiographical documentary can be seen as rewriting the history that a filmmaker desires to share with the spectator. The documentary films about the history of the "comfort women" are not exceptions. The filmmakers gather available visual sources and survivors' interviews to instruct and inspire the spectator to take action or at least, adopt a particular opinion of its subject. However, is there any historiography without a referent? Is there a history without an interpretation? In his study of representation of the Leo Frank case on film and television, Matthew H. Bernstein writes of docudrama, "Just as a historian interprets available facts to construct a story according to certain storytelling conventions, so does a filmmaker shape the historical record to tell a tale."[25] Although he writes about docudrama rather than documentary, I will use Bernstein's position as a guide for my examination of documentary films made by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson and

Young-joo Byun in chapter 2 and 3 respectively. But, in this chapter, it is imperative to examine the problematic aspects of documentary's treatment of history.

The majority of documentary films that deal with history dismiss individual people and their differences in order to present a collective vision of an event. Nichols argues that history which documentary referred to is "popular memory."[26] Therefore, history is "outside the text" and "never captured" by filmic representation.[27] A good illustration of his argument occurs in the historical documentary/fiction film, The Hour of the Furnaces (1968), by Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas, which reflects civilians' memories of revolution. However, the civilians to whom Getino and Solanas refer are not the whole population of Argentina. They are the people who ideologically identified with revolutionaries. The film only shows the "popular memory" of the 1960s Argentina. Since the history that documentary represents sometimes lacks evidence and witnesses (and even if there is evidence and witnesses), history is larger than what the spectator sees within the filmic text. Paragraph 175 (2000) shows gay and lesbian history under the Nazi regime during the 1930s and 40s, and the filmmakers interview one lesbian who was supposedly saved by Marlene Dietrich. She fled from Germany to England with a permit Dietrich gave her. It is true that she is the only registered female lesbian survivor of the Nazi regime. Because of Dietrich's story, her account is dramatic. Furthermore, the spectator only watches a small portion of survivor's life story. Therefore there is "the gap between life as lived and life as narrativized."[28]

Representing and rewriting history is also problematic because films present the past event in the present time and space of the screening. Jane Chapman argues that representing history in documentary is more complex than in fiction because it involves

two histories: the history of the subject and the history of the filmmaking process.[29] For instance, The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter (1980) depicts women's story about their experiences in the work force during and after World War II. However, there is another history we cannot see by watching the film: the history of the film's production. Director Connie Field interviewed more than 700 women, but the spectator only can see a few women's testimonies within the film. Furthermore, according to Chapman, all of those women had worked in a different time and space, but the film erases these contexts, conflates them, and consequently shows a partial truth. While the film tries to show manipulated and hidden history of women's lives of the time, the film hides its history of making the film and its temporal and spatial interpretation/translation of the history.

The documentary filmmaker's efforts to manipulate the spectator's emotional response further compromise the film's authenticity. Nichols notes that documentary appeals to the spectator's emotions "to produce the desired disposition; putting the audience in the right mood or establishing a frame of mind favorable to a particular view" of the documentary's subject.[30] He criticizes "apologists for documentary, many of them leftist in their politics, which has clouded formal or structural issues in order to cover the advance of arguments about the social purpose of film or its privileged relation to reality compared to the other arts."[31]

Presenting only a partial history for the sake of collective activism, as well as the filmmaker's temporal and spatial manipulation, has also constituted the main criticisms advanced against the "comfort women" movement. In her recent anthropological investigation, Sarah Chunghee Soh argues that the movement only showed partial accounts of survivors.[32] She interviews some survivors who were rejected by the

movement for accepting compensation from Japanese private organizations. They were regarded as traitors by other survivors who sought a formal apology and compensation from the Japanese government. According to Soh's interviews with those women, the survivors who did not receive money from private agencies were not kidnapped or deceived by the Japanese but voluntarily became prostitutes. This story contradicts the story of the survivors who refused to receive the money. Those who refused private compensation rejected it in part because it was possible to make them seem like prostitutes. The "comfort women" movement and the documentary films that portray survivors have only focused on the survivors who did not accept compensation. Based on this situation, several revisionists such as Soh accuse the "comfort women" movement of being incomplete just as historiographic documentary has been criticized.

Although I understand and appreciate the criticism against historical documentary and the "comfort women" movement, my ultimate aim is to reveal the faults of those arguments. Revisionist historians also highlight partial points to claim that the history rewritten by the "comfort women" is totally false. Furthermore, historical documentary, from my perspective, does not limit or distort history but adds a layer of hidden stories to it. And certainly, documentaries cannot show everything, but can allude to other aspects that are not directly shown in the films. In her defense of documentary's use of dramatization, Linda Williams argues that documentary rhetoric equipped with "participatory and fictional modes within documentary can rewrite multifaceted truths of traumatic incidents."[33] In other words, if, as Bernstein argues, every history is selective, selective documentary can broaden our understanding of history and people.

1.3 The Ethics of Ethnography and the "Comfort Women" Movement

Ethnography has been the most prevalent documentary format since the birth of cinema. Traditional ethnography has in Nichols's words, "represented a valuable, concerted effort by those who share anthropology's principles and objectives regarding the representation of other cultures to member of our own."[34] People with anthropological knowledge who picture "other" people in different nations and cultures were traditionally "white, male, and strongly university-based with minimal inclusion of those who now represent themselves"[35]

Since ethnographic filmmakers have been associated with economic, social, political, or imperialistic power structures, the ethics of ethnography has been contested. The most cited example is Robert Flaherty's Nanook of the North (1922). Flaherty documents Inuit life in order to show their culture and struggles against famine and weather. What makes the film problematic, however, is that the filmmaker has the power to manipulate and objectify the Inuits' lives. By focusing on the ways in which the Inuit people are different from Westerners, the film makes the Inuit look uncivilized and savage. Fatimah Rony writes:

> [T]he premise of the inevitable death of the Native, moreover, allows the physical and cultural destruction wrought by the West to appear ineluctable, and such films, albeit with pathos, implicitly provide ideological justification for the very colonial and economic conquests that brought filmmakers like Flaherty to the Arctic.[36]

Furthermore, it is necessary to question the ethics of the filmmaker. Nanook and his family endure famine and confront mortal dangers, while Flaherty films them through his camera lens. He also had them re-enact anachronistic hunting methods.

The ethical issues in documentary filmmaking—especially ethnography— have also been associated with the notion of power in terms of the cinematic gaze and voice.

Who is looking at whom? What is the purpose of this looking? Who is speaking for whom? In her study "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey argued that the narrative cinema employs the "male gaze," which provides the central pleasures—voyeurism, fetishism, and narcissism—for heterosexual male audiences.[37] Building upon Mulvey's "male gaze" theory, Nichols argued that documentary film provides a fundamental pleasure he called "epistephilia or desire for knowledge."[38] Nichols writes:

> The difference in this regard between fiction and documentary is akin to the difference between an erotics and an ethics, a difference that continues to mark out the movement of the ideological through the aesthetic. Mulvey's feminist and psychoanalytic dissection of Hollywood erotics—the cost of aesthetic pleasure within the economy of that system—could be paralleled by a dissection of documentary ethics.[39]

In other words, documentary filmmakers gaze at the subject for their films' values and ideological purposes, and subsequently the subject is objectified.

Furthermore, documentary filmmakers often employ authorial voices and emotional rhetoric to affect audiences' perception and persuade them to follow the filmmakers' opinions. And this practice ironically silences the subject of the film. Filmmakers become an authorial voice in order to tell a story about "other" people and culture, although filmmakers typically adopt the stance that they are speaking for their subjects. In this sense, "others" lose their agency to tell their own stories by themselves.

