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## The Traumatic Effect of the Japanese War on Women in Rani Manicka's Selected Novels

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### Abstract

The Second World War which lasted from 1939-1945 left a deep dent in the lives of many victims in the world. The four-year Japanese rule in Malaya created a permanent scar in the hearts of the Malaysians which lingered on even after many decades. The sufferings of the Malaysian people under the inhuman Japanese army are clearly depicted in the two novels selected for this research, Rani Manicka's *The Rice Mother* (2002) and *The Japanese Lover* (2010). The novels are about how women are subjected to the effects of war during the Japanese occupation, the pain of separation from a mother and her child, and the challenges a woman goes through to survive within a community. Manicka has used the Japanese occupation in Malaya as part of the settings for both novels. The characters will be studied under the light of trauma theory to highlight the irreparable damages caused by war on the psyche and the emotions of the characters as portrayed in the two novels. Trauma describes experiences that are emotionally painful and distressing whereby the victims face the inability to cope with life and it leaves behind a fundamental life-altering effect. This study aims to highlight the atrocities of the Japanese army in Malaya by studying the female characters in the selected novels. Secondly, this study will analyze the damages brought by the war to the female characters in the novels using the trauma theory and finally show how the war left a permanent damage in the lives of the female victims. The novelist highlights the injustices done to women in such societies and how they suffer even more after colonization. This double marginalization shatters and traumatizes the female identities. Therefore, this article will further break down the coping mechanisms used by the female characters to survive.

**Keywords:** Japanese atrocities, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Trauma, Female identity

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## Introduction

The experience of war is always traumatic to the victims. It often leaves a deep scar in their souls which linger for a long time and sometimes even change their path of life. The Japanese occupation in Malaya during World War Two has left a deep impact on the lives of many Malaysians and their descendants for decades. The atrocities committed by the Japanese were passed to the younger generations as life experience stories. Many Malaysian writers have chronicled the lives of the Malayan people during the period of Japanese occupation and World War Two. Rani Manicka is one of those writers who often use the Japanese occupation in Malaya as part of the settings for her novels. Manicka is a novelist who was born and educated in Malaysia. She is of Sri Lankan origins and she infuses her Sri Lankan family history in her novels. The novels selected for this research are *The Rice Mother* (2002) and *The Japanese Lover* (2010).

Her debut novel, *The Rice Mother* (2002) won the Commonwealth Writer's Prize in 2003 for South East Asia and South Pacific Region. *The Rice Mother* is about how women are subjected to the effects of war during the Japanese occupation, the pain of separation from a mother and her child, and the challenges a woman goes through to survive within a community. This powerfully moving novel portrays a strong feminine figure, Lakshmi who is supposedly known in the name of the Goddess of Wealth and the title 'The Rice Mother' dully explains as to why women, especially mothers, are then considered epitome of life itself. The protagonist tries to manage all her shortcomings in life especially after she was married off to a much older man when she was barely fourteen and how she copes with the loss of her daughter Mohini to the Japanese in varying time periods. Lakshmi's struggle starts when she, as a child, was forced to leave her motherland, get married to an old stranger and migrate to a country she hardly knows. One could imagine how loving her mother had raised Lakshmi when she says, "I sucked my mother's breast until the age of almost seven... impatiently crying out for my mother" (Manicka, 2002, p. 8). Imagining a child to be married to a man who is more than two decades older than Lakshmi is something that makes any reader disturbed, "Well he is thirty-seven years old... But Ama, he is older than you!" (Manicka, 2002, p. 4). Besides, child marriages were considered a norm and when sexual exploitation was considered a crime traditionally such marriages still took place. Lakshmi was even too young to understand sexuality let alone being sexually violated on her so called "first-night" when she says, "I stared at my own tear-streaked shocked face in confusion... What it he has just done to me was?" (Manicka, 2002, p. 19).

