

Closing the Distance
Identity and Self-Representation in the Japanese Literature of Three Korean
Writers in Japan:

Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong

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Abstract

The theme of cultural identity is topical in the academy and society at large but it is especially significant for the Korean *diaspora* in Japan. This thesis investigates the means by which Japan-based second-generation Korean novelists Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong characterize ‘*zainichi* Korean identity’ in six semi-autobiographical novels written in Japanese between 1957 and 1972. I argue that a close reading of *The Death of the Crow* (1957) and *The Extraordinary Ghost Story of Mandogi* (1971) by Kim Sok Pom, *The Cloth Fuller* (1971) and *For Kayako* (1970) by Lee Hoe Sung¹, and *Frozen Mouth* (1966) and *Delusions* (1971) by Kim Ha Gyong allows for an in-depth understanding of the experiences of Koreans born in Japan before 1945 and the effects of racial oppression on minority identity formation. Specifically, I evaluate and compare the methods by which ethnicity and images of the self are articulated by these three writers in their creative fiction.

The thesis argues that, despite the diversity of the views the three writers offer on ethnicity and cultural identity, a theme which they all share is how to overcome the problem of identity fragmentation – the problem of negotiating incongruous hybrid-Japanese/Korean identities. Ambivalent experiences of belonging or dislocation, vis-à-vis both Japan and Korea proper, surface as a continual source of concern for second-generation *zainichi* Korean writers and their protagonists. How hybridity and difference are articulated as a lived experience by Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong is at the heart of this thesis. Their protagonists are Japanese-appearing Korean men, who move between the two worlds of Japanese and (*zainichi*) Korean culture, and search for a unified identity, or at least contemplate what such an identity might be. In effect, they attempt to ‘close the distance’ between competing and conflicting images of the self while at the same time pointing to a new politics of identity and sense of belonging, where diversity no longer suggests distance but the possibilities inherent in a truly inclusive society.

¹ Lee Hoe Sung is pronounced Lee Hoay Sung.

Notes to Reader

I use the term ‘*zainichi* Koreans’ to refer to those Koreans and/or their descendants whose presence in Japan is the direct result of Japan’s thirty-five year occupation of the Korean Peninsula (1910-1945). This term distinguishes them from ‘newcomer Koreans.’ Some scholars use the term ‘resident Korean,’ an abbreviation of the English translation of *zainichi* Korean, ‘Japan-resident Korean,’ however ‘resident Korean,’ like its Japanese equivalent, may make sense only to English-speaking scholars familiar with Japan’s Korean *diaspora*, the term being unknown to members Koreans in Japan. The indigenous term is immediately comprehensible to any Japanese speaker and will facilitate discussion about *zainichi* Koreans amongst non-Japanese, Japanese, and *zainichi* Koreans. Additionally very few of the *zainichi* Koreans I interviewed for my doctoral thesis like the term ‘Korean-Japanese’ and they like the term ‘Japanese-Korean’ even less, though that seems to be increasingly popular with young third- and fourth-generation Koreans in Japan.

Japanese and Korean names are written with the family name first, as is customary in East Asia. Koreans mostly have monosyllabic family names and disyllabic personal names such as Kim Soo Jin: a boy called Soo Jin from the Kim family. Koreans assume the paternal surname and do not change it even upon marriage, which explains why married couples have different surnames.

In describing people as first-, second-, third- or fourth- generation migrants, I adhere to the *zainichi* Korean custom of counting through the paternal line. Thus where somebody is the offspring of a first-generation father and a second-generation mother, I describe that person as a second-generation *zainichi* Korean, rather than a third-generation *zainichi* Korean. However, young people today who fall into this category, might refer to themselves as a second-and-a-half generation *zainichi* Korean.

The non-italicized term Japanese as a noun refers to Japanese nationals, or is used as an adjective to describe things of or from Japan. I sometimes use it to refer to the Japanese language if its meaning as such is clear. However, I use the italicized term *Japanese* to refer to the Japanese language to denote its wider usage by both Japanese and non-Japanese nationals. For example, because the phrase ‘a Japanese readership’ implicitly refers to readers who are Japanese nationals, I have opted to use the phrase ‘a

Japanese readership' to emphasize its reference to both Japanese and non-Japanese readers. I also use the italicized term *Japanese* as an adjective; for example *Japanese* literary criticism refers to literary criticism written in Japanese but not necessarily written by Japanese nationals.

All translations of passages from the novels, excerpts from essays or literary critiques and conversations held with informants are my own. Unless otherwise specified, I have relied on my own translations of passages from *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, though it has been translated into English by Beverly Nelson as *The Woman Who Ironed Clothing*. I use my own translation of the title: *The Cloth Fuller*.

The style of this thesis conforms to the guidelines outlined in the *MLA Handbook for Research Papers* (1999). To avoid confusion I wish to call attention to two points. Firstly, when an original Japanese title and its translation appear together in the text, the first version takes the form of an original title. The English translation of the title is always enclosed in parentheses and treated like a bona fide title (whether or not the work represents a published translation) with title capitalization appropriate to the language: *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* [*The Extraordinary Ghost Story of Mandogi*]. Secondly, in instances where I cite the spoken word of interview informants, I use their last name in the citation: (Chong). The details of the interview appear in the Works Cited. In cases, where I interviewed the same individual on different occasions in different years, the citation will appear with the name and year (Tazaki 1999) but if I interviewed the same individual more than once in the same year the citation will include the name and date (Tazaki 11 Jun. 1999). This is similarly the case for television broadcasts, such as (*Rakuen*).

Declaration

This is to certify that

- I. the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD except where indicated in the Preface,*
- II. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,*
- III. the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices,*
- IV. The thesis has been awarded ethics approval: 030654 HREC*

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During my stay in Japan as a Japan Foundation Fellow I was warmly hosted, supported and enlightened by three *zainichi* Korean families, the Cho family in Ueno for two weeks, the Kaku family in Kawasaki and the Chong-Kotera family in Osaka each for approximately one year. Each home-stay brought with it new information, insights and inspiration. Most of all they brought a priceless exchange of friendship and communion. I have no words to describe the gratitude and warmth I feel for the families with whom I spent much quality time. I am deeply appreciative and will remain so always.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my research and time in Japan was the chance to interview many *zainichi* Koreans, including numerous writers including Kim Sok Pom, and Lee Hoe Sung, the poets Kim Shi Jong and Chong Jang as well as numerous intellectuals, activists, publishers and tens of laypeople. I conducted over one hundred forty interviews and am grateful to all of the participants, who generously took time out of their busy schedules to speak with me. I am particularly grateful to the following seven individuals, who met with me on numerous occasions, and spoke with me time and again to facilitate my understanding of the issues: the philosopher Takeda Seiji, poet Chong Jang, publisher Koh I Samu, editor Tazaki Akira and Pak Yon Ho, Chang Jong Bong and Sakuma Shōichi. I am indebted to them for their outstanding intellectual and multifaceted support.

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Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis is a sustained study of selected novels by Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung, and Kim Ha Gyong. Though different in age, outlook, and literary style, these three writers are arguably Japan's best-known second-generation *zainichi* Korean writers. Any study of 'orthodox *zainichi* literature' – literature written by *zainichi* Koreans about *zainichi* Korean issues and produced by second-generation writers – must include novels by them.² Although the six novels selected for this study were published early in these writers' careers, they may be considered representative works of each. This is because they take up the major themes each writer has continued to pursue throughout his writing career. For Kim Sok Pom, whose roots are linked to colonial Cheju Island in the Republic of Korea (ROK), that theme was the massacre that took place there in 1948, in which tens of thousands of suspected communists were killed. The Cheju Massacre gave rise to a distinctive *zainichi* Korean community that fled to Japan. For Lee Hoe Sung, whose roots are linked to colonial Sakhalin, it was the question of how to recover a Korean identity for conflicted *zainichi* Korean youth exposed to opposing ideologies, including fascism, democracy and nationalism, while living in Japan after the country's defeat in WWII. Finally, for Kim Ha Gyong, whose roots are linked to colonial urban mainland Japan, the reality of suffering existential limitations, namely domestic violence and a physical disability, profoundly influenced his opinions on identity and ethnicity.³

² In general, novels by 'first-generation' writers, such as Kim Sa Ryang, Kim Tal Su and Chong Sung Bak, take up issues such as Japanese colonialism, American imperialism, the Korean War and unification. By contrast, novels by second-generation writers such as Lee Hoe Sung, Kim Ha Gyong, Lee Yang Ji, Yan So Gil, Tsuka Kōhei to name just a few, generally focus on racism and poverty in Japan, violence in the home, the sense of alienation *zainichi* Koreans tend to feel in both Japan and Korea, and a recovery of 'Korean-ness' or the painful process of self-determination. Third and fourth-generation writers, such as Yū Miri, Gen Getsu and Kaneshiro Kazuki, tend to take up highly diversified issues in their novels.² While their literature is unmistakably informed by the political, cultural and familial implications of what it means to be a *zainichi* Korean in Japanese society, there is some debate as to the legitimacy of labelling it as '*zainichi* Korean' literature. This is partly because of a seeming lack of attention to issues of 'ethnicity' and related political concerns in their literature, but also because of debates surrounding the significance of categorizing writers by their ethnicity and concerns as to the degree such categorization either further 'minoritizes' or 'exoticizes' those writers.

³ Lee no longer subscribes to notions of Korean nationalism as he once did; the themes of his later works

One cannot read *zainichi* Korean literature and fail to see that *zainichi* Korean lives, at least those depicted in literary fiction, are different from Japanese lives in irreducible ways. A close reading of the six novels facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the second-generation *zainichi* Korean experience as being one of severe marginalization due to ‘difference’. It also draws attention to the writer’s ability to creatively portray and demystify the racist enterprise known as imperialism in its past and present guises, an ability that arguably deserves recognition within the discipline of post-colonial studies.

All three writers articulate the ambiguities that surround notions of home and nation and explore the importance of ethnicity to the process of identity formation in multi-faceted ways in their novels. The grand narratives of home and nation, which are deemed so central to both identity and the creation of the imagined community, are explored and textualized differently depending on the relative importance each author places on place, history, politics, and embodied experience. Kim Sok Pom’s novels suggest that ethnicity, while malleable, should hold an esteemed role in the construction of the subjective and intersubjective self, and that the recovery of Korean-ness is inextricably linked to the homeland and national history. Lee Hoe Sung’s novels show how the inevitable phenomena of post-colonial assimilation and hybridity thwart a recovery of Korean-ness and thus, they suggest a more pragmatic approach to identity formation. Kim Ha Gyong’s fiction, however, challenges the grand narratives of home and nation by denouncing ethno-centrism and nationalism, depicting them as an ineffectual means of escape from emotional pain. His novels highlight the importance of the subjective experience of lived, embodied difference. Nevertheless, ‘self-identification’ is the crucial issue the three authors and their protagonists grapple with. Although they articulate the concept of identity in different ways in their fiction, their prose reveals that identity fragmentation was, in fact, a critical experience for second-generation *zainichi* Koreans of their era.