The "comfort women" movement has faced criticisms similar to ethnography's ethical issues. The "comfort women" movement has been led by Koreans, Korean-Americans, and Japanese in East Asia. Their activism has been contentious. The revisionist "comfort women" movement argued that Korean activists have used emotional rhetoric to ignite nationalist sentiments among Koreans. According to the revisionists' argument, the visibility and liberation from silence of survivors has

portrayed them as suffering old women. Survivors' testimonies were not coherent, and their stories often became more miserable.[40] Revisionists also argued that Korean American activists and artists portrayed the issues raised by the existence of the "comfort women" as similar to those the advocates and artists have experienced. In the revisionists' view, Korean Americans used their geo-political power by living in America to stand as authorial voices for the "comfort women" movement.[41] For instance, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's writings and film that I will discuss in chapter 2 are examples of ethnography that incorporates autobiographical practices. She travels from America to China, Japan, and Korea to interview survivors, scholars, and war criminals. As a diasporic intellectual American, she continuously connects her personal life to the survivors, a practice that the revisionists have criticized.

On the one hand, I acknowledge the shared ethical issues raised by ethnography and the "comfort women" movement, which I will problematize by examining two documentary films, Comfort Women and Senso Daughters. On the other hand, it is necessary to note how documentary filmmakers and activists for the "comfort women" movement have addressed these ethical issues and created new modes of documentary filmmaking to unearth hidden history and resurrect survivors.

Within the context of documentary filmmaking, innovative documentary modes and styles "outside of anthropology per se" have been created by Third World filmmakers and minority groups.[42] In Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas's 1969 manifesto "Toward a Third Cinema," they advocated a collective filmmaking practice based on documentary to decolonize their culture from imperialist ideology. [43] They believed Third Cinema could let people of the Third World speak for themselves. Trinh T.

Minh-ha also asserted that ethnographers should give voices to "others," not speak for them.[44] Her ethnographic documentaries, Reassemblage (1982) and Surname Viet Given Name Nam (1983), exemplify her ideas. She challenges the ideal of realist ethnography, reveals the power of the camera and the filmmaker that can manipulate "others," and participates in the film as a characters and maker simultaneously. She casts actresses as real Vietnamese women in Surname Viet and Given Name Nam, which blurs the boundary between documentary and fiction. These participatory, reflexive, and dramatic modes are also employed by Kim-Gibson and Byun for their documentaries on "comfort women." I will further discuss their films in my chapter 2 and 3. First, however, I examine two documentary films, Comfort Women and Senso Daughters. This is necessary in order to describe more precisely problematic documentary filmmaking practices and to compare them to films by Kim-Gibson and Byun.

1.4 Journalistic and Anthropological Documentaries: Comfort Women and Senso Daughters

Two documentary films, Comfort Women and Senso Daughters, are widely circulated in America and other Western countries for educational purposes. Noriko Sekiguchi made one of the first documentary films about Korean "comfort women" issues.[45] She filmed natives in Papua New Guinea who remember the existence of the "comfort women" and "comfort stations." And she also reveals the fact that native women were raped by Japanese soldiers and their offspring are alive. While the thirty minute Comfort Women employs traditional journalistic and authorial voices based on its

institutional purpose, Senso Daughters uses traditional ethnographic practices to fulfill its knowledge production.

The journalistic documentary Comfort Women by the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. is informative but it does not give a voice and power to survivors to manifest and create their own agency. This short documentary uses several talking-head interviews, along with photographs and documents that are mainly discovered by Japanese scholar Yoshiaki Yoshimi. The film also includes film footage from World War II that is not necessarily related to the "comfort women" issue but show the brutal atrocities committed in the name of the Japanese government. Since the film has a didactic and political purpose to reveal this hidden history and to encourage people to participate in the "comfort women" movement, several visual materials—besides film footage, the filmmakers include photographs, interviews, testimonies, and literal captions—all of which are narrated by an authoritative voice, Sangmie Choi Schellstede, a Korean American scholar. This voice makes the film credible and persuasive. While this format is effective, it limits survivors' agency to address the issue using their own voices and visions. The journalistic and authorial modes also create the distance between the film's producers and survivors. Thus, the filmmakers cannot avoid the criticism of objectifying survivors.

Although the ethnographic documentary Senso Daughters [Daughters of War] opened the door for other filmmakers to make ethnographic films about the "comfort women," it also objectifies its human subjects. The film consequently leads the spectator to become a voyeur who desires to know "other" people's suffering history. In the beginning of the film, Sekiguchi explains in a voiceover that she started this filmmaking

project because she heard the story about "forgotten war," the Pacific War caused by the Japanese Emperor. As a student in 1980s Australia, she was shocked how local residents remembered this history as unforgettable brutality, which Japanese people, including Sekiguchi, barely knew about the war. In her rigorous search for traces of the "forgotten war," she finds that what has been forgotten is not only the history of war but also people who have suffered by trauma and the offspring of Japanese soldiers and native women. And the film also finds existence of Korean "comfort women" who have been forgotten as well. The most important achievement of the film is to show different memories among Papua New Guineans and Japanese by juxtaposing different interviews with them.[46]

While the film fulfills its purpose to study this "forgotten war," the film renders the other culture as a spectacle in the eyes of the filmmakers and their viewers. Sekiguchi participates in the film through her voiceover, but her subjectivity and physical existence are not shown. Sekiguchi gazes at the subjects of the Third World from the perspective of the First world. She believes that speaking for them through this ethnography is the best way to let the world know about the existence and history of natives. Native Papua New Guineans, however, have dealt with the issue for a long time and know how to handle their own challenges. Her camera does not recognize or show the natives' power to discuss their problems and agonies by themselves. The knowledge she records is not from her own efforts but collective efforts that precede Sekiguchi's travel to Papua New Guinea and continue after she left. The film is a pioneering piece but vulnerable to criticism. By contrast, as I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, Kim-Gibson's

performative and autobiographical documentary shows some ways to resurrect “comfort women” history and to reproduce new modes of documentary filmmaking simultaneously.

Chapter 2

Drama within Documentary: Silence Broken

The 1970s' incorporation of semiology and structuralism into film theory resulted in the questioning of the notion of realism as well as the reality claims of documentary as I discussed in chapter 1. The structuralist interrogation of documentary ironically opened a space for more innovative filmmaking. Filmmakers tried to find new forms and styles in order to achieve realist sensibilities in the film. They also challenged the prevalent modes of address in documentary. The integration of fictional elements into documentary was the most striking innovation. Linda Williams writes:

> An overly simplified dichotomy between truth and fiction is at the root of our difficulty in thinking about the truth in documentary. The choice is not between two entirely separate regimes of truth and fiction. The choice, rather, is in strategies of fiction for the approach to relative truths. Documentary is not fiction and should not be conflated with it. But documentary can and should use all the strategies of fictional construction to get at truths.[47]

In this chapter, building upon Williams's insights, I examine Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's 1999 documentary Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women (1999) within the context of documentary's use of fictional elements and the revisionist "comfort women" movement. On the one hand, the theoretical discussion of documentary's use of reenactment offers a way to challenge the notion of "factual reality" that requires tangible evidence as used in previous documentaries and documentary scholarship. On the other hand, I am going to argue against the revisionist "comfort women" movement driven by Korean American scholars that has dismantled the "comfort women" movement publicly since 2003 by challenging its ethics. Revisionists mainly have criticized the romanticization of the "comfort women" history. According to them, the "comfort women" movement also fictionalized some survivors' stories and made their testimonies

sound more miserable and brutal than was in fact the case. However, revisionist arguments are mainly based on their interviews with the survivors who received compensation from Japanese private agencies and subsequently argued with other survivors who had demanded the governmental compensation. Furthermore, Korean American involvement in the "comfort women" movement was criticized by revisionists for its embodiment of this history through artistic works, including Kim-Gibson's autobiographical approach to her film. However, my readings of interviews, essays, and memoirs with/by Kim-Gibson on the film Silence Broken will reveal the revisionists' flaws in interpretation of the "comfort women" movement. I will also reveal the formal possibilities of the documentary produced by Kim-Gibson as her collaborators, Margaret Stetz and Bonnie B. C. Oh, for the "comfort women" movement in America wanted to render "visibility to the events of the past," while "listening to and valuing those who have survived, obtaining justice in the present, and ensuring a future free of organized and politically sanctioned sexual violence against women."[48]

2.1 Sharing the Herstory of Dai Sil Kim-Gibson with Korean "Comfort Women"

Kim-Gibson, a Korean-American scholar, activist, and documentary filmmaker, has written and produced films to call attention to forgotten, neglected, and distorted historical events such as the 1992 Los Angeles riot. After her subsequent works work in academia for academia and as a programmer for governmental art programs such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, she moved to the filmmaking field in the late 1980s. The reason she started making documentary films was her agitation with "so called objective news reporting" that "did not show minorities as human beings."[49] She

identifies herself as a feminist scholar who "never really believed in going after the strictly objective cognitive elements with the mind alone but with emotive cognition."[50] Her aspiration to make documentaries that avoid superficial objectivity and sustain a strong belief in human emotion produced several documentary films that depict minority groups and their racial relationships in America as presented in America Becoming (Kim-Gibson as a producer/writer and Charles Burnett as a director 1991), Sa-I-Gu: From Korean Women's Perspectives (collaborated with Christine Choy and Elaine Kim 1993), Olivia's Story (collaborated with Charles Burnett 1999), Wet Sand: Voices from LA (2004), and Motherland: Cuba Korea USA (2006). Kim-Gibson has also produced documentaries about forgotten Korean history during and after World War II in A Forgotten People: the Sakhalin Korean (1995) and Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women (1999).