The Japanese invaded Malaya in 1941 and they raped girls and women regardless of their race. The Japanese soldiers used Mui Tsai as a comfort woman, "Oh God, how hard I tried not to think... who urinated inside Mui Tsai" (Manicka, 2002, p. 229) but this benefited Lakshmi's beautiful daughter Mohini and her Chinese neighbor who were safely hidden for more than three years, "Our Mohini and Ah Moi next door owed their virginity to her ... Because they had Mui Tsai, they didn't bother to look too hard for the other carefully hidden daughters" (Manicka, 2002, p. 90). The Malaysians did their best in order to protect their daughters from being sexually exploited by the Japanese, "Girls turned into boys overnight, and girls of a certain age vanished into thin air" (Manicka, 2002, p. 127). The character of Mui Tsai does not fail to make one wonder about the inequality a woman was subjected to when she was sold as a slave, "Old Soong, Mui Tsai's master paid the pricey sum of two hundred and fifty" (Manicka, 2002, p. 51) and she was raped and impregnated by the Master only for her babies to be handed over to the mistresses of Old Soong, "Come, come my dear... patting the bed beside him" (Manicka, 2002, p. 54) and as time passed she endured so much torture

that would bring tears to one's eyes, "The thick blackish blood had stained her samfoo... Mui Tsai looked right through me, so torn with pain" (Manicka, 2002, p. 214).

Rani Manicka, in her novel *The Japanese Lover* (2010), stresses the fear of the sexual abuse that the Malaysians suffered from. Kasu Marimuthu, Parvathi's husband, warned her from the Japanese before his death, "The Japanese are coming. They are uncaring and inhuman... But do all you can to protect my daughter. Cut her beautiful hair... Turn her into a boy and hide her as much as you can" (Manicka, 2010, p. 172). In *The Japanese Lover*, Parvathi was only sixteen years old when she got married to a rich widower from Malaya, Kasu Marimuthu, "he became so immensely rich in the new land that he earned the nickname Kasu (Money) Marimuthu" (Manicka, 2010, p. 12). The latter was cheated by Parvathi's father so that he would benefit from his son-in-law's wealth, "Don't forget how we are suffering here. Send money as soon as possible" (Manicka, 2010, p. 17). Parvathi, the Goddess of love and devotion, was sent to a place that she barely knew and she had to meet the expectations of being the mistress of Kasu Marimuthu and to adapt to the sophistication of her new life in Adari. Language played a crucial role in that society as it reflected the person's classiness so a tutor was hired to teach Parvathi English, "Who would have thought it? She is learning English!" (Manicka, 2010, p. 69). Kasu Marimuthu's decision to send Parvathi back to her home was delayed because Maya, the wise cook and healer, advised him not to let her go as, "she is an adored soul who has incarnated to experience love in the most unlikely circumstances" (Manicka, 2010, p. 31).

Rani Manicka gives a pivotal attention to the female relationship in her novels and the empowering role they play in each other's lives. Though Parvathi and Maya were not blood relatives, their strong bond lasted until the end of the novel when Maya died, "When my soul issues its call for me to return, you mustn't cry" (Manicka, 2010, p. 306). Parvathi was separated from her mother at a younger age and she felt what Kasu Marimuthu's daughter Rubini went through when her mother died, "I can't bring her back for you, but I promise to take care of you just like she would have... You can trust me. I won't abandon you" (Manicka, 2010, p. 145). After the death of Kasu Marimuthu and the invasion of the Japanese, Parvathi's life has drastically changed, "The Japanese have taken over our house, our estates, our bakery, our cars" (Manicka, 2010, p. 204). Even Parvathi's heart was taken by the Japanese General, Hattori San, who became her secret lover, "I unhesitatingly accepted the love offered by life... Who can blame you? Does not God himself say, Love your enemy for he is me" (Manicka, 2010, p. 198). However, the General's love for Parvathi does not cover for the atrocities that the Malaysians endured by the Japanese as they were, "A wholly enigmatic race, their souls covered with night light; deadly, ill-pleased men who would cut down a tree for a coconut and blow up a whole nest for a comb of honey" (Manicka, 2010, p. 226).

Based on the above motives, this paper highlights the atrocities of the Japanese army in Malaya by studying the female characters in the selected novels. *The Rice Mother* and *The Japanese Lover* are being selected due to their depiction of what the Malaysians went through during the Japanese invasion. This war has strongly affected the female characters' lives and the drastic changes will be analyzed through the use of trauma theory. Moreover, the female characters endured severe traumatic experiences because of the Japanese war which consequently left a permanent damage in the lives of the female victims.