Their narratives also indicate that the search for a cohesive unified self characterizes the *zainichi* Korean experience of their day. Yet there is no such thing as a cohesive unified self for there are too many variables that make up an identity in a given

depart from those of the earlier works discussed in this thesis.

time and place. Nevertheless the impulse towards such a notion of selfhood is not uncommon, even today (Cohen 5; Gilroy, *Roots* 24; Peake). Jacques Lacan emphasises that every individual has numerous images of his or her own self or ego (2-4). In order to locate oneself in time and space and in order to function one needs a sense of a cohesive unified self. To achieve this there should not be much disparity between the various images one has of oneself. In the case of *diasporic*, colonial, post-colonial or bi-racial subjects, the disparity, or what we might call the distance, between conflicting images of the self is generally significant and difficult to reconcile. Moreover, the greater the disparity between images of the self, the greater the sense of fragmentation and the greater the need to close the distance between those images.

Titled “Closing the Distance,” my thesis points to the implicit distance between identity positions such as Japanese and *zainichi* Korean subjectivity, Korea and Japan or pre-modernity and modernity. These points are actually best construed as points on a matrix or scale of reference, rather than simplistic dualistic binaries or polarities. Some distance between identity positions is inevitable, but where relationships are characterized by conflict the distances may seem insurmountable and give rise to identity crises. Some identity positions are virtually impossible to reconcile, such as Taliban and North American or prostitute and mother; this is also true of Japanese and Korean identity positions during the early post-war and Cold War eras, when the Japan(ese)-Korea(n) relationship was typified by racism, suspicion and hostility.

The metaphor of closing the distance, besides emphasising the aspiration of writers to close the distance between self and other, refers to relationships such as father-son, husband-wife, ghost-human, North Korea-South Korea or communist-anti-communist, even writer and reader. For example, the distance between the first-generation father and the second-generation son is a key theme in the literature of Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong and yet the writers’ accounts are markedly different. Lee, for example, excuses the domestic violence he witnessed and experienced at the hands of his father, seeing it as a product of the marginalized status of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans. Kim Ha Gyong, with his pain and angst embodied as it was, could not reconcile himself to his experience of paternal violence given that it produced his disability.

The semi-autobiographical novels of the three writers studied in this thesis

provide critical insights into the lived reality of *zainichi* Koreans in early post-war Japan in ways that statistics or history or social science texts cannot convey.⁴ Thus while this thesis highlights the political dimensions of the six novels, it also draws attention to their artistic and creative qualities. The six novels are works of art in their own right and each writer brings to his craft discrete artistic objectives and distinctive literary styles. For example, Kim Sok Pom's refusal to employ the Japanese literary style of 'I-novel' writing is as much a declaration of his commitment to using his imagination to create innovative fiction as it is to dismantling Japanese canonical ideals that privilege the 'I-novel'. Lee Hoe Sung's lyrical or romantic adaptations of his storylines give them distinctive mythical or contemplative qualities that allow them to stand on their own as superior novels. Kim Ha Gyong's gift for depicting the interiority of his protagonists, his intermingling the past and the present or dreamtime with real time, and his meticulous illustration of time and place, reveal artistic foresight and aptitude.

The novels are personal accounts of spiritual and physical struggle, continuity and change, passion and pathos. They speak of love, despair, tragedy, and triumph; the motifs are both particular and universal. It is part of my argument that creative fiction has provided these writers with a safe and effective means to recover their sense of identity, and that for them, artistic production is "the last fortress where writers can defend their cultural identity and find their home" (Maiping 45). Above all, it is the writing from personal experience that makes these narratives so compelling, for even as it rules out indifference and condescension, it advances a highly nuanced view of both the Korean *diaspora* and Japanese society at large. A close reading of the texts brings to light a stunning array of methods by which the writers are able to *close the distance* and build bridges, between the past and present, self and other, Japanese and Koreans, North and South Korea, tradition and modernity, fathers and sons, men and women, and of course story-teller and reader.

In the following section I outline the trajectory of historical events that pertain to the *zainichi* Korean experience, from the colonial era to the present.⁵ I do this because I

⁴ Refer to Brah 180 and Boehmer 189. John Lie erroneously suggests that these writers are not producing fiction (*Zainichi* 185).

⁵ According to Catherine Ryu, "From the Korean perspective, Japan's colonization of Korea is but the

believe that one cannot engage in an analysis of *zainichi* Korean *diasporic* texts without some knowledge of the profound impact of the colonial experience on this group of people.

Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 was "the most decisive event in the history of Japan's Korean minority" (Fukuoka 4). At this time, all Koreans became Japanese nationals and were thus deprived of their rights to a discrete identity (Hanami 122; Macdonald 296). Morris-Suzuki explains, "Although pre-war and wartime Korean and Taiwanese colonial subjects possessed Japanese nationality in terms of international laws within the empire, they were eternally differentiated from "ethnic Japanese by the fact that their families were registered not in 'Japan proper' (*naichi*) but in the 'external territories' (*gaichi*)" (64). Prior to 1910 there were only about 250 Korean students and government officials residing in Japan. From 1939 to 1943, however, an average of 200,000 Koreans a year flowed into the Japanese Archipelago, so that by 1945 there were 2.4 million Koreans residing in Japan (Mitchell 102; Hanami 127; Fukuoka 5).

Koreans came to Japan after Korea's annexation largely because of the ruined state of Korea's agricultural industry (Kang and Kim 6-20). Official measures established between 1910 and 1918 allowed the Japanese to confiscate large tracts of Korean land, with the result that many Koreans had to emigrate to find work; those from the South fled to Japan while those from the North fled to China (Fukuoka 4). Though most had been farmers in Korea, they were only able to get work as laborers in Japan, working in the mining and railroad industries or else in factories, mainly in the Osaka area. They worked long hours and did dangerous and difficult work for extremely low wages. Many had to live together in one small room. Sometimes barricades were set up outside Korean enclaves, which they were not allowed to cross (Kang and Kim 6-20). Additionally, the tragedy of the Great Kanto Earthquake that took place in 1923 set in motion the slaughter, or what John Lie terms a "massive pogrom", of approximately 6000 *zainichi* Koreans after many Japanese were led to believe that *zainichi* Koreans were rioting and poisoning the wells (Chapman 20, 120; Lie

latest and most comprehensive expression of Japan's long-cherished dream of taking over its neighbor and long-time cultural mentor" (312). The 1592 invasion of Korea by Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi is often mentioned by Koreans today to illustrate this view. Ryu points out that "The legacy of Hideyoshi's war atrocities still remains in the form of the so-called 'nose and ear mound', built of the severed noses and ears of the Koreans that Japanese troops brought back as evidence of their successful military campaigns" (312-13).

Multiethnic 106).

1939-1945 was characterized by “forced migration,” (*kyōsei renkō*) a euphemism for slave labour, implemented by the Japanese government in order to satisfy labour shortages. According to Chapman, “The victims of forced conscription ended up in various extremely dangerous and dirty occupations such as labouring in mines, working construction and factory work” (22). Almost two million Koreans were brought to Japan by force, some in shackles (Nakano 56, 296; Chapman 16). These Koreans, despite working long and hard hours, remained poverty stricken (Miyawaki 2). Conditions were so bad for the forced laborers that many fell ill and died. Norma Field contends, “The brutal conditions imposed on these workers suggest a Nazi economy wherein laborers were maintained at the threshold of death because they were easily replaced” (642). In 1944, all Koreans under age forty-five were subject to conscription. By the year’s end, 186,980 Koreans had been forced to join the Japanese Army and 82,290 had been conscripted into the Navy (Henderson 135). The Japanese Imperial Forces also forcibly recruited at least 80,000 Korean women into wartime prostitution as so-called ‘military comfort women’ to act as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers, starting in 1938 (Chapman 22).⁶

The Japanese colonial effort to both debase and suppress Korean identity was perhaps most manifest in its policy of comprehensive assimilation (Moon 40; Chapman 23; Fukuoka 5, Field 642). John Lie makes the point that Japan “instituted a policy of complete Japanization” which was enforced by a “massive police and military presence” (*Multiethnic* 105). Both Chikako Kashiwazaki and Norma Field draw attention to the complex interplay between assimilation and separation given that despite the rhetoric of inclusion, Japan oscillated between treating the Koreans in Japan as Japanese and as aliens. (Kashiwazaki 17-18; Field 642). From 1939 Japan forced Koreans to use Japanese names under the infamous policy called *sōshi-kaimei* (Fukuoka 5; Chapman 22; Kashiwazaki 19). Koreans passively resisted by selecting Japanese names that encoded their Korean roots and, if possible, the name of their clan. People with the Korean name Kim, for example, registered with a name that incorporated the

⁶ Known as ‘comfort women’ over 100,000 women across Asia, including Chinese, Filipinos and Malays as well as Dutch and Russian women became victims of military rape on a scale previously unknown in history (Hicks xv). See also *Comfort Woman* (1997) by Nora Keller and *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II* (2001) ed. Margaret Diane Stetz and Bonnie B. C. Oh

Japanese equivalent for Kim – Kin, also read as Kane – Kaneda, Kaneyama or Kanemoto (Fukuoka 8).

In 1945, when the Pacific War came to an end, the majority of the 2.4 million Koreans in Japan began to return to the Korean Peninsula, primarily to the southern half (Morris-Suzuki 22). It is a common misconception in Japan that most *zainichi* Koreans in Japan today are the descendants of ‘forced laborers’. In fact, almost all of the forced laborers went directly back to Korea in 1945 (Fukuoka 9-10; Morris-Suzuki 194; Chapman 24). The number of remaining Koreans recorded in March 1946 was 647,000, approximately one quarter of the total at the end of the war in 1945 (Hanami 127; Chapman 24). The Koreans who remained in Japan had either established businesses or families in Japan and, for the most part, could not afford to return to Korea, partly due to harsh conditions stipulated by the Japanese government, which, for example, prohibited the transport of funds out of Japan. Political and economic strife on the Korean Peninsula also prevented *zainichi* Koreans from “going home,” and in the late 1940s and early 1950s over six hundred thousand Koreans settled in Japan, primarily in Osaka and the Tokyo-Kawasaki areas. Despite the fact that they were Japanese nationals, they were obligated to register under Alien Registration, which required all foreigners to have a fingerprint taken annually and carry a registration card (Hanami 128).⁷

In 1952, when Japan recovered its sovereignty through the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Koreans in Japan formally lost their Japanese nationality. This meant they had to live without most of the civil rights guaranteed to Japanese nationals by the constitution (Hanami 122, 128). Morris-Suzuki writes:

Koreans in Japan lost the right to public housing and a range of other welfare benefits... Because of their foreign status, Koreans in Japan were also now excluded from professions such as medicine and debarred from public employment...For over two decades, Koreans in Japan would also have no automatic right of re-entry to Japan if they travelled overseas (67).

Importantly, former colonial subjects who served in the Japanese military were now no longer entitled to a pension or compensation. Despite this, those Koreans who had been

⁷ At the end of the Japanese colonial period, while thousands of Koreans settled in Japan, thousands of others emigrated to Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands and millions had settled in China and the Soviet Union. As John Lie writes, “Quite simply, the sheer number of *diasporic* Koreans is immense” (*Zainichi* 175).

involved in atrocities against allied prisoners of war on orders of Japanese superiors were found guilty of war crimes by allied tribunals and were not given remission of their sentences once they lost their Japanese nationality (Fukuoka 12).