Kim-Gibson's commitment to the Korean "comfort women" issue was the first step in her effort to deconstruct the existing "objective" gaze toward them. Some news coverage and research focused just on statistics: how many women were kidnapped, raped, and killed by the Japanese military. Kim-Gibson instead focused on personal stories and traveled to interview each woman. Her journey on behalf of the "comfort women" issue started when she became an interpreter for Grandmother Keum-ju Hwang's testimony in Washington D.C. in 1992. In addition to her engagement in the Korean American feminist movement, Kim-Gibson's experiences of growing up under the Japanese regime in her early teenage years made it possible for her to communicate with the survivors who were born and raised in a similar era. Kim-Gibson and the survivors remembered how it was like to live in the colonized Korea where the mother

language and customs were banned by Japan. Furthermore, Kim-Gibson also could understand the agonies of the survivors caused by their migration during and after World War II because Kim-Gibson also migrated from North Korea to South Korea and then to the United States.

After that, she carried out her research and interviewed survivors for the next seven years. She even met Korean survivors living in China during the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.[51] They are the ones who could not escape from China to Korea after World War II. Kim-Gibson wrote about her meetings with them in her book Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women but could not record their testimonies in a visual form because the Chinese government tried to hide survivors living there. Because Japan is the most powerful Asian country in the world, it is imperative for several Asian countries to maintain good political and economic relationships with the Japanese government. Therefore, these Asian countries including China try not to talk about their uncomfortable history of World Wars. Although Kim-Gibson only could publish these women's testimonies as a book, Young-joo Byun, whom I will discuss in Chapter 3, finally filmed their existence.

Kim-Gibson's primary project based on her research and interviews was to create autobiographical literary works by combining the grandmothers' testimonies. But she sought a way to visualize these testimonies in order to overcome problems caused by the absence of visual evidence, which, as noted earlier, has had a great impact on debate over the "comfort women" history. Furthermore, by recording the grandmother's existence and voices in documentary film's audio/visual format, the testimonies that Kim-Gibson gathered could gain more credibility among audiences. Throughout her involvement in

activism and collective documentary projects along with survivors and young Korean American artists, both her literary and visual works shrewdly document the "comfort women" history and survivors' lives. Moreover, the grandmothers became collaborative artists for these autobiographic projects.

Kim-Gibson's literary and visual projects under the same title, Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women, became the first extensive compilation of testimonies and autobiography of Korean "comfort women" in America. Since "[t]he most important primary source is the testimony," her book and film are composed of several interviews with survivors living in Korea and Japan in addition to Japanese who participated in their recruitment.[52] She also includes a conservative Japanese group, which has claimed that the "comfort women" were paid prostitutes, to reveal its lack of reasoning and evidence. Nevertheless, recording oral history is a style typical of scholarly and artistic works on the "comfort women" issue.

What makes Kim-Gibson's projects different from others is that this oral history incorporates the form of documentary, drama, and autobiography at the same time. For the book, she uses a dual subjective narration composed of Kim-Gibson and grandmothers' stories. While Kim-Gibson describes her perception and reflections on her meetings with grandmothers, each grandmother narrates her lifelong history, including her childhood experiences, her life as a sexual slave, and her postwar life. In order to differentiate her "I" from each grandmother's "I," Kim-Gibson italicizes her story. The film is also presented through an interwoven collage/combination of women's testimonies, archival footage, dramatized sequences, as well as interviews with Japanese soldiers and recruiters from World War II. Kim-Gibson's approach to the history of

"comfort women" has the same purposes as the previous films, Comfort Women and Senso Daughters, which I discussed in Chapter 1: to break the silence and to reveal the historical truth. However, her film employs multiple modes, including participatory, reflexive, and performative, in the documentary. Her film is similar to Young-joo Byun's trilogy, which I will discuss in Chapter 3, for their joint authorship between the director and survivors to resurrect silenced history and tie the past to the present.

2.2 Silence Broken within the Context of Documentary

Documentary that includes dramatic reenactment has been a contentious form, for it employs (dis)advantages from both fiction and documentary. By taking fictional form, the filmmaker freely uses rhetoric to demonstrate his/her opinions, but fictional elements make the documentary vulnerable to criticism of being nonrealistic. Documentary's use of reenactment "addressing and representing the historical world, from photography and photojournalism to radio reports and oral histories" has been widely discussed since the release of Errol Morris's The Thin Blue Line (1988).[53] E. Ann Kaplan argued that dramatization within documentary makes the film controversial, because the spectator accepts the documentary as representation of reality, not reality.[54] Therefore, documentary's advantage of being perceived as a depiction of reality diminishes from her perspective. In her study on lesbian history represented in Forbidden Love (1992), Amy Villarejo asserts that dramatization based on women's testimony and pulp fiction in this documentary, which portrays lesbian lives, romanticizes the history and manipulates the spectator's perception. Villarejo concludes that "each of [these visual materials] brings with it a distinct history and a regulatory matrix that cannot quite be apprehended solely

through the paradigms of visibility and representation, because they conceal the translations and condensations at work within each form."[55]

Linda Williams, however, asserted that recent documentary, which stages scenes to approximate reenactment, makes traumatic history accessible; furthermore, this strategy helps to find traces of history in the present, because such techniques suggests that what you know as a truth is not "the" truth. In other words, documentary can overturn a known history by incorporating other visual materials such as reenactment, historical footage and photographs in the film to approximate the truth.

Kim-Gibson's Silence Broken was also the object of criticism for its use of dramatization in documentary after it aired on Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in America and at the Pusan Film Festival in Korea. The film, Kim-Gibson writes, "has stirred controversy not only for its content/topic, but also for its format of using extensive dramatization in a documentary."[56] There were several reasons Kim-Gibson incorporated drama in documentary. First, as Williams argues, fictional moments in documentary make traumatic history, such as that of the "comfort women"—which includes incidents such as kidnap, torture, rape, and massacre—more accessible to the viewer. Documentary films cannot "show" these incidents without reenactment based on survivors' testimonies. Second, as noted earlier, "comfort women" history lacks concrete evidence to prove its history except some documents found in Japan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Kim-Gibson notes that "the paucity of direct visual material drove me to make an agonizing decision to dramatize some of the stories."[57] Therefore, her use of dramatization in a documentary was a necessary strategy to portray the memories of survivors and testimonies of Japanese who were involved in the "comfort women"

recruitment and work in wartime but who came forward to confess their sins during the 1990s.

For Silence Broken, Kim-Gibson "quilts" photographs, historical footage, reenactment, interviews, survivors' narration, and paintings, along with music/sound, to reconstruct the coherent story and truth of the "comfort women." This reconstruction redresses the historiography of the "comfort women," despite the lack of documents from World War II. In the climax of the film, Kim-Gibson superimposes all visual and sound materials in order to make the most traumatic account of the "comfort women" history—rape and massacre—accessible. These superimposed images also reveal the fact that the "comfort women" stations and sexual slavery are under the control of Japan's institutionalized and governmental system. The scene starts with the interview of Grandmother Keum-ju Hwang. Hwang says that there were five orders which kidnapped young girls had to follow. She enunciates these five orders: "first, the order of Emperor Hirohito; second, the order of the Japanese government; third, the order of this army headquarters; fourth, the rules of this place; and fifth, my [head of officials] order." This narration overlaps with photographs which show a poster written these five orders in a brothel. Photographs are superimposed with a reenactment of a Japanese soldier raping a girl. Grandmother Keum-ju Hwang's narration reaches a high tone and mixes with a girl's cry (see stills 2.1 and 2.2 from Silence Broken). This seamlessly superimposed scene with photographs, reenactment, narration, and sound shows that the Japanese army kidnapped and raped young girls under the order of the Japanese government.