## Background of the Study

The inclusion of trauma theory in literary studies has been widely spread because of the traumatic events which the world is witnessing. Writers and literary researchers rely on trauma theory as it mirrors the suffering of traumatized people especially because of the war. Cathy Caruth in her *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995) states that, "...many people have recognized the urgency of learning more about the traumatic reaction to violent events and about the means of helping to alleviate suffering" (p. vii). Trauma is defined as, "An overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (Caruth, 1995, p. 11). Caruth refers to the trauma as a belated phenomenon which takes place not directly after the occurrence of the incident. Verbestel (2010) asserts that the victim who goes through a traumatic event finds it difficult to swallow the shattering experience, "The fact that the event was overwhelming for the victim means that the victim's brain was not prepared for a shattering experience. The victim was not ready to feel pain and anxiety" (p. 10).

The increase of the traumatic events led to the extensive application of trauma theory in various fields transgressing disciplinary boundaries. Trauma theory's roots lie to psychoanalysis and dates back to 1980 when it was identified as a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The psychological disorder that the soldiers of the Vietnam War suffered from resulted in the definition of the term PTSD by the American Psychiatric Association. According to Stef Crap in his *Postcolonial Witnessing Trauma Out of Bounds* (2013), "PTSD is caused by an event that would evoke significant symptoms of distress in most people. The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event" (p. 24). Initially, PTSD was defined for those who had a direct relation to the traumatic experience and then it developed to include secondary victims, witnesses and the victims' relatives. Visser (2011) highlights the different occurrences of the PTSD symptoms (flashbacks, nightmares, depression...). He states that, "symptoms may appear chronically or intermittently; immediately or many years after the event... The traumatic event may intrude repetitively on everyday activities and sleep, but there may also be a total absence of recall" (p. 272).

Sigmund Freud defines trauma as, "... a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli... it is caused by lack of any preparedness for anxiety" (as cited in Caruth, 1996 p. 61-62) which means that the inability to digest the unexpected traumatic events result in psychological wounds and traumatize the victims. This traumatization keeps haunting the memory and results in the disturbance of the victim's life. Some scholars believe that the traumatic experiences are unspeakable while Laub trusts the healing ability of the verbalizing mechanism as a therapeutic tool:

[m]uch of knowing is dependent on language [...] Because of the radical break between trauma and culture, victims often cannot find categories of thought or words for their experience. That is, since neither culture nor experience provide structures for formulating acts of massive aggression, survivors cannot articulate trauma, even to themselves. (Laub & Auerhahn, 1993, p. 288)

Authors used the trauma theory as a medium to portray the atrocities and the dreadful experiences that people went through and to reflect the mechanism used to deal or react

to the traumatic events. Among the healing reactions which can be used by the victims is narrating the atrocity they have experienced. In her book *Trauma and Recovery* (1994), Herman stresses the important role of narration as it enhances the victim's integration of the traumatic experience and leads to the recovering stage:

Keep encouraging people to talk even if it's very painful to watch them. It takes a long time to believe. The more I talk about it, the more I have confidence that it happened, the more I can integrate it. (p. 179)

As a response, a traumatized person undergoes a process of 'acting-out' and 'working through' which are derived from Freud's concepts of 'mourning' and 'melancholia', "Whereas Freud used the terms mourning and melancholia to describe the different stages a person's traumatic after effects, LaCapra prefers the respective expressions 'acting-out' and 'working through' which were 'invented' by Freud as well" (Verbestel, 2010, p. 15). The repetitive occurrence of the traumatic event is a sign of acting-out and the working through reveals the person's acceptance of the trauma s/he was exposed to and their willingness to work it through. Hence, the separation between the past and the present is itself a process of working through as it is indicated by LaCapra who states that, "In the working-through the person tries to gain critical distance on a problem, to be able to distinguish between past, present and future" (Goldberg, 1998, p. 2). According to Freud, the traumatized person is not aware that s/he is undergoing the process of acting-out, he argues that,

"The patient does not remember anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but acts it out. He reproduces it not as a memory, but as an action; he repeats it, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it" (Verbestel, 2010, p. 16).