The Korean War, also known as the Forgotten War, officially took place between 1950 and 1953 against the backdrop of the Cold War, generating two million casualties and resulting in the division of the nation at the infamous 38th parallel, thus causing the separation of ten million family members (Morris-Suzuki 57). Unlike most other civil wars, the Korean War ended in a stalemate (Lone and McCormack 93). Lasting antagonism between North and South Korea has played a significant role in preserving fervent nationalism and militarism in both countries (Moon 37-38; Kendall 14). The split on the Korean mainland manifest itself in a split amongst *zainichi* Koreans in Japan. As Morris-Suzuki explains, “The 38th parallel ran also through the middle of the Korean community in Japan and straight through the dreams of those whose visions of a free Korea fitted the ideologies of neither of the two new Cold War camps” (47).

Two antagonistic support organizations for Koreans in Japan emerged out of this division. The most popular for many decades was *Chongryun* (The General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) affiliated with the DPRK, sometimes referred to by its Japanese name, *Sōren*. *Mindan* (The Korean Residents Union in Japan) is affiliated with the ROK. Relations between these two organizations were especially volatile until the early 1970s and fierce political antagonism still characterizes them today (Fukuoka 7; Nakano 60). In his discussion of *Sōren* and *Mindan* John Lie makes the important claim that “Divided loyalties to the two nation-states have impeded the solidarity of Korean Japanese” (*Narratives* 343). Animosity between the two organizations is often described as ‘the 38th parallel’ in Japan (Chapman 31, 40). Chapman explains,

During the 1950s and 1960s the *zainichi* community was primarily dominated by a discourse of hegemonic control divided by political affiliations for either the North or the South of Korea. This discourse was largely generated by *Chongryun* and *Mindan* and dominated by the opposing ideologies of communism and capitalism (141).

Over the years many new splinter groups have emerged through the efforts of younger *zainichi* Koreans who wanted to distance themselves from mainland Korean politics

(Fukuoka 21).⁸

The Japanese Red Cross worked together with the North Korean state, the pro-North *Chongryun* in 1959 and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to initiate two repatriation programs to the DPRK (1959-1967 and 1971-1984). The ‘Repatriation Movement’ saw over 93,000 *zainichi* Koreans leave Japan for North Korea (Fukuoka 35, Morris-Suzuki 12).⁹ Though over 95% of *zainichi* Koreans originally hailed from the southern half of the Korean Peninsula or had been born in Japan, the euphemism ‘repatriation’ stuck. According to Sonia Ryang, “The opening of repatriation to North Korea in 1959 was a great victory for *Chongryun*, which called it “A great national exodus from capitalism to socialism” (*North* 36-7). There were bitter explosions between pro-north and pro-south *zainichi* Korean factions; as the former celebrated, the latter not only complained that *zainichi* Koreans were falling prey to communist propaganda but also that Japan was merely ‘getting rid’ of them. In her 2007 monograph entitled *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan’s Cold War*, historian Tessa Morris Suzuki argues that this latter proposition is largely true, writing, “Japanese authorities’ motives for supporting a mass repatriation to North Korea were, to say the very least, dubious” (135). She argues that the motives of the Japanese government and the Japanese Red Cross, “were economic and security concerns, enhanced by a large infusion of prejudice. They hoped to rid the country of those they saw as subversive and a welfare burden” (199). Sonia Ryang draws claims that “poverty was the main reason for the Korean exodus from Japan” and rightly observes that *zainichi* Koreans did not benefit from Japan’s economic growth boom for many years (*Homeland* 34). The Repatriation Movement, one of the most central political and social Korean issues of the decade, features in the literature of both Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong and is discussed in more detail in the body of this thesis.

In June 1965 Japan and the ROK normalized diplomatic ties amidst vociferous complaints that the funds Japan was paying to the ROK, which was headed by the controversial military dictator Park Chung Hee, would only be used to renovate the South Korean economy in the interests of a neo-colonial Japan (Komori 231, Chong J. 2

⁸ *Mintōren* (Association of Ethnic Koreans) is just one example; it supports neither Pyongyang nor Seoul (Fukuoka xii).

⁹ 在日朝鮮人帰還協定

Nov. 2001).¹⁰ A powerful campaign urging *zainichi* Koreans to adopt South Korean citizenship ensued. It was argued, for example, that South Korean nationality would allow *zainichi* Koreans to finally attain passports and the long-coveted right to travel freely. Significantly, as part of the agreement to establish diplomatic ties with the ROK, Japan granted special permanent residency to those *zainichi* Koreans who adopted South Korean nationality. For both of these reasons, even pro-North *zainichi* Koreans applied for South Korean nationality (Koh, M). As Japan had not normalized relations with the DPRK, there was no embassy or place for *zainichi* Koreans loyal to the northern regime to attain North Korean citizenship or passports. To this very day they remain stateless in Japan. In fact then, as Norma Field points out, this treaty actually cemented the North-South divide within the *zainichi* Korean population, since it gave both legitimacy and a nation-state *only* to those affiliated with the South, further segregating those affiliated with the North (643).

By the early 1970s Japan had the largest GNP in the world and commentators were drawing attention to Japan's 'economic miracle' (Nakano 67). The decision to reside permanently in Japan became increasingly common amongst *zainichi* Koreans. This resulted in movements to ban discrimination and achieve civil rights in Japan. For example, it was still virtually impossible for *zainichi* Koreans to get employment in Japanese corporate industry, even for those who had graduated from prestigious Japanese universities (Fukuoka 27-28; Hanami 139).

The 1980s and 1990s were decades of significant change in the status and rights of Koreans in Japan. These changes became the backdrop of the anti-fingerprinting movement by *zainichi* Koreans (Hanami 142; Chapman 7, 73). *Zainichi* Korean groups increasingly focused on the improvement of the status of Koreans as permanently settled denizens of Japan (Kashiwazaki 29). In 1982, special permanent residency was given to *zainichi* Koreans regardless of their nationality (Chapman 32, Ryang *Homeland* 40). In 1992 finger printing was finally completely abandoned for special permanent residents. Additionally, *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese were increasingly intermarrying. In 1995, almost seven of every ten marriages of *zainichi* Koreans were with Japanese (Nakano 59). Even so, barriers to intermarriage,

¹⁰ Park Chung Hee ruled South Korea "with an iron grip" from 1961 to 1979 (Morris-Suzuki 42).

including parental disapproval from both Japanese and Korean families, remain strong (Fukuoka 32).

Zainichi Koreans can be found in all forty-seven Japanese prefectures, but over 80% are concentrated in the urban areas of western Japan, notably Osaka, Hyogo, Tokyo and Kawasaki (Nakano 58). At present it is difficult to determine how many *zainichi* Koreans live in Japan due to increases in intermarriage and naturalization. There are also many children born of mixed marriages who make up another large population bloc that is partially Korean in identity (Fukuoka 20). Furthermore, the number of Korean nationals has been decreasing in relative terms, due to a drop in the net balance between the number of births and deaths (Nakano 57). However, it appears that people of Korean or partly Korean descent account for 1% of Japan's overall population; in numerical terms there are over one million *zainichi* Koreans in Japan (Fukuoka 38). The vast majority has adopted Japanese citizenship, assumes Japanese names and is virtually linguistically and culturally indistinguishable from Japanese. John Lie points to a 'post-*Zainichi*' generation, who he claims have a "very weak sense of ethnic solidarity" (*Zainichi* 191) and "readily embrace the idea of Korean-Japanese identity" (*Zainichi* 192). For a variety of political and cultural reasons, over four hundred thousand *zainichi* Koreans purposefully retain either South or North Korean citizenship. Estimates indicate that 20% of *zainichi* Koreans speak the Korean language – mainly first-generation Koreans and younger generations who attended North Korean-sponsored schools in Japan (Fukuoka 25). *Zainichi* Koreans, including those who have naturalized, are still negatively stigmatized and continue to face discrimination in employment, education, marriage, real estate, political affairs and in everyday social circumstances (Nakano 60; Chapman 47, Field 644).

This stigmatization is reflected in the fact that there is little existing scholarship on Japan's minorities. In tertiary courses, general literature, journalism and the media, Japan continues to be treated as a homogenous mono-ethnic state with a monolithic Japanese literary canon. Japanese minority issues, if treated at all in university courses, tend to be relegated to a single lecture, often informed by generalist social-scientific or history texts that pay little attention to race relations in Japan. Additionally, Japan, as a colonial power, and her former colonial subjects are only mentioned, if at all, in existing major publications on post-colonial studies. This partially reflects the deficiency in

research on minorities in the discipline of Japanese studies in Western academia, but it also reflects an idiosyncratic Euro-centric bias in post-colonial studies. Increasingly students and scholars interested in Japanese studies or post-colonial studies or both are taking notice of post-colonial minorities in Japan, but English-language scholarship in this area in both disciplines, and particularly in post-colonial studies, is still embryonic. Moreover, the cultural production of Japan's minorities in film, literature, art, music, and dance has received scant attention in either discipline, though that too is gradually changing. Despite this, the experiences of minorities in Japan have been and remain minimally portrayed in the countless mainstream texts on Japanese society and culture that have been published in English in the post-war era. Of late, publications specifically on Koreans are increasing in number, but there are still only a limited number of books to choose from. English-language studies on *zainichi* Koreans, although situated within Japanese studies, tend to be standalone monographs, which themselves arguably exist on the margins of the field, divorced from general commentary on Japan.¹¹

More noticeable is the huge deficiency of scholarship in Western academia on Japan as a (post) colonial nation and the Korean *diaspora* in post-colonial studies. Even massive edited volumes on post-colonial studies make no mention of Japan or her former colonial subjects. This oversight paradoxically exemplifies the Euro-centric bias of this supposedly inclusive discipline, the very goal of which, claim many post-colonial scholars, is to divest academia and popular culture of Euro-centrism. Increasingly Asian studies and Japan studies specialists are applying post-colonial theory to their analyses, and contributing to post-colonial and cultural studies. However, I argue that a comparable consideration of Japanese studies or Asian studies is not as evident amongst cultural or post-colonial studies scholars. There remains a pressing need for further interdisciplinary scholarship.

The minority literature belonging to Japan's former colonial subjects has not,

¹¹ In short, only ten English-language books on Koreans in Japan were published in the post-war era until 1999 – only two of which were available for the first two decades after the end of WWII. Additionally I found one hundred and two English-language journal articles on *zainichi* Koreans published in the post-war era listed in a survey of several social science indexes. Fortuitously the number of refereed journal articles concerning Koreans in Japan in the 1990s appears to have doubled since the 1980s; over forty of the articles I found were published in the 1990s.

with very few exceptions, been translated into English or other European languages.¹² Latin, Indian and African writers – let alone academics or the public – have yet to have the opportunity to read about the post-colonial Korean *diasporic* experience via fiction and from the point of view of Koreans themselves, a point *zainichi* Korean writers articulate and lament. Names like Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Anthony Hecht, George Lamming, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, Isabel Allende, Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the infamous Salman Rushdie are well-known amongst the Japanese literary establishment and *Japanese* consumers of literature. The omission of the names and works of Korean *diasporic* writers, even from the so-called ‘*minor canon*,’ not only excludes these writers from this literary fraternity, but also from consideration for prestigious non-Japanese literary prizes, which would further draw attention to their writings as well as their minority condition. This exploratory analysis of the literature of three of the major *zainichi* Korean writers in post-war Japan thus offers an original contribution to knowledge, both for Japanese studies as well as for post-colonial literary studies.