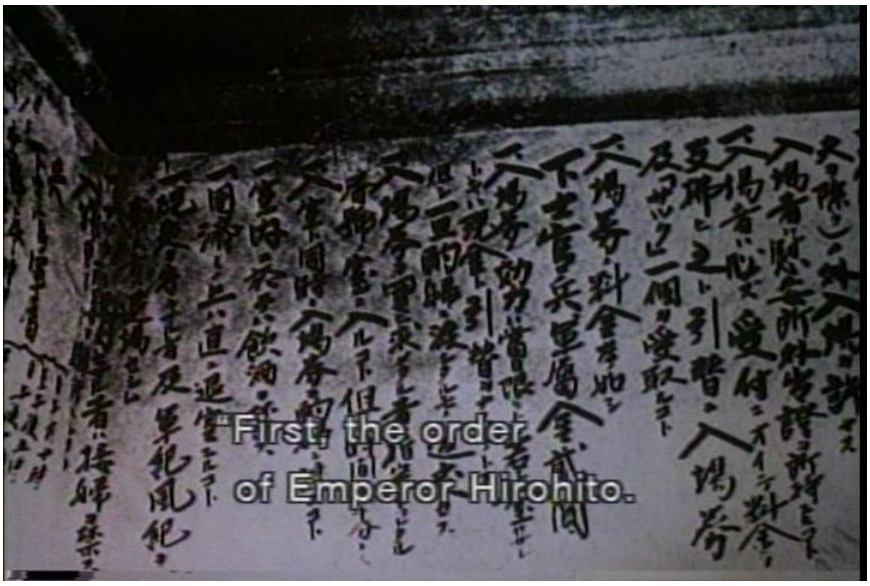

Fig. 2.1. Silence Broken

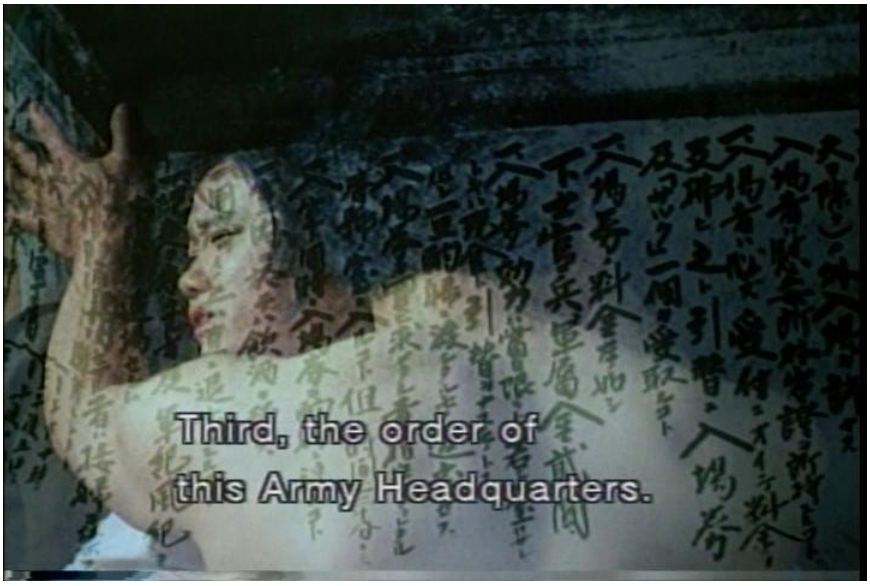

Fig. 2.2. Silence Broken

Furthermore, sound bridge effects over images inform continuous history over time. In Silence Broken, Kim-Gibson often "quilts" images with music. For instance, in the beginning of the film, diegetic music sung by survivors begins in one scene and continues to another image and the music becomes non-diegetic. This non-diegetic music again blends with diegetic music of a new scene (image). Furthermore, a former "comfort woman" starts to look at the camera and narrate her story about how she was kidnapped

by a Japanese official when she was twelve. As she narrates her memory, Kim-Gibson shows photographs of Japanese soldiers with young Korean girls taken during World War II. The photographs are related to the topic/issue but are not of her. But, the photographs become evidence of her memory because of the similarity of contents and the use of a sound bridge. All of these images and the use of sound are organically connected from the beginning to the end. At the end of the film, we are looking at the current lives of former "comfort woman" accompanied by the same song heard in the beginning of the film. As a result of this quilting effect, sound, images, and memory circle around, and the director suggests that this history continues now.

2.3 Korean American Representation and the Reconstruction of the "Comfort Women" Story

Kim-Gibson, along with other artists such as Young-joo Byun, faced criticisms from revisionists for other elements of their films beyond dramatization. As I noted, revisionists have accused the "comfort women" movement of objectifying survivors and romanticizing their stories. In addition to this criticism, Korean American activists and artists were seen to have practiced what Lisa Yoneyama calls "the 'Americanization' of the 'comfort women'" by connecting the "comfort women" experiences to Korean American's diasporic history or to the recent trafficking of young Korean women to America.[58] Americanization of the "comfort women" threatens to displace its history from its space and time and consequently universalize their experiences. Moreover, according to revisionists, who are mainly activists and scholars based at universities in California, the "comfort women" movement scholars and activists based in South Korea

and on the east coast of America often emphasized unproven survivor stories and selected the most sensational stories—such as brutal rape—to publicize the movement.

These criticisms of civic scholars of the "comfort women" movement, especially Korean American artists, are valid. On the other hand, revisionists only advanced these criticisms based on their familiarity with the one-sided story of selected survivors who received compensation from Japanese private agencies. Since the "comfort women" movement has requested a formal apology with compensation from the Japanese government, those survivors' acceptance of private fund was controversial. The tension between survivors who received money and those who did not gradually became severe. While it is imperative not to blame them for receiving monetary support from private organizations, the rhetoric of their justification should be examined to reveal the revisionists' fallacy. In their view, the majority of survivors, except those received compensation, were actually voluntary prostitutes. Such claims threaten to render war and sexual crimes acceptable and to make it possible to talk about "comfort women" history without violence, specifically rape and murder. In fact, what activists acknowledge is not sensational and popular stories but the horrible history the "comfort women" endured.

It is true that several Korean-American artists, including Kim-Gibson, Yong Soon Min and Sasha Y. Lee, created art works, which make linkages between the "comfort women" and diasporic and postcolonial stories of Korean women. Moreover, Kim-Gibson frequently connected her own personal stories—such as her living under the Japanese regime, her escape from North Korea during the Korean War, and her immigration to America—to the "comfort women" experiences. She writes, "In making

this film, I often felt my entire personal history becoming entangled with the history of my land of birth, coupled with that of humankind."[59] However, these artists never conceal the fact that their artistic creations are based on the "comfort women" history.

Furthermore, their accusation against Korean-American artists does not recognize what the "comfort women" movement means for women in subsequent generations. The "comfort women" movement became not only American but an international campaign against war and sexual crimes. In South Korea where the rate of rape and sex trafficking are the highest in the world, the "comfort women" movement became a platform for a war against sexual crimes against women. Revisionist arguments minimize the value of the "comfort women" movement.

Most significantly, Kim-Gibson's joint authorship for her literary work, Silence Broken, and her reflections on literary and visual creation, reveal that the "comfort women" movement recognizes the danger of objectifying and romanticizing this history. In her subsequent articles, "A Film within the Film," "They Are Our Grandmas," and "Do You Hear Their Voices," Kim-Gibson highlights the inspiring power of survivors/grandmothers. She writes, "I rely on the power of the collected voices of the women who tell their stories and all those who suffered the insufferable, living or dead. If there is even an echo of those voices, the film will have a power surpassing the maker [Kim-Gibson]" and "they are also telling their stories for all other women who suffered the same."[60]

Kim-Gibson's efforts through joint authorship for her literary and visual works and the innovative quilting structure she devised for her film provides the spectator with vivid insights into this silenced history and enables her to resurrect legacies of Korean

grandmothers. As Williams argues, dramatization also makes the spectator accessible to traumatic and hidden history. These visual and literary documents created by Kim-Gibson and the grandmothers can establish evidence to fight against the false historiography of the Right Wing groups in Japan and Korea.