Rani Manicka's novels shed light on various phenomena which were discussed in previous articles. In "The struggles of Ceylonese Women in Rani Manicka's *The Rice Mother* and *The Japanese Lover*," Mani (2016) discusses the issues of identity and displacement that the young Ceylonese women go through after getting married and displaced to a strange land where they are expected to adapt to the new surrounding culture and perform their duties as loyal wives. From a total different perspective, Pramita Sidhu in her study "Living Spaces: A Chronotopic Analysis of Rani Manicka's *The Rice Mother*" (2014), uses Bakhtin's notion of Chronotope as an analytical tool to study *The Rice Mother* and to prove that this concept can be applied to an Asian text to analyze historical characters in a more enhanced manner. The most recent study "Encounters with the Past: Rani Manicka's Search for History" (2017), Asha stresses the importance of the characters' celebration of their history and how they embrace the past for the sake of understanding their own present.

### **Acting-out and Working-through the Traumatic Events in *The Rice Mother***

One cannot deny the massive destructive role that the war plays in shattering families and communities, and depriving them from the sense of wholeness. Especially after witnessing and being subjected to brutal atrocities which leave an eternal print in the lives of the female victims and a deep black hole in their souls. Rani Manicka's depiction of the war differs in her two novels, *The Rice Mother* and *The Japanese Lover*.

In *The Rice Mother* (2002), Rani Manicka tells us the story of four generations and describes their lives in detail before and after the Japanese war which played a major role in shaping their destiny. The characters' behavior and personality undergo radical changes because of the trauma resulting from the war even if they did not directly witness it but the trauma was transferred through generations. The characters are continuously haunted by the massacres of the war because, "to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" (Caruth, 1995, p. 4-5). The war had a terrible effect on the characters with the unbearable atrocities that they have committed publically. The Japanese were merciless, "they stand like people without souls" (Manicka, 2002, p. 202), they tortured and killed innocent people and left them thrown in the streets as a threat, "Their savagery was beyond comprehension. We had seen bodies skewered from the groin through to the mouth, like pigs ready for roasting, lining the streets... Cruel and barbarous" (p. 200). During the war, the characters suffered from the lack of food as, "rice became rare and precious... People hoarded it by the grain and kept it for special occasions" (p. 205). The inhumanity of the Japanese Army reached to the point that they, "reserved almost all medicines and hospital supplies for its own use and we were left to traditional medicine" (p. 207). The characters suffered in silence with no food or proper medicines to heal their wounds. Even water was no longer clean and safe for drinking as it was affected by water-treatment chemicals, "Minute cream colored worms sometimes writhed as if in mortal pain inside our drinking water" (p. 207).

Lakshmi, *The Rice Mother*, *The Keeper of Dreams*, and *The Giver of Life* is portrayed as the strong young wife who managed to protect her marriage and raise her children regardless of the bad conditions they lived in. Even during the war, she remained the tough pillar of the family, "I don't think she ever slept for more than two or three hours a night" (p. 181). Despite the severe financial crisis that they went through, Lakshmi stood still and faced the situation wisely and made a business out of nothing, "I had no time to moan and groan... I sold some jewellery and bought the cows... the coffee stalls and shops paid us in Japanese currency" (p. 205). By challenging all the harsh obstacles that come in her way for the sake of saving her family, Lakshmi's dedication for work was her way of coping with the exigent situation implied by the war. Lakshmi could protect her beautiful daughter Mohini from the Japanese soldiers for three years. Mohini's beauty was a threat hunting the whole family as the Japanese took girls despite their race. However, Lakshmi did not know that, "excessive beauty is a curse" (p. 67), she had to hide her in a secret place in order to keep her away from everyone's eyes, "And a prisoner Mother's bird remained until the day she flew away forever" (p. 117).

The Japanese abduction of Mohini marks the turning point in the whole family's life, "The whole house was vibrating and crashing from their hob-nailed boots, a dreadful sound that has haunted my nightmares ever since" (p. 221). It is an unbearable shock that hit Lakshmi unexpectedly and resulted in the death of her darling daughter. This was highlighted by Caruth in her *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996) where she states that, "the confrontation with death - takes place too soon, too suddenly, too unexpectedly, to be fully grasped by conscious" (p. 101). Consequently, Lakshmi's journey with nightmares begins as a way of acting-out, "our memory repeats to us what we haven't yet come to terms with, what still haunts us" (Erikson, 1995, p. 184). Since Lakshmi could not accept the death of her daughter, nightmares trouble her peace. Further, Lakshmi's state of denial, "I refused to consider my daughter's fate" (Manicka, 2002, p. 228) and inability to save her daughter resulted in anger as a reaction to her trauma, "Lakshmi, you have turned into a monster" (p.