A number of Japan-based Korean writers surfaced in the post-war era and their works comprise what is known today as *zainichi* Korean literature. *Zainichi* Korean literature is either written in Korean or in Japanese. Most *zainichi* Korean writers today write in Japanese, primarily because of linguistic requisites, both their own and those of their readers, and because of constrictions of the market economy. I limit my discussion to those who write in Japanese. *Zainichi* Korean literature has been reviewed and criticized in Japan since its inception; nevertheless the few Western studies of the genre that exist have paid scant attention to such critiques.¹³ Attention to these earlier studies, published concurrently with the literature itself, is valuable since it enables the reader to contextualize the literature historically with a greater degree of precision than has

¹²An anthology of *zainichi* Korean literature translated into English, entitled *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan*, edited by Melissa Wender, will be published soon by the University of Hawaii Press.

¹³ Some contemporary critics, such as Kawamura Minato and Takeda Seiji, are increasingly cited in English publications, but more attention can still afford to be paid to the reviews of Japanese and *zainichi* Korean critics for their insights.

hitherto been the case. Accordingly, this thesis will draw on this sort of commentary, and in doing so will add depth to the existing criticism of *zainichi* Korean literature.

The key scholars writing the reviews and criticism in this earlier period are Itō Naruhiko, Isogai Jirō, Takeda Seiji and Hayashi Kōji.¹⁴ In 1972 Itō Naruhiko made the compelling argument that the entire genre of *zainichi* Korean literature may be characterized as a *sinse ta'ryong*¹⁵ – a dirge or a lamentation borne of the Korean tradition of putting a life-story to music or lyrical rhythm – in his *Zainichi Chosenjin Bungaku to Wareware* [*Zainichi Korean Literature and Us*], one of the first book-length studies of *zainichi* Korean literature (26). Itō emphasized that the genre at large both displays a ‘Korean sensibility,’ as well as manifests in numerous ways as a lyrical lament because of its linkage to the pain and suffering of colonialism and racial prejudice. In effect he is saying that the genre represents a lamentation of life’s tribulations, but of course the *zainichi* Korean experience is also characterized by resistance, triumph, adaptation and survival, and these aspects of the genre need more recognition.

Itō draws attention to the father-son relationship and how differently it is dramatized in Japanese and in *zainichi* Korean literature. He writes, “In Japanese literature if the father is a wolf, it is an individual issue whereas in *zainichi* Korean literature, if the father is a wolf, it is directly related to history” (30-34). He recognizes that the lack of reconciliation between the Korean father-son mirrors the lack of reconciliation between the Korean father and his colonial history. Itō is one of the few Japanese critics to overtly call for Japan to make amends for an untenable colonial history and neo-colonial present in order for there to be reconciliation between Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans and by extension between *zainichi* Koreans and their particular life circumstances (26).

Isogai Jiro has also written extensively on *zainichi* Korean literature and is best known for his 1979 book, *Shigen no Hikari* [*Origins of the Light*]. He is primarily interested in the “density of Korean-ness” apparent in this literature, especially that written by first-generation writer Kim Tal Su and second-generation writers Kim Sok

¹⁴ Kawamura Minato is another scholar who has written commentaries on *zainichi* Korean literature, but as he is primarily concerned with colonial era literature I do not address his works.

¹⁵ 身勢打鈴

Pom and Kim Tae Sen [*Shigen* 212-13].¹⁶ He contrasts this Korean-ness with what he sees as an intention towards a Korean ethnicity, or an attempt to recapture Korean-ness inspired by the dilemma of “being half Korean and half Japanese,” in the literature of second-generation writers Lee Hoe Sung, Kim Ha Gyong and Kō Sa Myong. However, Isogai fails to address adequately the different approaches the writers take to the phenomenon of hybridity. He maintains, for example that Lee’s characters initially espouse the recovery model but end up advocating a discrete *zainichi* Korean identity.

Isogai also takes issue with the idea that Korean writers must express themselves in a foreign tongue [*Shigen* 210, 236). Yet, this overlooks the fact that Japanese is the first language of the second-generation writers and the possibility that using Japanese may assist the *zainichi* Korean writer to alert a Japanese readership to the minority views of the past and present. It also ignores what Kim Sok Pom calls the “partisan tactics” that writers use, an approach which involves them using ‘the enemy’s weapon against the enemy’ (Kim, S.P. *Kotoba*).

In contrast to both these critics, Takeda Seiji has teased out both the philosophical and psychological implications inherent in *zainichi* Korean literature. Takeda’s premise is that *zainichi* Koreans are inexorably disadvantaged. To be a *zainichi* Korean was to experience what Takeda terms *fugūsei* – to be ill fated (*Zainichi* 75).

The pressure the characters experience from living in Japanese society... show they have nothing at all. They cannot cling to Japanese society for support, and they lack an integrated inner self. Here we meet up with the particular nature of what it might mean to be a *zainichi* Korean. All the problems the hero meets up with are intrinsically related to his being a *zainichi* Korean; all of his anxieties stem from here (*Zainichi* 83-84).¹⁷

Takeda has emphasized the role *zainichi* Korean literature played in demonstrating the self-loathing internalized by many second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, but he goes further and points out that this self-loathing was a direct result of racism in Japanese society and, more broadly, that the social era itself largely determined the experiences of *zainichi* Koreans (*Zainichi* 54, 80). Takeda points to the fact that the works of Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong depict the limited number of options that were available to *zainichi* Koreans as they sought to escape the pain of

¹⁶朝鮮的なるもの

¹⁷ Kang Sang-Jung also notes that from the moment of birth *zainichi* Koreans are negatively represented in Japanese society. He argues that “The struggle for a context in which to develop a positive sense of self or identity involves a difficult process of self repudiation and recapture” (qtd. in Chapman 7).

being disadvantaged by their ethnicity. According to him, there were only two limited paths – assimilation or Korean nationalism. Takeda Seiji also recognized how endemic inter-generational conflict was to second-generation experience and writing. In particular, he drew attention to father-son conflicts in *zainichi* Korean families; however, unlike Japanese critics, he alone linked it to the stress of colonial or post-colonial oppression on the family.

A further contribution Takeda makes to the literary criticism of this genre is in the comparisons he draws between *zainichi* Korean writers of the 1960s and 1970s and Japanese writers of the same era. Isogai Jirō, Itō Naruhiko, and Hayashi Kōji all highlight the similarities between *zainichi* Korean writers of this generation with the *Shirakaba-ha* [the silver birch society] writers, and the latter-day *naiko no sedai* [the introverts], which I discuss in the thesis (*Zainichi* 10-18). However, Takeda brings into his discussion the role that modern literary theory and criticism have played in the production of fiction in post-war Japan. Specifically, Takeda argues that *zainichi* Korean literature offers a more realistic and nuanced version of modern man's quest – that of achieving an integrated sense of identity and a place in society through overcoming pivotal obstacles on the path to maturity – than modern Japanese literature does. He says that, by offering the stories from the vantage point of the underdog in a hostile environment, *zainichi* Korean literature grapples with the contradictions of modernity in a more compelling way than Japanese literature and it can also offer more insights into responsive strategies. The dilemmas involved in the *zainichi* Korean youth's attempt to step out of the home into a forbidding society is a point Takeda also consistently underscores (*Zainichi* 17, 40-44, 83).

Another critic of *zainichi* Korean literature, Hayashi Kōji, author of *Kozarushu: Shoki Hyōron Shū* [*The Monkey Files: An Early Critique*] (1986), *Zainichi Chōsenjin Nihongo Bungakuron* [*Theories of Zainichi Korean Literature*] (1991), and *Sengo Hi-Nihon Bungakuron* [*Theories of Oppositional Literature in Post-war Japan*] (1997), offers micro-analyses of a number of *zainichi* Korean literary works. Hayashi locates strengths and weaknesses in works that have elsewhere been overlooked, such as Lee Hoe Sung's *Mihate no Yume* [*Unfulfilled Dreams*]. Though he endorses Lee's attempt to depict the socialist dreams of labourers and farmers in the ROK, he finds Lee's novel ultimately unsatisfying since Lee speaks from a detached position in Japan

and, “doesn’t grasp the reality of the people on the ground or understand South Korean labourers and farmers” (*Kozarushū* 27-28). He also emphasizes that Lee speaks from a privileged position because the writer was never at risk of being placed in prison for espousing socialist or anti-establishment views while his contemporaries in the ROK were.

Hayashi does make one overarching and important claim in all three of his critiques, namely that *zainichi* Korean literature is ‘universal’ because it takes up ‘Korean’ issues outside of Korea. However, he does not explain how taking up of Korean issues, which emphasizes a focus on the particular or the local, makes the literature universal. The glorification of the term universal as a descriptor of this genre runs the risk of sounding patronizing or even exploitative. Hayashi unintentionally tends towards this indiscretion when he claims that *zainichi* Korean literature is ahead of its time and therefore is an improvement on Japanese literature, but does not substantiate his assertion with comparative examples (*Kozarushū* 12). Universalism and its inherent meaning of appreciation for underlying similarities between ethnic groups is not an invalid concept, but it has been over-valorised by Japanese critics of *zainichi* Korean literature. Privileging the notion of universality needs to be scrutinized lest appreciation for difference be overlooked, as it “implies the repression of the oppositional voice and the illusion that there is only one genuine culture” (Paley 2). Nevertheless, Hayashi Koji’s commitment to drawing attention to and historicizing the little-known literature of *zainichi* Korean writers cannot be underestimated.

In addition to *Japanese* scholarship there exists some English-language scholarship on *zainichi* Korean literature. Melissa Wender’s 1999 doctoral dissertation, *Lamentation as History: Literature of Koreans in Japan, 1965-1999*, is the first English-language dissertation on the topic.¹⁸ Wender examines the texts of six writers in conjunction with a number of social movements pertaining to the *zainichi* Korean community. She is particularly interested in the question of agency and as part of this investigation she interrogates how the literature, the grassroots movements, and the community at large have been affected by “three decades of Japan’s meteoric economic rise” (6).

¹⁸ Wender uses the term “resident Korean,” an abbreviation of the direct translation of *zainichi*, which literally means ‘resident-in-Japan’.

Her introduction is primarily a forum for a discussion of the problematics of agency. Her discussion of Herbert Marcuse's theories on the capacity of art to engender personal freedom lacks coherence but she successfully articulates economist Samir Amin's view on agency as a "conflict of logics, which allows choice among different possible alternatives" (10). In her chapter on first-generation female writer Chong Wol Ol Wender discusses how many women of Chong's generation, who were unable to read Japanese, empowered themselves by learning how to read and write, noting that "Literacy helped the women protest discrimination and speak out against the state" (145). She argues that the women may not have directly influenced policy, but they did experience a much greater sense of personal and collective agency, which manifest in a variety of avenues of communication – literary, political or informal.