Chapter 3

Breaking Boundaries: New Modes of Documentary Filmmaking through the Lens of Diasporic Daughters Survivors

This Chapter 3 examines the documentary trilogy, The Murmuring [Najeun moksori 1, 1995 South Korea], Habitual Sadness (Najeun moksori 2, 1997), and My Own Breathing (Najeun moksori 3, 1999), directed and produced by Young-joo Byun. Among the many efforts to make personal memories of the "comfort women" legitimate and visible history to the public, Byun's documentary films have been considered the most influential and effective vehicle for educating and influencing the public both domestically and internationally. From my perspective, Byun's trilogy challenges revisionists that criticize the "comfort women" movement by deconstructing documentary filmmaking practices that are used to objectify survivors and manipulate public perception of survivors' identities. And the trilogy records evidence to fight against (New) Right Wing political groups in Japan and Korea that hinder the legitimacy of the "comfort women" history.

3.1 Hidden Voices and Visions: The Murmuring (Najeun moksori 1, 1995)

Byun started to film this movie in 1993, while she was making another documentary called Living as a Woman in Asia (1993). By making the first part of the trilogy about survivors, Byun innovates upon documentary filmmaking itself. First, Byun develops collaborative relationships with the survivors by destroying the traditional hierarchy between the director and the subject. In doing so, the film revalues former "comfort women" as members of our society as opposed to mere victims. Second, Byun

incorporates others arts such as music and paintings created by survivors within the film, so the spectator can see survivors' past through their arts. This innovation makes both the director and the survivors the authors of documentary trilogy.[61] The films also break the boundary between documentary and other art forms as well. In this filmmaking practice, the marginalized truth about the "comfort women" is revived. The Murmuring establishes a milieu for the subsequent art movements that sought to empower survivors of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery.

The Murmuring is not only created by Byun's vision but also evolved out of survivors' participation. Even before the filmmaking began, Byun had established relationships with survivors as a feminist activist. Compared to her later films, Habitual Sadness and My Own Breathing, Byun and the survivors do not seen to have very close relationships. But, throughout this film, the spectator can witness how their relationships change. One example is the survivors' gradual involvement in filmmaking, which reflects Thomas Waugh's argument for committed, ethical documentaries. Documentary films—which deal with people's lives and political discourses—"must be made not only *about* people directly implicated in change, but *with* and *for* those people as well."[62] For instance, in the middle of the film, Grandmother Pan-im Song asks Byun to go to the court with the other grandmothers, so Byun can "direct those events." Their voices are not strong at this stage, since it was a time when the extensive public revelation of their presence first occurred. They become a part of the filmmaking process, however.

Byun also abandons the traditional format of documentary film interviews. Claire Johnston criticized documentary techniques that depict "images of women talking to the camera about their experiences, with little or no intervention by the film-maker."[63] Eileen

McGarry mounts a similar critique in her 1975 essay, "Documentary, Realism and Women's Cinema." She demonstrates that the noninterventionist and positivist stance of documentary, in which the director stands behind the camera, cannot filter "the ideological codes of both the natural and the filmic worlds."[64] The documentary filmmaker cannot help but depict the world where women are objectified. Both theorists excoriate documentary film practice that keeps objectifying women in and outside the filmic diegesis. Since The Murmuring was the first film of the trilogy, it was inevitable that it would include interviews of the survivors' personal experiences as "comfort women." However, rather than standing behind the camera, Byun appears in front of the camera as she conduct the interviews. In this way, survivors are no longer the object of the director's eye.

What makes Byun's trilogy unique is her integration of the survivors' art within the film. The spectator not only sees the mechanical visual art of documentary but also observes the highly crafted visual art of paintings and the auditory art of music. In "The Political Aesthetics of the Feminist Documentary Film," Julia Lesage urged documentary filmmakers to produce distinctive aesthetics by highlighting women's own subculture within their films. She believes that women's sensibilities can deconstruct traditional patriarchal codes and provoke the spectator to perceive reality through women's eyes. Some possibilities such as women's "music, voiceover and dramatization" can stylize documentary and disrupt established norms.[65]

In The Murmuring, survivors' music not only provides a distinctive style but also becomes a way to deliver the history of the "comfort women." The most striking instances happen when Byun visits survivors who live in China. These women could not

come back to Korea after the war. After forty years of forced diaspora—first by the Japanese government, second by Korean society's abandonment of them, and third by the Chinese government's surveillance, these women did not even know that their motherland had changed its name from Chosun to Korea. Yet, they still remember traditional songs and sing these songs everyday to cure their trauma and to express their yearning to go back to their home. Some of the survivors in China remember a national anthem of the time sung by Koreans in the early 1940s to support Korea's independence. Among several survivors in China, Granny Kim shows the power of music. She forgot how to speak Korean and does not know her name. Her memory starts from the period when she was in the comfort station. However, she remembers several songs. She repeats "Arirang," which is a traditional song that expresses the pain of life. The sexual slavery system took her language and her name, but it could not take her songs.

In addition, Byun incorporates survivors' paintings, and these visualize verbal testimonies. After the first testimony by grandmother Hak-soon Kim, other grandmothers came out to the public to testify about their past experiences. Since then, they have had to reiterate their testimonies. It was imperative to listen to their statements as their memories are the only evidence of the historical event. However, because testimonies constitute verbal evidence, those cannot be exactly the same whenever they talk about the past. And testimonies can disappear when grandmothers die. The Japanese government and South Korea's New Right political associations attacked the movement as false based on some subtle differences among the testimonies of different survivors.

In order to materialize their verbal testimonies, the movement organizes and creates several art shows, including paintings and photographs. Painting was another way

to collect and visualize testimonies. Furthermore, paintings became a way to cure the survivors' psychological despair when they first appeared publicly. What makes these paintings so fascinating is that these images can tell and show survivors' inner struggles, which were silenced and could not be expressed verbally. In The Murmuring, rather than filming a series of interviews, Byun shows several survivors' paintings. Here are some examples:

Fig. 3.1. Sun-duck Kim. "In the Boat."[66]

Fig. 3.2. Duk-kyung Kang, "A Comfort Station."[67]

Fig. 3.3. Duk-kyung Kang, "Stolen Innocence."[68]

Grandmother Kim's painting literally shows that young women were gathered by the Japanese military at the direction of the Japanese government and sent overseas. Grandmother Kang's paintings (Figure 3.2 and 3.3) have drawn domestic and international attention for their complex metaphors and style, and consequently they have been exhibited and published in different countries. In "Stolen Innocence," she portrays

her rape by a Japanese military person. This sexual slavery system and its violence were deeply planted, as a Japanese soldier becomes a root and body of a tree in the painting. With this rotten tree, flowers withered as an innocent woman died. As soon as the leaves hit the ground, they change into people's skulls. In the film, when grandmother Duk-kyung Kang narrates her experiences in the "comfort station," the camera moves to her painting. The camera first establishes the shot by showing the entire canvas. As grandmother Kang explains her feelings embedded in the painting, the camera cuts to close ups of the details of the painting. As the camera isolates each part of the painting, the spectator is led to interpret the painting based on the visualization of grandmother Kang's testimonies. By substituting talking-head interviews with these paintings in the film, the spectator can see survivors' memories in multiple ways.

With the music and paintings created and produced by the survivors, the boundary between director Byun and the grandmothers diminishes. All of these women are creators of this film. Furthermore, through these artistic works and filmmaking, the survivors begin to cure their traumas. It is also worth noticing how this unique style blurs the borders among film, painting, and music.