276). Lakshmi has always been devoted to saving and supporting her family relying on her intelligence and creativity in making up businesses. She continues to do the same after Mohini's death which is considered as a working through mechanism.

Traumatized people become entrapped by the nightmares and the hallucinations as they feel guilty for surviving while their loved ones are dead. The same is observable in the case of Mohini's twin brother, Lakshman who blames himself for letting the Japanese take his sister, "Lakshman did it. Lakshman did it. He let the Japanese dogs take her" (p. 227). This feeling of guilt is an acting-out towards the traumatic experience that he was going through, "Lakshman had begun to grind his teeth in his sleep after Mohini died" (p. 255). Even when he became fifty years old, he could not stop dreaming about his twin sister and blaming himself, "I dream of her. Take me with you Mohini... It was my fault I was the fool who slipped and fell into the crevice that should have kept her safe" (p. 451). Moreover, Lakshman became so violent even towards his family members. As a reaction to the lived trauma and the loss of a loved person, the traumatized may become violent and aggressive in order to push people away from getting closer and stay unsociable. To understand more what acting out involves, Herman (1994) explains that, "Trauma victims will have these two symptoms of either intrusion; experience flashbacks and nightmares; and constrictions, withdraws from social engagement, living a greatly restricted life" (p. 175). All Lakshman's life turned upside down after what happened to Mohini, he was very smart and dedicated to his studies then he ended up being a gambler. By gambling and drinking to lose his consciousness, Lakshman worked through his trauma.

The other characters who were really affected by the Japanese war are Ayah, and Sevenese. Sevenese witnessed the Japanese soldiers' cruelty towards a Chinese woman in a forest and he was too shocked to accept their brutality:

I cannot describe how they used her. In the end she was no longer human. Covered in her own excrement and bleeding profusely, she was panting on the ground when one of them slashed her throat. Another cut off one of her breasts and stuffed it in her mouth as if she was eating it (p. 458).

Sevenese was consumed by dreaming of Mohini who talks to him about what will happen in the future. The constant nightmares that he sees kept him entrapped in a traumatic state where all he waited for is to see Mohini in his dreams. Therefore, he became a fortune teller and he never gave up on the hope of seeing her again. In this case, Sevenese shows no sign of working through his trauma and he stays trapped by the past to ensure his loyalty to Mohini as it is highlighted by LaCapra (2014) who states that, "Those traumatized by extreme events... may resist working through because of what might almost be termed a fidelity to trauma... One is betraying those who were overwhelmed and consumed by that traumatic past" (p. 22).

Ayah witnessed a physical torment when the Japanese held him as a suspect of helping a Communist, "they pulled out his fingernails. How well cruelty suited them... Something was eating his finger. The rat was eating his flesh" (Manicka, 2002, p. 133-135). Their brutality left considerable psychological damage on Ayah as he was a self-respected man, "He felt ashamed that his captors could have reduced him to such an inhuman state so quickly. He had always thought of himself as a dignified man" (p. 135). This experience kept bringing him painful memories and nightmares and he was drained emotionally and psychologically, "the second figure gave me nightmares for many years to come" (p. 122). After taking Mohini, the hallucinations began, "I saw

Mohini escape through a door with a faulty lock. Perhaps I was hallucinating” (p. 269). Ayah was not at home when the Japanese abducted his daughter so the sense of guilt weighed him down,

If I only had been home instead of sitting outside the chartered bank with the old Sikh guard, sharing a cheroot... The guilt. I cannot tell you how it pressed upon me that night. Why, why, *why* on that day of all days did I leave the house? Hopelessly I banged my forehead against the wall. I wanted to die (p. 270).

While his daughter was abducted and he survived without being able to save his *Nevertiti*, Ayah faced a difficulty to deal with his survival and he repeatedly wished death, “Have me. Go on take me now. But return her, return, her, return, her” (p. 270). Caruth (1995) explains how the survival itself can become traumatic when the survival has to deal with the loss of his relatives and cannot accept his survival, “the fact that, for those who undergo trauma, it is not only the moment of the event, but the passing out of it that is traumatic; that *survival itself*, in other words, *can be a crisis*” (p. 9).