At various points in her thesis Wender intimates that "Japan's capitalist modernity" merits censure (15, 71, 79, 84, 119, and 124), but she stops short of comprehensively theorizing the dynamics of capitalism, especially in its 'Japanese' guise, or its relationship to globalization and multiculturalism.¹⁹ She writes, for example, "The global economic and political statuses of both Japan and the two Koreas have been important in determining the subjects that concern members of this community" (15). However, the thesis does not explore how capitalism compares to communism in their particular manifestations as economic systems in Japan and the DPRK respectively. Nor does she ask what is the real economic status (or purchasing power) of Koreans in Japan, the ROK or in the DPRK, including repatriates, and how are we to then re-examine the agency of Koreans in an affluent Japan? How do *zainichi* Koreans on the ground assess capitalism? Is post modern capitalism merely a paradigm that celebrates wealth above all other values, characterised by extravagant waste and gratuitous consumption? Are there any redeeming features of late capitalism and globalization as it has manifest in Japan? How specifically has it affected or disaffected *zainichi* Koreans? A more detailed discussion of how capitalism informs Japanese society and its effects on the *zainichi* Korean community could provide additional perspective. Wender's thesis may stop short of strictly demonstrating the contingencies or material relationship between 'capitalist modernity' and 'agency' with regard to

¹⁹ See, for example, "A Roadmap to Millennial Japan" by Yoda, Tomiko.

zainichi Korean individuals, the *zainichi* Korean community or literary nationalism; however, it does inaugurate a discussion of these phenomena.

One strength of Wender's thesis is her commitment to interrogating issues about gender and gender bias. She applies contemporary discourse on gender to her discussion in such a way that she avoids sounding unnecessarily judgmental, which is a difficult task when critiquing literature written decades ago in a male-dominated society. For example, Wender endorses female writer Yi Yang Ji's conceptualization of motherhood and reproduction as instruments of control both on a national scale and between individuals. Wender, however, is simultaneously careful to recognize that motherhood and reproduction may also be celebrated as instances of individual agency (185, 188). Additionally her discussion of the younger female writer Yū Miri in juxtaposition with the issue of 'comfort women' reminds the reader of the very different relationships women and men have to the nation as well as how conflicts takes gendered forms and are a collective phenomenon.

Wender encourages her readers to explore *zainichi* Korean literature as expressions of agency that resonate with similar expressions provided by grassroots and other social or political movements. Additionally, to date Wender is the only writer to provide a book-length work on this subject and to have provided a feminist reading of the works in question. Her diplomatic exposition on the gendered nature of this national literature also makes her contribution to the field unique.

John Lie, an eminent scholar whose extensive writings on Japan and on *zainichi* Koreans are exemplary for their contemporary and incisive observations on identity, the nation and diversity, has also briefly and sporadically critiqued the literature of *zainichi* Korean writers Kim Sok Pom, Yi Yang Ji and Lee Hoe Sung. His limited literary analysis has led to some facile assertions, in particular with regard to writer Kim Sok Pom. For example, Lie argues that Kim Sok Pom is "anti-Japanese," although Kim "lives as a Japanese and writes for the Japanese public" (*Narratives* 436). He goes on to claim that "By averting his gaze from his *diasporic* status, Kim elides all the concrete problems that exist for Korean Japanese" (*Narratives* 436). While Kim does critique Japan's colonial history, I have not encountered much evidence to support the claim that he is "anti-Japanese", nor was this the impression he gave on the several occasions I met with him. A more comprehensive reading of Kim's literature demonstrates that Kim

does not, as Lie claims, “elide all the concrete problems that exist for Korean-Japanese”. Rather, as I hope to show in the thesis, Kim advocates a nuanced approach to the question of hybridity, that most *zainichi* Koreans encounter, one that endorses adaptation and individual agency.

Other non-Japanese scholars and students are increasingly taking up the study of *zainichi* Korean literature, including Australian scholar Carol Hayes, who has written about *zainichi* Korean women writers, and British scholar Tracey Gannon, who has written a PhD on the writers Yū Miri, Lee Hoe Sung, Chong Ch’u-wōl and Yi Yang Ji. Michael Konigsberg, a German scholar, has a book on second-generation minor writers that is scheduled to be translated into English. Other people who appear to be doing similar research include Lisa Yoneyama, Marty Holman, Ted Fowler, Christopher Scott, Stephen Snyder, Yoshiko Matsuura, Irena Hayter and Kristina Weickgennant. I am only familiar with the name of one Korean scholar based in the ROK, who is writing in Korean about *zainichi* Korean literature, Yū Fan So Gyong, although there are surely others. Many of the works of Lee Hoe Sung, Yang So Gil, Yū Miri and others have been translated into Korean and are now widely accessible in South Korea.²⁰

In contrast to the earlier critics who have examined the works of Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong, my thesis focuses on comparing the different ways that these writers grapple with the problem of cultural identity in their novels. This has in turn required a different kind of critical approach, one that draws on knowledge of post-colonial concepts, but also of Japan’s colonial history and the writers’ own life experiences and their authorial intentions. To achieve this, my research has focused on four main activities. Firstly, the reading of Japanese-language primary texts as well as non-prose commentary, such as non-fiction books, essays, published interviews and lectures by the three writers. Secondly, the reading of primarily Japanese but also the few existing English-language critiques and analyses of the works in question to gauge the intersections of analysis applied by Japanese, *zainichi* Korean and non-Japanese intellectuals. Thirdly, the conduct of in-depth interviews with authors, literary critics,

²⁰ For many years Japanese cultural products were banned from the ROK, so Japanese literature, including that written by *zainichi* Koreans, was disallowed in the southern state until the bans were lifted in the 1990s, when Kim Dae Jung became the President of the ROK. In particular, any literature that either promoted socialism or painted a negative picture of the southern regimes was frowned upon. Kim Sok Pom’s literature, therefore, had to be smuggled in to Cheju and translated in secret.

publishers, sociologists, historians and lay-persons, mainly with second-generation *zainichi* Korean men in similar age brackets to the writers I introduce here, but also with Japanese, newcomer Koreans and some Westerners. Fourthly, the examination of critical concepts and ideas drawn from the fields of cultural studies, anthropology and post-colonial studies. My approach was additionally driven by the theoretical and dialogical opportunities offered by the texts themselves.

Before I go on to outline the chapter contents of the thesis, it is important to explain my decision to conduct interviews with lay people as part of my research into the backgrounds of the writers and the texts being studied. Interviews fall into the realm of ethnography, itself a critical approach derived from the field of social anthropology. By immersing themselves in a particular milieu, ethnographers get a rich sense of that milieu and the complexity of the factors that influence it. Cultural studies theorist Avtar Brah maintains that “Attention to the unidentified voices of ‘ordinary’ individuals is an important part of a wider effort to remap the theoretical milieu, which is predicated on the analysis of texts at the expense of an auxiliary analysis of lived reality” (204). Brah recommends using ‘ordinary’ voices – “world as text” – to enhance our understanding of “literature as text” (204). The oral testimonies of first-hand experience and knowledge of individual *zainichi* Koreans unequivocally illustrate the human dimension of the *zainichi* Korean *diasporic* experience in post-war Japan, augment the depiction provided in the creative fiction studied and attest to the reality of multiculturalism in Japan.

One criticism commonly levelled against ethnography is that the researcher’s presence may in itself contribute to results that are inaccurate. This is because the observed subjects may act in a manner that is different from the norm due to the presence of the observer (Agar and Hobbs 104-11). I didn’t overcome this limitation. Indeed my American background both privileged and prejudiced both conduct of interviews and my reading of texts.²¹ In some instances I was welcomed as an impartial third-party while in other instances I was suspected of being a spy.

My interview techniques drew on the concept of the “dialogical self,” which has its roots in William James’ distinction between the I and Me, outlined in his *Principles*

²¹ Refer to Paley 4.

of *Psychology* (1890). James argued that we choose among conflicting selves to create an identity for our selves. Russian cultural theorist Mikhail Bahktin further develops this concept in his theory of Dostoevsky's poetics. Bahktin attributes to Dostoevsky the creation of the genre of the polyphonic novel, in which a multiplicity of voices interact to create a narrative of the self. The self is constituted out of a whole host of voices, each with its own quasi-independent perspective, and these voices are in a dialogical relationship with one another (Barresi 240). Each viewpoint of reality is allowed to stand on its own, contested by alternative viewpoints, but none assume paramount importance (Hermans and Kempen 208-10).

The dialogical approach departs critically from the Cartesian idea of the detached, rational or scientific observer. "Dialogical interpretation does not operate like traditional qualitative methodologies where the researcher puts aside her or his own pre-suppositions; rather, prejudices are the tools of trade – they are what enable any sort of understanding" (Peake 5). It is through our 'locatedness' in the world – our embeddedness in the cultural life we inherit – that communication with others becomes possible. In his book, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty also stresses that perceptual knowledge or prejudices are not based on the relationship between reference points 'out there,' but, between those points and the point of location of the observer. Dialogical relations emerge when a voice emanates from a personal position in relation to others (Hermans and Kempen 212-13). Through dialogue the researcher learns to see the world as the story teller does. Gadamer makes the case in *Philosophical Hermeneutics* that the dialogical encounter might help to modify our identity and that in true conversation or dialogue, there is a back and forth, where something new can emerge for either party.

Ladelle McWhorter advocates including the writer's experience in one's own writing (xvii-xx). Following such a practice strengthens methodological arguments made by Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty of the necessary connection between subject and object, viewer and viewed, researcher and participant. Arthur Frank similarly argues that the researcher who solicits people's stories does not simply collect data, but assents to enter into a relationship with the respondent and becomes part of that person's on-going struggle. Such research he characterizes as dialogical. Rather than speaking for an *other*, which involves an element of intellectual mastery and domination, entering into a

dialogue involves a willingness to hear and receive as well as to question (Halbfass 141). “The premise of the dialogical perspective is that existential wholeness is inherently constituted in relationships with others” (Frank, *Illness* 153). If existence is necessarily dialogical, the other is already included in my own existence and the well-being of any individual must be a derivative of the qualities of the relationships he or she enters into. To be a dialogical human is not to simply stand where we are in our particular worldview and speak it out to others and listen to others from afar. Rather it means to question, reconsider and revise at the deepest level our own patterns of interpreting reality and become open to profoundly different cultures, worldviews and perspectives (Gangadean 8). Wholeness comes to mean the on-going communication between simultaneous difference; dialogue can assimilate otherness and otherness can elicit dialogue. The ethical challenge is to live in the space of that tension (Frank, *Illness* 152-53; Clark and Holquist 9).

As for my decision to include history as historiography this was done out of a recognition that life-history or testimonials occupy an increasingly important place in the field of post colonial history. Historiography, the study of how history is studied and written, by including hitherto unheard of versions of history or non-traditional methods of the telling of history, such as literature and oral storytelling, has challenged the dominance of exclusive or purely academic historical accounts of the past.²² Historiography increasingly employs auxiliary disciplines including gender studies, anthropology, literary and post-colonial studies as resources for historical research (Woolf 46; Furay and Salevouris 223). According to Bill Ashcroft, post-colonial societies or immigrants, in particular, need to contest existing historical accounts that omit their versions of history (Ashcroft et al. *Post-Colonial* 356). A committed protest against a colonial past is a common feature of Third World literature everywhere (Dash 199).²³ Indeed, as Itō Naruhiko points out, “*Zainichi* Korean literature would not exist as an entity at all were it not for the colonial burden placed on Koreans” (“*Zainichi*” 27). Even literature can create a space for marginalized *zainichi* Korean voices to articulate a *zainichi* Korean version of history. Accordingly, by pointing to the agency of previously

²² For example in the ROK a central thrust of historiography since WWII has been to dispel foreign, and especially Japanese, views of Korea as backwards and servile (*New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* 34).