3.2 Never-ending Story: Habitual Sadness (Najeun moksori 2, 1997)

Eight months after the filming of The Murmuring ended, the filming of the second part of trilogy started. While The Murmuring was a record of personal memories and the survivors' fight against the trauma of the past in postcolonial South Korea and China, Habitual Sadness portrays how survivors' coherent senses of self can be assembled through filmmaking. In this film, survivors do not just participate in a part of the film but

create this film entirely. Their gradual recovery from their past traumas through the filmmaking process becomes interconnected with their active social participation. At the end, the film shows how grandmothers' stories of the past and present resonate with postcolonial Korean daughters' experiences as women in patriarchal society; therefore, the film manifests why we should keep the history of the "comfort women" and survivors visible.

The film is composed of two narratives: 1) survivors' confrontation with the death of grandmother Duk-kyung Kang and 2) grandmothers' new lives in the new "House of Sharing," a home for survivors supported by a Buddhist organization. Unlike the first part of the trilogy that Byun planned by herself, the grandmothers proposed how to make the second film to Byun. In the beginning of the film, Byun narrates a brief history of the "comfort women" and the movement since 1991: "In World War II, Japan forced many Koreans into sexual slavery. In 1991, 158 women began testifying about being comfort women. The House of Sharing was set up for former comfort women in 1992." By summarizing the history of "comfort women," Byun hints that the purpose of the second film is not about the past. She then introduces the reason the sequel was created. "I worked on The Murmuring that recorded their [grandmothers'] lives in the 'House of Sharing' for two years from 1993. 8 months after the film was finished, they moved outside Seoul. Grandmothers called me to suggest making a new movie in their new home." In addition, after grandmother Kang was diagnosed with lung cancer, "she wished to be remembered. So she asked me [Byun] to film her until her death." In this introduction of the movie, Byun clearly states that this film was not a result of her interest, but rather the grandmothers' collective wish to record their lives.

To grandmother Duk-kyung Kang, making documentary films is a powerful way to communicate with other survivors. In this film, it is hard for us to see Kang's rigor and energy. After her illness became worse, she could not go outside the new "House of Sharing." Despite the fact that she wished to see other survivors—whom she called "sisters," director Byun "was disgusted because [she] could only film her battle with cancer. When [she] heard grandma Kang's wish to see other people, I dropped everything, and went to Ulsan to film grandma Yun Tu-ri." In the next shot, the spectator is led to the scene that shows grandma Tu-ri Yun who prays for her "sister" Kang. By watching these two subsequent scenes, the spectator can witness how this documentary film becomes a medium of connection between two survivors, two sisters. Yun can see Kang's last moments and Kang fulfills her wish to see sister Yun before her death.

What makes the film interesting is that Byun is not afraid of expressing her anger on camera. The camera of this documentary film subsequently mirrors Byun's agonies as a documentary filmmaker. This project started as a result of Kang's hope to be remembered through film. However, as an activist and a filmmaker, Byun, who had developed affection for Kang, could not help but be emotional upon filming her death. In Habitual Sadness, we see several black-blank frames without images but with Byun's monologue and the grandmothers' voices because Byun often turns her camera off to express her wrath and to keep her obligation to grandmother Kang. The two most distinctive instances are a) her confession that she was furious with her own filming of sick grandma Kang and b) her remorse for her absence in a moment of grandma Kang's death. When grandma Kang became healthier, director Byun went on a business trip to Europe. However, while Byun was away, Kang suddenly passed away. Without image

and color, her narration becomes the only element that we can perceive. She says, "I couldn't keep my promise to film her to the end. In my absence, of course, my assistants filmed her last moments. But I was not there. For a time after I returned to Seoul and while I was editing the film, I couldn't look at that scene." Documentary films can employ several devices to capture "reality," including the moment of individual death. Even though Byun had filmed images that accompanied the sound, she decided not to include them in the final version of the film. This is a unique methodology not because of its striking effect on the spectator but because Byun's powerful attachment to her subjects of filmmaking produced innovation. The director who is behind the camera shows her anger through the camera that refuses to "look."

But the film finally becomes a commemoration of grandma Kang's legacies. After the blank frames, we see grandmother Kang's images and her voice filmed and recorded during her treatment. Kang, who became "a movie star" through filmmaking, claims, "Even though we grannies are all very old, we live together like a family…I want the world to know our fight. We became stronger. We'll live longer." And the film retrospectively employs The Murmuring by filming that movie shown on television within this film. We now see healthy and active Kang who sings, "We've sworn to stick together and forever." The camera comes back to the present and shows Kang's paintings, to which she devoted herself in order to provide evidence of her memories. With a sound bridge effect, we still hear her songs; "Forever, love's gone forever, and so have you! I'm left all alone. I'll miss the old days." The last image of Kang is a photograph of her, which was taken while filming Habitual Sadness. With her photograph, we hear her last voice, "I'm crying." Michel Chion has said that "sounds [that] lack a frame…are easily

projected by the spectator."[69] Her songs, beyond time and space, reverberate and inspire our own inner voices. The images and voices are belong to Kang, but they also become ours—spectator's, film crew's, Byun's, survivors'—memories of her. This part of the film becomes a way to mirror our memories. In our memories, she is not only a victim of the sexual slavery but also a painter, singer, danger, movie star, and director who left several artistic works to us.

By keeping Kang in our memories, we continue to meet our grandmothers who moved to the new "House of Sharing." Grandmothers who were ashamed of their past and somewhat timid in The Murmuring now have authority over the house and their own identities. I would like to highlight two scenes of the film that exemplify these changes. After The Murmuring, in addition to media coverage of the grandmothers, several support groups were formed and donated money. The grandmothers came to know that their existence was material for public media consumption. They also realized that staff members of the "House of Sharing" misused donations for their moving and living. While some grandmothers argue, "we just need to accept what they do for us because we are the ones who are old and illiterate," the majority of them assert they should "discuss logically if they [Monk Hye-jin and staffs of the House] have done something wrong" to grandmothers. During the House meeting, grandmother Mi-ja Shim concludes; "if we speak up, you must listen. And when you talk, we'll listen too. We should behave like a family. Let's respect each other to make our home peaceful." Before the making of The Murmuring, grandmothers used to "murmur" their voices and opinions. But they learned the value of their opinions and their presence. This is not to say that the grandmothers are

fully recovered from their past traumas. But, through the collective filmmaking process, they have awakened to their value.[70]

Fig.3.4. Habitual Sadness

Fig.3.5. Habitual Sadness

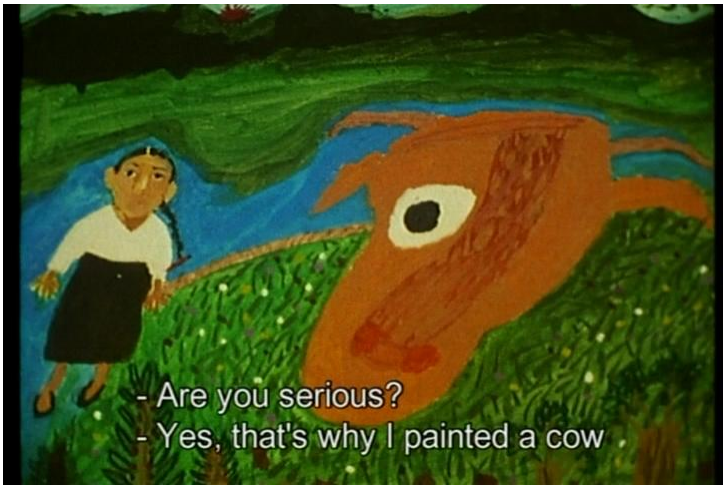

Fig.3.6. Habitual Sadness

The grandmothers also direct films to represent their awareness of their sense of selves. In The Murmuring, the grandmothers participate in the filmmaking by suggesting Byun come to the court with them. In Habitual Sadness, they decide on one theme of the film—new lives in the new House—because they want to show their subjectivities to the spectator. After the grandmothers moved to the new house, they started farming. Grandmother Sun-Duck Kim asked for the film crew to film her carrying pumpkins because she wanted to show that grandmothers "grew them by [themselves]." Byun, who appears on the screen as frequently as the grandmothers, asks, "How do you think you'll look in the film? How do you like to be seen?" Kim replies, "As someone who works like a cow. That's why I painted a cow." The film then shows Kim's painting, "Cow," and we hear Kim's narration; "Even at my age, I work all day long." In this scene, her painting becomes a reminiscence of her life (see the sequence captured from Fig.3.1 to Fig. 3.3). Byun, and of course the spectator, becomes curious as to why Kim wants to be filmed while working. Her answer becomes a powerful statement to verify her subjectivity and philosophy of life. "I want to prove I'm only working…I don't lie or beg. I do my best. I don't do any harm to others. But I help others with my strength even though I've only had work all my life." Kim does not want the public to consume her image as a victim of hard life but to respect her devotion and diligence in trying to help others. Pilzer noted that Kim's song and painting, "My Heart the Number One," proves her effort to recover from her past trauma.[71] In addition to her song and her painting, she shows her autonomy by directing documentary filmmaking.