### **The Permanent Trauma in *The Japanese Lover***

The Marimuthu family is devastated after losing everything they once had when the Japanese invaded Adari. Their social status has drastically changed and they became poor which resulted in the inability to accept the miserable conditions. Caruth (1996) states that, “An overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often uncontrolled, repetitive appearances of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (p. 11) which implies directly on the situation of Parvathi’s family as most of them started having repetitive nightmares. The turning point in the family’s life is marked by their departure from the famous Marimuthu’s castle, “The Japanese have taken over our house, our estates, our bakery and our cars” (Manicka, 2010, p. 204). Therefore, the children were unable to adjust to the harsh circumstances after moving to a poor apartment full of rats and cockroaches which worsened their psychological state.

There is no doubt that the war has an immensely negative effect on the behavior of some characters. Some of the traumatized characters eventually end up adopting the cruelty of the soldiers. Kuberan, Parvathi’s son, is very intelligent but his discipline was really affected by the atrocities committed in front of him by the merciless Japanese, “Beasts, Monsters, Raping, taking, killing and now the disgusting creatures were urinating on the streets” (Manicka, 2010, p. 203). The lack of having a parental guidance is reflected on Kuberan’s behavior, he became so aggressive towards his schoolmates when he tried to rape one of his classmates and he got expelled from the school. After going to Oxford, Kuberan killed a woman, “He looked at himself in the fragmented mirror. A murderer” (p. 287). The withdrawal from life and the adaptation of the enemy’s brutality are working through methods to cope with the surrounding atrocities that the characters witness. According to Cabrera (2002), aggressiveness is a one of the social consequences if the victim refuses to work through his trauma and he explained that, “when a person does not or cannot work through a trauma right away, its social consequences, the most frequent of which are apathy, isolation and aggressiveness, are only revealed over time” (p. 2).

The coming of the Japanese traumatized the characters and caused a permanent harm in their lives. When Parvathi was 92 years old and regardless of her sickness, she did not forget the past, “... How shocked he would be to know that she remembered all

of it, every precious detail. They thought the past was dead because she never talked about it” (3). LaCapra states that, “traumatized people tend to relive occurrences, or at least find that those occurrences intrude on their present existence” (Goldberg, 1998, p. 2) which means that the past may live with them forever and they cannot work it through. Despite the fact that Parvathi became a Japanese lover, but the threat that they could harm Rubini kept haunting her, “His boots made a hollow sound. She would remember that sound until the day she died” (Manicka, 2010, p. 192). From the other hand, Rubini resisted the changes that she had to do in order to protect herself from the Japanese but after she was about to be taken as a comfort woman, she realized the importance of giving away her femininity for the sake of being safe. Parvathi sacrificed herself to prevent the exploitation of Rubini by the merciless soldiers, “If you wish to spare her, you may take her place... Just a blank wall asking her to be his *ianfu*, his comfort woman” (Manicka, 2010, p. 185). Consequently, Rubini’s fear was reflected through repetitive nightmares about the Japanese General which marked her way of acting out.

### **Conclusion**

Literature has always been a powerful tool to mirror the atrocities of the war and to give a voice to the victims who suffer in silence. Rani Manicka used her novels, *The Rice Mother* and *The Japanese Lover*, to expose the injustices which the Malaysians witnessed during the Japanese occupation. The war leaves not only dead bodies but dead souls with unbearable memories which keep haunting them for as long as they are breathing. The shattered identities that the victims end up with are clearly reflected through the chosen characters which were analyzed in this paper. Their trauma is further transferred to the other generations which confirms the huge effect of the war not just on the person who is directly subjected to it, but even to the people who grow up in an ex-colonized country. Females more specifically are doubly exploited as colonized citizens and as women who are brutally abused. It is known that the Japanese used comfort women to satisfy the soldiers and this was not different in the cases mentioned by Manicka. The sexual exploitation takes the war atrocities into another level because its long lasting effect breaks females and their families as well. This paper has focused on the gendered aspect of trauma not only to highlight the sufferings of females but to further stress the continuing traumatic impact on those who did not personally witness the trauma and how each individual lives the trauma and reacts differently according to their experience and personality.

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