²³ For example, Haitian novelist, Jacques Stephen Alexis and Guyanese novelist Wilson Harris.

ignored social groups, unfamiliar texts and forgotten stories, historiography offers more heterogeneous and interactive histories (Partner et al. 242).²⁴

Methodologically speaking, then, this thesis uses literary narratives to bring historical problems of the Cold War era and perspectives specific to *diasporic* Koreans in Japan into greater focus. The six novels examined bring into sharp relief the Korean experience of Japanese and American imperialism, the Korean War and the experience of extreme marginalization in post-war Japan. The literature also draws attention to the highly charged ideological divide amongst Koreans in Japan along pro-communist and anti-communist lines. Finally, the literature tells of the *zainichi* Korean lived experience of racism and its effects on subjectivity. It also offers insight into what that racism means or how it feels.²⁵ For this thesis, then, I put forward a detailed textual analysis that allows the reader to duly engage with the texts. I have organized the chapters in the following way: the chapter that follows this introduction (Chapter Two) provides an account of the concept of cultural identity as this has been theorized by a number of important cultural historians and post-colonial literary critics. In particular I elucidate the terms that are most relevant to my discussion of cultural identity, including hybridity, *différance* and *diaspora*. An important question I ask is how *diasporic* ethnic minority members cope with the racism, stigmatism and marginalization they experience in the societies to which they have emmigrated. I focus specifically on the second-generation post-colonial migrant struggle to develop autonomous definitions of self and navigate the experiences of ambivalence or inbetween-ness in an attempt to identify with two incompatible cultural identities – that of the former ‘homeland,’ however imaginary, and that of their current ‘home’. The chapter also articulates some of the key forms of identity which *zainichi* Koreans have adopted in order to negotiate political stigmatization and social ostracism in Japan.

In Chapter Three I examine how the issue of cultural identity is portrayed in Kim Sok Pom’s 1957 novel *Karasu no Shi* [*The Death of the Crow*], focusing in particular on how Kim both represents and attempts to solve the problem of the young *zainichi* Korean caught between the antithetical forces of Japanese colonialism and modernity on the one hand, and the force of Korean nationalism and tradition on the

²⁴ See also Brah 183.

²⁵ For a discussion of this see Jordan and Weedon 232.

other. This chapter traces the way that Ki Jun, the novel's protagonist, who is forced to become a spy in order to survive the 1949 Cheju Massacre, struggles to firmly position himself in a way that offers him the possibility of new beginnings. In addition, I examine the novel's use of the doppelganger motif, a device that Kim Sok Pom employs to suggest the need for personal insight and compromise between the two cultures – Japanese and Korean. This chapter also highlights Kim's attempts to relate the past to the present and his probing of the question of agency.

In Chapter Four I scrutinize Kim's 1971 novel *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* [*The Extraordinary Ghost Story of Mandogi*]. The author's depiction of an insignificant but lovable temple boy, Mandogi, allows the reader to extrapolate allegorical insights into the cultural identity of the *zainichi* Korean. I demonstrate how Kim obfuscates the boundaries that normally limit a given identity and how in so doing he navigates the dualisms and the problems associated with mixed cultural identity. In pursuing these questions I examine what Kim sees as the tension between the outer body or name and the enduring aspects of the interior self. The concept of 'home' is invoked to facilitate an understanding of how Kim theorizes identity. I also examine how Kim uses the trope of the ghost and literary devices associated with magical realism to pursue the line of inquiry into transcendence and into the continuum between the past, present and the future, as well as to that between life and death. Finally, the chapter asks how the ghost of Mandogi acts as a reminder of the dead – specifically of those Koreans who were massacred on Cheju prior to the Korean War.

Chapter Five focuses on Lee Hoe Sung's 1971 novel *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* [*The Cloth Fuller*], a semi-autobiographical folkloric tale, that describes the life and death of a young Korean woman, Chang Suri, during the 1940s, as recounted by her son. The chapter approaches *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* as exemplary of the 'little narrative,' which privileges personal experience as the means to articulate identity. It also draws attention to a masculine/feminine divide in Lee's novel, with war and ideology on one side of the divide and the experiences of individuals on the other. For example, instances of violence in the story take place at the domestic rather than at the national level, with the battle field being at home. The chapter also demonstrates how Lee attempts to ground personal identity in the Korean tradition of oral and folk history. The story functions as a *sinset'aryong*, a Korean tradition of oral lamentation, which allows

Lee, the ‘story teller,’ to point to Korean-ness – discernible in the culturally-informed experiences and Korean identity of the mother – as an anchor.

In Chapter Six I turn to Lee’s 1970 novel, *Kayako no Tameni* [*For Kayako*], a novel about adolescence, ethnicity and love. I examine Lee’s depiction of his protagonist’s search for the recovery of his ‘Korean-ness’. The question at hand is whether ethnicity is somehow inherently bound to the self or perhaps lies inert (primordially) in one’s being but, like a ‘diamond in the rough,’ needs to be unearthed or polished. The chapter also explores Lee’s pragmatic view that socio-political structures enact a determining influence on *zainichi* Korean life-choices and relationships by exploring the constellation of social forces, such as imperial fascism, socialist nationalism and democracy that affect their lives. Finally, this chapter investigates how Lee’s heroes approach the art of identity-building focusing on the difficult choices the protagonist San Juni is forced to make when confronted with differing ideologies and agendas, some of which challenge his commitment to his love affair with Kayako, his Japanese girlfriend.

Chapter Seven provides an analysis of Kim Ha Gyong’s 1963 novel *Kogoeru Kuchi* [*Frozen Mouth*], which tells the story of the isolated and angst-ridden, Sai Keishoku, a *zainichi* Korean, who suffers from a stutter. The chapter explores the concept of double marginality focusing on how Kim juxtaposes his hero’s physical disability with that of his ethnic minority status. I also explore how Kim uses the experience of living with a disability to throw what it might mean to *be* and *feel* different into sharp relief; I draw attention to how Kim uses the hero’s stutter at times to allegorize race relations. I also highlight Kim Ha Gyong’s distinctive dislike of nationalism. The writer contends that political activism cannot alleviate existential trauma, but instead has the capacity to exacerbate it. I consider that Kim, via his hero, is more interested in the non-stuttering interior self that lies beneath his over-determined, disciplined and marginalized self. I inquire as to how Kim hopes to close the distance between his authentic and inauthentic self by unveiling these negative influences.

The theme of existential loneliness and how to deal with life’s tribulations are also explored in Chapter Seven. Kim depicts love and suicide as two potential means to ameliorate the human condition. Here it is important to consider Kim’s ideas about the role of love and suicide as forms of agency and whether suicide, in particular, is seen by

him as a conscious rational solution to a lonely and insufferable existence.

Chapter Eight analyzes Kim Ha Gyong's 1971 novel, *Sakumei* [*Delusions*], which explores the notion of 'the starved heart'. Examined is the way Kim juxtaposes two heroes – a *zainichi* Korean and a South Korean from the mainland – who both experience 'starvation of the heart,' but who each develop different ways to ameliorate the problem. At stake is the question of whether or not sadness and misery can be overcome by identification with nationalism and activism, or whether it is better to forego this kind of idealism and learn instead to yield to or cope with the exigencies of existence. Chapter Eight thus draws attention to the delusions that Kim intimates we live with, by examining his theory concerning the distance between how things appear and how they actually are. The chapter scrutinizes, for example, the façade of an idealized homeland and the reality of a border crossing that only leads to a greater sense of dislocation and alienation.

Chapter Two

Zainichi Korean Writers and Cultural Identity

A central subject of this thesis is identity. This very abstract word, in the simplest terms, merely points to the qualities of a person or group, which make them the same as, or different from others. In short, it is the distinguishing character of an individual. However, the countless variables involved in the make-up of a given identity, such as one's place of origin, race, gender, name, age, profession, religion, education, speech patterns, body, personal interests or ability, status and other attributes, complicate the issue. Likewise identity is transitional and malleable and continues to change throughout the course of a life time (Nikkila 47). Indeed, "Individuals participate in the cultural life of more than one social group and carry multiple associational identities" (Novak 41; Fox 107-08). As Eric Lincoln writes, " 'Who' is often a mosaic of bits of 'what,' and when that mosaic becomes too complex or too cumbersome, then identity may be affixed to the most prominent or compelling feature presented" (209-10).

A prominent feature of identity is ethnicity, a term that is regularly invoked in the summoning and binding of individuals into cultural or national groups (Gilroy "*Diaspora*" 315-16; Roy 58; MacCormick 131). Where race is defined as those immutable traits a group of people possess that are transmissible by descent and genes and sufficient to characterize it as a distinct human type, ethnicity is primarily a sociological designation, identifying a group sharing some commonalities of culture and history and only some outward physical characteristics (Long and Kittles 103-26). Thus an ethnic group is defined as a category of the population that, in a larger society, is set apart and bound together by common ties of language, nationality, religion, culture and sense of identity (Ranger 19; Pinderhuges 82). John Lie, in his discussion of the history of Korean-Japanese relations effectively argues that "the continuous influx and efflux of bodies across national borders... threaten to make a mockery of established categories and identities" (*Zainichi* 169).

Scholars today understand that ethnic identity is, actually, based on a "social imaginary", or what Benedict Anderson calls an "imagined community." Ali Rattansi defines it as "a collectivity bonded together by forms of literary and visual

representation which are located in time and space, in history, memory and territory” (Rattansi 258). Bihkhu Parekh writes, “No modern culture or society has a uniform character, or is an undifferentiated and monolithic whole... The articulation of national identity is highly complex and involves millions of people the individual member has never seen... the imagined community spans past, present and future generations and involves unseen millions” (66-67).

Indeed, ethno-cultural characteristics are often too vague to specify and agree upon and are rarely shared by all or even a majority. Accordingly, trying to identify a diverse people with a diverse history through a single, hegemonic ‘group identity’ is extremely complex (Parekh 69). “People who share location and myriad aspects of culture in their everyday lives are actually totally different” (Woodward “Concepts” 9). Increasingly the complexities of drawing neat boundaries around concepts such as ethnicity and race, or of finding unambiguous or acceptable ethnic labels, are becoming widely acknowledged. Edward Mortimer writes, “The difficulty of defining group identities has become one of the central problems of our time” (viii).

Since the mid 1980s, using the critiques of such scholars as Renato Rosaldo, Donna Haraway and James Clifford, anthropologists have been conducting research on the fragmentation of society and culture, where identities are constantly being contested in various sites. Herbert Harris writes,

“Societal forces make us question who we are and push us to embrace attitudes and ideas that are alien to us. These forces are compounded by the rapidly changing demographics that separate us from our roots and take away those certitudes of identity that once were passed from generation to generation” (1).

In contemporary society almost every culture has been obliged to become aware of many other cultures. Simultaneously globalization, because of its challenge to traditional certainties, has actually inspired a reassertion of collective and personal cultural identities (Novak 31; Woodward “Concepts” 46; Lugo 52-53).

Robin Cohen makes the judicious point that while primordialism – the belief that ethnic differences are biologically ordained – does not work well as an explanation of ethnic difference it “does work as a description of the force that is contained in ethnic sentiment” (5). The term “ethnicity” acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and lends a sense of continuity or unity to

one's personal sense of self and identity (S. Hall qtd. in Ashcroft et al. *Post-Colonial* 226). Indeed, many ethnic minorities strenuously hold on to traditional notions of ethnicity. Cohen points out that people consistently demonstrate that ethnicity, however imaginative it may be to the intellectual community, is a powerful and enduring social force. "It would be very foolish" he writes, "for any social scientist to ignore the fact that many individuals strongly believe that ethnic allegiances are part of their core identity and have to be defended even on a life-or death basis" (Cohen 10). According to Stuart Hall, structural changes are transforming modern society and fragmenting existing beliefs about class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and nationality. This, he maintains, undermines one's sense of self as an integrated subject. Hall refers to this loss of a stable 'sense of self' as "the dislocation or de-centering of the subject" (Hall, Held and McGrew 274-75).