Moreover, grandmother Tu-ri Park's openness to singing her song—which is an expression of her sexual desire—in the film demonstrates her inner changes and her

overcoming of her fear of the public's view of her as a former prostitute with psychological problems. In The Murmuring, Park continuously expresses her anxiety about how the public will perceive her. When grandmother Pan-im Song pushed Park to sing her song, Park replied, "People will say that I am crazy." But, in The Habitual Sadness, Park voluntarily starts to sing her song when she drinks a bottle of traditional liquor with the female film crew and director Byun;

> It's only right to bring water to a house on fire.
> Bring a truckload of old widowers to the House of Sharing.
> If there's extra to go around, we'll share them out.
> Doggie, doggie, black doggie. Ragged, shaggy doggie.
> I didn't give you leftovers because I'm full.
> It's because I want you not to bark when my lover arrives deep in the night.
> Then, why bark and wake my husband.

Using the traditional poetic format, Park creates a new song to express her sexuality. She demonstrates that she still feels "like fifteen." Although time passed, "it shouldn't take [her] youth." Instead of being shy about her song, Park voices how her song has "deep meanings" for her about female sexuality.

Grandma Park's change, therefore, signifies how the "comfort women" movement and filmmaking also influenced people's ideas toward women's sexual desire. The "comfort women" movement actually became a platform for 1990s feminism to address women's rape and domestic violence that had been previously silenced in postcolonial South Korea. It was not a coincidence that after the documentary trilogy, Byun's next fiction film Ardor (2003) depicted issues of female sexuality and domestic violence. In this fiction film, the female character played by Yunjin Kim suffering psychological trauma from giving childbirth and her husband's continuous neglect and violence finds her liberation as she gradually recovers her sexuality. In that sense,

Habitual Sadness shows how struggles of the "comfort women" in the colonial period are linked to contemporary women's fight against sexual and gender discrimination. At the end, film shows how the grandmothers strive to support their lives by themselves through farming. After this image, Byun inserts the following statement;

> When the war ended in 1945, 65,000 of the estimated 80,000 comfort women were Koreans. In 1995, there were 7,031 official reports of rape. We must take under-reporting—around 2.2% of female victims of rape report crimes—into consideration, South Korea had 320,000 crimes of sexual violence.

These lines call attention to the importance of the "comfort women" movement and remind us of the fact that the violence of sexual slavery continues in the late 1990s.

3.3 They Are Still Alive: My Own Breathing (Najeun moksori 3, 1999)

The last film of Byun's trilogy uses an autobiographical mode. Here, survivors raise their voices to express their own subjectivity and agency. But, this film also becomes a place for filmmakers and spectators to remember deceased grandmothers and their legacies by showing the filmmaking process involved in the previous films, The Murmuring and Habitual Sadness, and in the grandmothers' other artistic creations.

In My Own Breathing, grandmother Yong-soo Yi, not Byun, becomes an interviewer of several survivors. What makes this film more innovative than autobiographical documentary is that grandmother Yi not only becomes the eye and voice of the film but also encourages other survivors to have a similar power over its dialogue. In other words, this film becomes a product of collective filmmakers—survivors.

The film also challenges the notion of film as a visual art, by incorporating literary art, specifically an autobiographical essay written by grandmother Yoon-shim Kim, as a main device. Grandmother Kim received a "Labor Literature Award: The Best

Journal Award" in 1998 for her autobiography. In her work, she wrote of how South Korean myths are against women's liberation and influenced the "comfort women" system. She also included her drawings as symbols of her writing.

> Ma told me I was born on Feb 28th 1929 at night. Dad didn't want a girl in the year of the horse. It meant I'd be an ill-fated wanderer. I'm 14 and my life is worse than death. I was taken when I was out skipping rope. I hate the bastard Japs. I hate my wandering horse destiny.

While we are "reading" her essay, we see her drawing of a horse that looks similar to her. Instead of interviews or photographs that heavily rely on visuality in testimonial documentary, the spectator reads personal stories on the screen.

Furthermore, her writing is also a fight against Confucian custom that excluded women from education and social participation. Throughout the trilogy, we often hear of the grandmothers' desire to learn. Most of them were illiterate, never went to school and came from low-class families. In addition, Confucianism, which was a source for pervasive social norms in East Asian countries, blocked their desire to be educated during the colonial period. Pilzer noted that the efforts of the "comfort women" movement to educate women through painting and writing were a "hierarchical" way to construct survivors' stories.[72] Education is hierarchical from his perspective because he assumes that women do not need to learn to express their emotions and tell their stories. The movement led by the intellectuals tried to teach survivors how to read and write. Scholars and activists believed that survivors could show their legacies to the public and cure their trauma through their writings and paintings. From Pilzer's perspective, grandmothers already had music as their tool to recover from the trauma and to tell their history. He believes that the movement forced other methods of expression such as writing. While his "anthropological" approach—which is in danger of making the subject the other—seems

plausible, he does not take Korean women's struggle of the time against Confucian custom into account. Grandmother Kim argues that South Korean society does not care about justice for women. Society merely treats their stories as mere gossip. Against society's limitations on women's education and lives, Kim's writing becomes a sign of her own subjectivity and her liberation from social oppression.

The film finally becomes an autobiography of director Byun, the film crew, and the spectator by reflecting our memories of previous films and grandmothers. To examine this aspect in depth, I would like to highlight its introduction and ending. In the beginning of the film, we see photographs taken from 1995 to 1997. The five photographs show the history of the trilogy. The first picture shows the film crew for The Murmuring (1995) with the grandmas at the House of Sharing. Next, we see a black and white photograph of grandma Hak-Sun Kim with the caption "Grandmother Hak-sun Kim deceased." The photograph of granny Kim [a survivor living in China whose name is unknown] with a caption "Granny Kim deceased" is shown, and then the black-and-white photograph of Hong-kang Lim with the same caption is presented. And the last photograph shows the film crew for Habitual Sadness (1997) with grandmas at the new "House of Sharing." In these photographs, we encounter people, including the film crew, grandmothers, and activists, who participated in filmmaking. Furthermore, we meet grandmothers who are no longer present through photographs. By watching these photographs that mirror our memories about the previous films and deceased grandmothers, My Own Breathing becomes a pathway between the past and the present. At the end of the film, the survivors take a group picture together. This photographic art within the filmic art brings other memories such as those of the survivors' past, their movement, and filmmaking.

The integration of other artistic discourses and filmic expressions makes the formerly hidden voices of the former "comfort women" heard and restores their historical and artistic legacies. The political aesthetics of the filmmaker, incorporating grandmothers' arts in documentary, opens the space for them to address their memory by means of their own words and artistic expression. In her interview, Byun comments, "the camera became a witness for the women; a witness that remained and lives with them for seven years. And my hope was for the women themselves to create something, by and for themselves."[73] The spectator, therefore, sees marginalized history and women's legacies through the lens of grandmothers.[74] Through these reconstructions of traumatic history in documentary films, we now know the grandmothers are survivors, artists, and film directors.

Conclusion

The "comfort women" movement led by Korean and Korean American feminists since 1991 has been a fight against sexual violence against women in the past, present, and for the future. In addition to academic investigations and activism, artistic works have been effective vehicles for revealing the hidden and manipulated stories about "comfort women." Among those arts, this thesis paid a specific attention to documentary films, which have been circulated throughout domestic and international film festivals and schools as the most effective educational tools.