In fact, the widespread belief that identities persist through time as unified and internally coherent is problematic. Judith Butler critiques this belief, writing, "The question of what constitutes 'personal identity' almost always centers on the question of what internal feature of the person establishes the continuity or self-identity of the person through time" (22-23). She challenges this idea, however, by pointing to the extent to which regulatory practices – be they national, societal, legislative or media-based – govern such notions of identity. She argues that the "coherence" and "continuity" of "the person" are not logical or analytic features of personhood, but rather, socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility (22-23).

Binaries and Derridean Deconstruction

Concepts of self and community have been shaped according to an understanding of the discourse or dialectic of sameness and otherness. The tendency to classify individuals or groups in relation to one another, or in relation to what they are not, is well established. Theoretical discourse on the idea of the Other was largely shaped by Jacques Lacan and Emmanuel Levinas, based on the acknowledgement of strangeness in the Other and an emphasis on distance and difference rather than shared characteristics or solidarity (Hutchinson and Williams 6). Korean identity, for example, relies for its existence on something outside itself: namely, another identity (Japanese), which it is not. In short, identity is marked out by sameness and difference (Maiping 31; Littrup 8; Woodward,

“Concepts” 9; Hoadley 115, 118). Binary oppositions, known also as binarities or dualities, are the most extreme form of marking sameness and difference (Woodward, “Concepts” 35). “The most cited duality in colonial studies is modern and traditional, which always includes an ethnic dimension and, in effect, evokes images of European and Native” (Hoadley 115, 118). Other binary oppositions include white-black, man-woman, Jew-Christian and rational-emotional (E. K. Chang 172).

French cultural theorist, Jacques Derrida, demonstrated how binary oppositions are placed in a hierarchical order and normalized, with one term having priority over the other (Coward 143). Derrida’s critique emerged from a focus on the supremacy of the spoken over the written word. He established that both speech and writing are structured by difference and distance. Barbara Johnson, one of Derrida’s translators, explains:

The spoken word is given a higher value because the speaker and the listener are both present to the utterance simultaneously. This immediacy seems to guarantee the notion that in the spoken word we know what we mean, mean what we say, say what we mean and know what we have said. Whether or not perfect understanding occurs, this image of perfectly self present meaning is, according to Derrida, the underlying ideal of Western culture (qtd. in Coward 143).

Derrida names this belief in the self-presence of meaning ‘logocentrism,’ from the Greek *logos* (speech, meaning, word of God, reason). Speech is preferable to the written word, because the latter may be read after the writer’s death or by those who might corrupt the self-presence of meaning, present only in speech. Derrida viewed this ‘speech versus writing debate’ as the foundation of the entire system of philosophical opposition, generating and normalizing the exclusion and marginalization of those who are defined as different, ‘other’ or as outsider vis-à-vis a dominant majority (Coward 143; Grosz: 36; cf: Woodward “Concepts” 35). Specifically one binary is deemed the norm and its counterpart is the ‘other’ (Woodward “Concepts” 36; Grosz 37).²⁶ Avtar Brah similarly notes how “Regimes of power purposefully differentiate one group from another and thus are able to represent them or to include or exclude them from the body politic” (183).

Ali Rattansi writes, “Modernity’s ‘Others,’ both internal and external or real and imagined, especially in the context of imperialism and colonialism, who supposedly

²⁶ Feminist theorists Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Michèle Le Doeuff and Judith Butler have all used Derridean deconstruction to make important contributions to feminist theory.

lack majority characteristics, for example, have been marginalized as binary opposites by processes of differentiation” (251). The general result has been the privileging of sameness over difference (Gilroy, “*Diaspora*” 308-09). When Japan became a colonial power, for example, the term ‘Japanese’ assumed a positionality of superiority with respect to the Korean. The Korean became the ‘Other’. This discourse remains an underlying feature of racialised conceptions of Japanese-ness and Korean-ness in Japan. Accordingly, the conception of the *zainichi* Korean is definitively rooted in the colonial situation in which Japanese were colonial masters and Koreans were colonial subjects. Gayatri Spivak explains that once we define the colonial subject as ‘other’ we weaken yet again their own definition of themselves, which constitutes a form of epistemic violence (qtd. in Ashcroft et al. *Post-Colonial* 24).

Derridean deconstruction inspires marginalized ‘others’ to develop autonomous definitions of self (Grosz 37). These can then be disseminated, thus further destabilizing already changing norms and representations. Judith Butler claims:

The cultural matrix through which a majority identity has become intelligible requires that certain kinds of minority “identities” are objectionable – that is, those whose cultural behaviors fail to conform to those majority norms of cultural intelligibility. Their persistence and proliferation, however, provide critical opportunities to expose the limits and regulatory aims of that domain of majority norms and, hence, to open up rival and subversive matrices of minority norms (*Gender* 24).

To extrapolate from her exposition on identity and gender one could argue about ethnicity that, inasmuch as a ‘Japanese identity’ is assured through the stabilizing concepts of ethnicity and language, the very notion of “a Japanese” is called into question by the emergence of Koreans who appear to be Japanese, culturally and linguistically, but who fail to conform to the ethnic norms of cultural intelligibility by which Japanese are defined.

Representation and Images

Derrida, along with structuralist giants such as Saussure, Althusser, Lacan and Foucault, stressed that relations of power, including the power to define who is included and who is excluded, are produced through language and representation. Nation-states, by definition, have a dominant cultural group that controls the production of nationalistic images, primarily through the media but also through tradition, ritual, and glorification

of historical icons, who may represent a cultural ideal. These exemplify what Judith Butler calls ‘regulatory practices,’ which assert themselves through symbolic systems of representation and finally through social exclusion (22-23; Gilroy, *Roots* 19). For example, state-centered policies, such as alien registration laws, identify and stigmatize minorities as often as they homogenize, unify and naturalize the majority (Gladney 777). Images tend to offer highly condensed and idealized accounts of majority identities and simultaneously, even if inadvertently, counter-productive images of minority identities. A romanticized image of an ethnic minority might elicit pity, for example, and generate unwitting condescension (Meyer i). Ali Rattansi draws attention to the implications of the production and constant recreation of images of both minority and majority ethnic identities in visual and written narratives of popular and high culture (258; Parekh 67-68). Undoubtedly some representations reinforce misconceptions and stereotypes rather than promote a positive shift in opinion (Meyer ii).

Due to the proliferation of one-dimensional idealized images focusing on the majority, it is very common for majority members in post-colonial societies to underestimate or remain ignorant of the particular histories of the minority groups with whom they live (Saenz 70). Images representing Japanese as historical heroes or victims during WWII, depending on the era, have kept Japanese people “ignorant of the violence of their nation’s treatment of Koreans and other Asians during the colonial era 1910 -1945” (Macdonald 301; Nakano 70). According to Gaynor MacDonald, “The Japanese use images of ‘heroic’ history... (such as) the samurai upholding the virtues of the Japanese way... All expressions of an ‘other’ culture, such as ‘Korean,’ are devalued... The nationalising imagery distorts the historical record through its omissions as well as its emphases... Japan’s history of colonization, slavery and migrant labor is omitted in most Japanese representations of history” (301).²⁷

Diaspora

The term Diaspora refers to the Jewish settlement outside of Palestine, particularly after WWII (Safran 83; Clifford 303). Recently the term *diaspora* – generally italicized – refers to immigrants who arrive in new locations as the result of war, oppression,

²⁷ The textbook controversy over government-approved history textbooks used in secondary schools of Japan is a case in point (Nozaki and Inokuchi; Chapman 86).

poverty, enslavement, natural disasters or the reluctant search for better economic and social opportunities (Gilroy "*Diaspora*" 304). Stuart Hall states that, "The experience of dispersal and fragmentation is the history of all enforced *diasporas*" (S. Hall "Cultural Identity" 52). "Slavery, pogroms, indenture, genocide and other unnamable terrors have all figured in the constitution of identity of *diasporic* minorities" (Gilroy "*Diaspora*" 318). Push factors, like war, famine, ethnic cleansing, conquest, enslavement and political repression all call attention to emigration following the threat of death, rather than freely chosen experiences of displacement.

Some scholars have argued that in migration studies, ethnic studies, cultural studies and anthropology the term has been increasingly used to describe "practically any population which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides" (Vertovec xvi). Hence, there have been attempts to further delimit the term. In 1991 William Safran argued that *diasporas* share the following six characteristics, paraphrased here: 1) they have been dispersed from a specific original "center"; 2) they retain a collective memory or myth about their original homeland; 3) they believe that they are not fully accepted by their host society; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would eventually return; 5) they believe they should be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland; and 6) they continue to relate to that homeland in one way or another, and their solidarity is defined by the existence of such a relationship (83-84). While Safran's demarcation of the term may inhibit indiscriminate use of the kind that concerns Vertovec, it actually runs the risk of limiting the definition so as to insinuate there is such an entity as a 'pure' or 'ideal' *diasporic* group – in fact he makes the unhelpful claim that Jews are the 'ideal' *Diaspora* (88). He thus leaves little room in his definition for ambivalence about return and attachment to homeland that exiled people might experience.

James Clifford recommends that, rather than look at '*diaspora*'s' essential features, scholars ought to look at specific articulations of identity (307). He makes the point that "societies wax and wane in *diasporism*, depending on obstacles, antagonisms and connections in their host countries and transnationally" (306). In short, the discourses of *diaspora* will continue to shift and change along with societal changes. Indeed, based on Safran's highly demarcated definition only first- and

second-generation *zainichi* Koreans would constitute a genuine *diaspora*. The 'homeland myth' so heavily associated with older *zainichi* Koreans has attenuated since the 1970s and 1980s and third- and fourth-generation *zainichi* Koreans have, for the most part, settled in Japan permanently. However, they still experience discrimination and exclusion and share a sense of solidarity with their first- and second-generation *zainichi* Korean predecessors and speak in vague terms about a sense of 'displacement'. Thus they arguably retain a '*diaspora* consciousness,' which enables them to collectively criticise the nation-state in ways that mainstream 'majority' Japanese tend not to.

The concept of *diaspora* provides a framework for understanding the problem of dislocation, social exclusion for immigrants and identity fragmentation. Psychologist Eric Erickson, one of the first scholars to write about identity, makes the case that ethnic minorities often experience what he called an 'identity crises' as a result of the experiences of emigration and immigration, negative representation, prejudice and social exclusion (196; Harris 3; Blue 224; Gleason 57). Immigration is coupled with the phenomenon of dislocation, defined by Avtar Brah as "a displacement that results in a sense of discontinuity" (180). Stuart Hall argues that displacement, the decentering of individuals from their place in the social and cultural world, constitutes a crisis of identity ("Question" 274-75).