While documentary films have been criticized for their manipulation and objectification of their subjects, films by Kim-Gibson and Byun which I have discussed show how documentary can be ethical and artistic at the same time. By breaking down the boundaries between the filmmaker and the subject, Byun and Kim-Gibson challenged documentary conventions. The filmmakers integrate the artistic works (painting, music, and writing) of the survivors in addition to incorporating fictional discourse in the documentary. These challenges subsequently make the survivors autonomous, collective authors of these documentaries, and as Claire Johnston imagined, their incorporation of other visual, musical, and literary arts becomes an example of "counter cinema."[75]

The integration of other artistic discourses and filmic expressions, furthermore, makes the hidden voice of "comfort women" heard and redresses their historical and artistic legacies. The political aesthetics of the filmmakers, incorporating former comfort women's arts in documentary, opens the space for them to address their memory by means of their own words and artistic expression. By creating a new artistic mechanism of documentary through the former comfort's women's artistic discourse, the filmmakers

restore the silenced and distorted truth of history. As Bernstein and Williams argued, cinematic representations of traumatic history provide a way to approach multiple truths. The spectator, therefore, sees marginalized truths and women's legacies through the lens of "comfort women." The survivors are still alive in the spectator's memory through the films, and the stills of these films are alive with their legacies.

Notes

Introduction

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[5] Dongwoo Lee Hahm, forward to Comfort Women Speak: Testimony by Sex Slaves of the Japanese Military, vii.
[6] Oh, "The Japanese Imperial System and the Korean "Comfort Women" of World War II," 4-8.
[7] Bill Nichols, Representing Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 76.
[8] Ibid, 77.
[9] Joshua Pilzer, "My Heart the Number One": Singing in Lives of South Korean Survivors of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, Chicago, 2006).
[10] Regarding interdependent efforts between survivors and the intellectuals for the "comfort women" movement as a general, see Soyang Park, "Silence, Subaltern Speech and the Intellectuals in South Korea: The Politics of Emergent Speech in the Case of Former Sexual Slaves." Journal for Cultural Research 9, no. 2 (2005): 169-206.
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Chapter 1. Documenting History of the "Comfort Women" and Screening Survivors

[17] Thomas Waugh, introduction to "Show Us Life": Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary, ed. by Thomas Waugh (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1984), xiv.
[18] Dziga Vertov, Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 47.
[19] Jack C. Ellis and Betsy A. McLane, A New History of Documentary Film (New York : Continuum, c2005), 227-8.
[20] Eileen McGarry, "Documentary, Realism and Women's Cinema." Women & Film 2, no. 7 (1975): 50.
[21] E. Ann Kaplan, "Theories and Strategies of the Feminist Documentary." Millennium Film Journal 12 1982-3: 58.
[22] Nichols, Introduction to Documentary (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 99-138.
[23] McGarry, "Documentary, Realism and Women's Cinema," 50.
[24] Ellis and McLane, A New History of Documentary Film, 3.
[25] Matthew H. Bernstein, Screening a Lynching: The Leo Frank Case on Film and Television (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 22.
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[27] Nichols, Representing Reality, 230-6.

[28] Nichols, "Questions of Magnitude," in Documentary and the Mass Media, ed. John Corner (Baltimore: Edward Arnold, 1986), 114.
[29] Jane Chapman, Issues in Contemporary Documentary (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), 30-1.
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[36] Fatimah Rony, The Third Eye: Race, Cinema and the Ethnographic Spectacle (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 196.
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[39] Ibid.
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[43] Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas. "Toward a Third Cinema," in Movies and Methods, Volume I. ed. Bill Nichols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 44-64.
[44] Nancy N. Cohen and Trinh T. Minh-ha, "Speaking Nearby," in Feminism and Film, ed. E. Ann Kaplan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 317-335.
[45] The first documentary film about the "comfort women" was probably Imamura Shohei's Foreign-Bound Women from the late 1970s. The filmmaker traveled to Malaysia and brought a former comfort woman to Japan. Yamatani Tetsuo's 1979 documentary film, Okinawa no harumoni, is believed to be the first documentary film that focused on a Korean survivor of the Japanese sexual slavery. And then, Pak Sunam produced Korean documentary about the "comfort women" called Chongshindae arirang for the first time in 1991.
[46] Scholars have argued the similar point that Senso Daughters shows a sense of complexity between public memory and official accounts. See John W. Dower, "Senso Daughters." The Journal of Asian Studies 51, no. 3 (1992): 723-4; and see Roxana Waterson, "Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony." History and Anthropology 18, no. 1 (2007): 51-73.

Chapter 2. Drama within Documentary: Silence Broken

[47] Williams, "Mirrors with Memories: Truth, History and the New Documentary," 20.
[48] Bonnie B. C. Oh and Margaret Stetz, introduction to Legacies of Comfort Women of World War II, xvi.
[49] Frances Gateward, "Breaking the Silences: An Interview with Dai Sil Kim-Gibson." Quarterly Review of Film & Video 20 (2003): 102.
[50] Ibid.
[51]. Kim-Gibson, "They Are Our Grandmas," 269.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Nichols, Introduction to Documentary, 2.
[54] Kaplan, Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera (New York: Methuen, 1983), 139.
[55] Amy Villarejo, Lesbian Rule: Cultural Criticism and the Value of Desire (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 191.

[56] Kim-Gibson, "A Film within the Film: Making a Documentary about Korean 'Comfort Women,'" in Legacies of Comfort Women of World War II, 191.
[57] Ibid., 190.
[58] Lisa Yoneyama, "Traveling Memories Contagious Justice: Americanization of Japanese War Crimes at the End of the Post-Cold War." Journal of Asian American Studies 6, no. 1 (2003): 57-93.
[59] Kim-Gibson, "A Film within the Film," 190.
[60] Ibid., 191.

Chapter 3. Breaking Boundaries: New Modes of Documentary Filmmaking through the Lens of Diasporic Daughters and Survivors

[61] The recent publication by Hye Jean Chung noted this joint authorship of documentary trilogy by Byun and survivors. See "Reclamation of Voice: The Joint Authorship of testimony in the Murmuring Trilogy," in Documentary Testimonies: Global Archives of Suffering, ed. Bhaskar Sarkar and Janet Walker (New York: Routledge, 2010), 135-154.
[62] Waugh, "Show Us Life": Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary, xiii.
[63] Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema," 29.
[64] McGarry, "Documentary, Realism and Women's Cinema," 56.
[65] Julia Lesage, "The Political Aesthetics of the Feminist Documentary Film." Quarterly Review of Film Studies 3, no.4 (1978): 56.
[66] Sun-duck Kim, "In the Boat," House of Sharing, 1995, http://www.nanum.org/eng/index.html (accessed October 18, 2008).
[67] Duk-kyung Kang, "A Comfort Station," House of Sharing, 1995, http://www.nanum.org/eng/index.html (accessed October 18, 2008).
[68] Dyk-kyung Kang, "Stolen Innocence," House of Sharing, 1995, http://www.nanum.org/eng/index.html (accessed October 18, 2008).
[69] Michel Chion, "Audio-Vision and Sound," in Sound, ed. Patricia Kruth and Henry Stobart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 204.
[70] The similar point was made by Maki Kimura. See "Narrative as a Site of Subject Construction: The 'Comfort Women' Debate." Feminist Theory 9, no. 1 (2008): 5-24. Kimura writes, "After the first film, Najuen Mokusori I (The Murmuring) (1995), the women became more self-confident and aware of the political implications of their experiences. Instead of isolating themselves from the audience, they have become more communicative so as not to be seen only as 'victims' of sexual violence" (18).
[71] Pilzer, "My Heart the Number One": Singing in Lives of South Korean Survivors of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery, 50.
[72] Ibid., 58.
[73] Soyang Park interviewed Young-joo Byun. See online article, "Nazen Moksori 2—habitual sadness: discussion with South Korean film director Young-joo Byun," 2001, http://a-r-c_Four/printexts/print_habitual.html (27 September 2009).
[74] The similar opinion was expressed by Roxana Waterson. See "Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony." History and Anthropology 18, no. 1 (2007): 51-73.

Conclusion

[75] Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema."

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