A major feature of many post-colonial literatures is the relationship between displacement and identity. *Diasporic* writers face the difficult task of articulating the relationship between self and place. The concept of *diaspora* embodies a subtext of 'home' or what Avtar Brah terms "a homing desire", which is not the same thing as a desire for a 'homeland'; indeed, not all *diasporas* sustain an ideology of 'return' (190). For many, 'home' is a mythic place of desire in the *diasporic* imagination. It is a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographic territory. Indeed, as John Lie argues, "the roots of *diaspora* should not be exclusively located in a primordial, bounded space" (*Zainichi* 182). In fact, 'home' is the lived experience of a locality (Brah 192). 'Home' can thus simultaneously be a geographic and psychic place of safety and terror (Brah 180).

Brah posits that *diaspora*, as a model, offers new possibilities for understanding identity. "The concept" he writes "should be seen as a theoretical

mapping, which defies the search for original absolutes or... authentic unchanging identities... it refers to *multi-locationality* within and across territorial, cultural and psychic boundaries” (196-97). *Diasporic* identities constantly produce and reproduce themselves anew, through transformation and difference. When *diasporic* immigrant identities are forced to leave one ‘home’ for another, they inevitably change (Woodward “Concepts” 17). The concept thus presents “possibilities for visualizing a future where new bases for social solidarity are offered and joined” (Gilroy “*Diaspora*” 304). “The *diasporic* experience is defined then, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*” (S. Hall “Cultural” 58).

Hybridity

The model of hybridity in post colonial studies was pioneered by Homi Bhabha and articulates the psychological and emotional experience of *diasporic* minority members in a dominant society. Hybridity, according to Bhabha, is “a process of splitting spawned by a condition of subjugation: where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different, as a mutation or a hybrid” (“Signs” 34-35). Whereas the first-generation immigrant supposedly has a pristine ‘ethnic identity,’ in terms of language, customs, religion, family patterns, diet, music, etc., the second-generation immigrant does not. For first-generation immigrants, ethnic identity tends to be experienced as a unified or intact identity. However, competing and conflicting notions of cultural identity delimit the second-generation immigrant identity. Hybridity signifies, in particular, the experience of the second-generation immigrant, who feels displaced vis-à-vis both the ‘new’ residence and the family’s ethnic heritage and cultural norms. “The ways ethnic traditions and the ways the dominant culture in a new homeland affects an individual’s inner life are subtle and complex” (Novak 46). Second-generation immigrant identities tend to require “recomposition, even reinvention”, because personal experience rarely fits with the cultural norms of the ethnic familial group to which the individual is supposed to belong (Roy 59).

Hybridity, as posited by Homi Bhabha, connotes, above all, the experience of

ambivalence or inbetween-ness.²⁸ As Salman Rushdie puts it, “Our identity is that once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we full between two stools” (15). Derrida’s term *antré* is useful here as it facilitates an understanding of Bhabha’s argument about ambivalence. The *antré* designates the dominant indigenous groups at the local levels, who existed in a place of inbetween-ness, during the colonial era. Spivak claims that this heterogeneous group was characterized by ambiguities and contradictions which manifest themselves in ambivalence (“Can the Subaltern Speak” 24-26). Specifically, the *antré* colonial identity experiences ambivalence as he attempts to identify with two incompatible cultural identities. As the colonized subject appropriates and adapts the varied capabilities and knowledge of the colonizer, he becomes a threat to the colonizer and the relationship inevitably becomes characterized by ambivalence. Ambivalence describes how “...the discriminated subject, incompletely contained by the power and paranoid knowledge invested into its constitution, participates in, confronts, and unsettles that very power” (Carter-Sanborn 581). Ambivalence usually takes the form of preference for the dominant binary norm and rejection of the minoritized binary or the ‘other’ (Pinderhuges 80). Frantz Fanon wrote of this phenomenon arguing that as the subjugated black man renounces his blackness he becomes whiter (17-18).

In fact hybridity functions as a strategic reversal of the process of domination through both the production and disavowal of competing identities in order to enable agency in different contexts. Bhabha points out that if colonial power generated hybridization, rather than the repression of native traditions, then an unexpected form of, “subversion that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into... those of intervention” occurs (“Signs” 35). Ashcroft et al. call hybridity the most common and effective form of subversive opposition (*Post-Colonial* 9). According to Achille Mbembe, “The post-colonial ‘subject’ has had to learn to continuously bargain and improvise... he or she mobilizes not just a single identity but several fluid identifies, which must be constantly revised in order to achieve maximum instrumentality and efficiency” (5).

Hybridity is thus often characterized as a privilege, a doubling or “second

²⁸ Refer also to Chapman 55.

sight” (Gilroy, *Roots* 22-23). The individual, who has a positive experience of psychological transformation or self-reinvention, may affirm a fluid set of identities and ultimately celebrate a positive synthesis of two cultural identities, what some scholars label “cultural dualism” (Carter-Sanborn 580). Such individuals may tap into what Mexican-American writer Gloria Anzaldúa has called the “*mestiza* consciousness... a tolerance for contradictions and for ambiguity” (77, 79).²⁹ Third-generation immigrants, in particular, adapt and assimilate cultural identifications associated with both their ethnic heritage and their current homeland in positive ways. This appears to be true for third- and fourth-generation *zainichi* Koreans, who are often encoded with new, and sometimes positive, significations. Even if they are still also informed by antecedent negative discourses, they are conceived of differently; for example, for many young Japanese, admiration replaces the fear and distaste that characterizes the feelings of the older generations of Japanese vis-à-vis *zainichi* Koreans.³⁰

While hybridity and difference can be celebrated as a source of diversity on the one hand, a celebration of difference can ignore the structural nature of oppression and the experiential pain of ‘being’ different (Woodward “Concepts” 19, 35). “Members of minority groups, who present a ‘different’ identity within society face particular challenges” (Harris 1). The defining experience for racial minorities has been that of discrimination (S. Hall “Cultural” 57 and Falcón 201). According to Margaret Spencer, “In general, the life experiences of minority members... are complicated by stressors not faced by majority members” (31; Blue 230). This is true for the great majority of *zainichi* Koreans, who experience discrimination, even if minimally, while living in Japan (Fukuoka 42). Specifically, second-generation immigrants and biracial children, especially in prejudicial societies, experience an unintegrated sense of self or a fragmented identity and may oscillate between dependence and independence, anonymity and visibility and home and homelessness (Gilroy “Roots” 24; E. K. Chang 173). Biracial and minority children, for example, consistently report that they experience “racial identity confusion, low self-esteem, ambivalence toward family and both psychological and behavioural problems” (Pinderhuges 73). The situation of the

²⁹ A *Mestiza* is a woman of mixed racial ancestry, especially mixed European and Native American ancestry. In border theory someone who, “grows up between two cultures” is identified as “a border person” (Anzaldúa pref., n.p.)

³⁰ See a similar discussion of Japanese representations of African-Americans in Cornyetz 211.

biracial and the second-generation immigrant child, more so than other marginalized ethnic immigrants, creates a unique experience of difference, since the individual experiences a sense of being “both yet neither” (Kich 306). According to Elaine Pinderhuges, “The experience of difference was found to be fraught with anxiety and pain for most people, irrespective of cultural background” (80). African-American writer, W. E. B. Du Bois, took up the problem in his famous work *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Using the term “double consciousness,” Du Bois wrote of an in-between sense of subjectivity and ambivalence that plagued the marginalized ‘other,’ who was always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others. He writes, “One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (qtd. in Harris 2). These words describe what Du Bois felt to be the central dilemma of African-Americans: the search for a coherent and affirmative identity in a society that has little tolerance for diversity. US-based Indian writer Bharati Mukherjee explains, “Colonized or discriminated subjects, over time, begin to see themselves as both the ‘we’ and the ‘other’” (29). Therein manifests the occurrence of hybridity or what author Edvige Giunta calls “hyphenation”, the site of a profound splitting and doubling – the experience of an in-between subjectivity (50).³¹ Evidently many second-generation immigrants experience hybridity in conflicted and negative ways – not as a source of celebration or a duality, but as a problem or contradiction and thus something to work through (Carter-Sanborn 582; Peterson 17). A more nuanced concept of hybridity will thus call attention not only to continuity, integration, wholeness and location, but also to discontinuity, disintegration, rupture and dislocation. These are the themes taken up by the three second-generation *zainichi* Korean writers who are the focus of this thesis.

Différance

Through the efforts of cultural producers, intellectuals and an endless variety of ordinary people alike, who aspire to a peaceful heterogeneous world, we are beginning to see new conceptions of cultural identity. Jacques Derrida’s concept of *différance*

³¹ In Evelyn Lau’s book *Runaway Diary of a Street Kid* (1989), the immigrant character voices feeling like both an insider and an outsider in relation to the city to which she emigrated.

invites us to think sameness and difference at the same time without privileging either term. Christopher Norris explains, “Derrida uses the anomalous ‘a’ in his way of writing ‘difference’ – *différance* – as a marker which sets up a disturbance in our settled understanding or translation of the word. It thus sets the word in motion to infuse new meanings in it without erasing the *trace* of its other meanings” (Norris 32). Kathryn Woodward points out that “Derrida’s notion of *différance* suggests an alternative to the closure and rigidity of binary oppositions offering contingency, rather than fixity, so that meaning is able to slide so that it is never quite complete and stresses the fluidity of identity” (“Concepts” 21, 38).

Ethnic minority identity is a dynamic, changing phenomenon shaped not only by the racial identity of the family of origin and their attitudes about it, but also by the child’s interaction with peers, extended family and the larger community. “Experiences of recognition, acceptance and belonging are necessary to facilitate healthy self-acceptance” (Kich 304). According to Elaine Pinderhuges, “Stable self-acceptance occurs when the definition of self is no longer determined by others’ definitions” (83). She stresses that biracial and second-generation minority children have to learn adaptive responses when interacting in both mainstream and their own ethnic communities and may have to emphasize either their majority or minority identity. Ambivalence should not be discouraged: “If the child is allowed to maintain some ambivalence, identity development... begins to be reconciled, over time, in a unified identity” (Jacobs 201). To the extent that the biracial or minority aspect of the self may be affirmatively integrated, the child may build a resilient – albeit in-between – identity. Thus while the research shows that identity-formation is especially difficult for the biracial or second-generation immigrant child, and even more so for adolescents, it also demonstrates that people can adapt and develop fluid identities. Accordingly Miller and Miller make the case that,

The ethnic minority child must learn to cope with his minority status... and become able to deal with a denigrated status. This involves learning how to handle racism without feeling personally stigmatized, which facilitates the construction of a... unified identity. It involves belonging to associations... which support identity development and involves accessing alternative role models to mainstream culture to promote personal empowerment. Immigrant and biracial children must learn to “successfully negotiate mainstream” systems while at the same time learn not to collude in the perpetuation of racism (172).

An inferior status based on difference needs to be viewed as a function of systemic discrimination, not as a flaw and failure of minority people. According to Pinderhuges, “The parents whose children were most successful were mothers who presented racism as a reality to children, which seemed to allay anxiety... whereas those who stressed individual effort, on the other hand, tended to heighten the children’s desire to deny their ethnic heritage in order to adopt a mainstream majority identity” (85-86). Ultimately the goal is to fortify the minority child’s self-esteem and foster acceptance of his biracial, multicultural identity (Pinderhuges 88). This would contribute to the resilience of minority children and strengthen their sense of identity (Harris 12).

Zainichi Korean Identity

Frequent polemics emerge amongst Koreans, in both Korea and Japan, about who is a ‘true’ Korean. In fact, in Japan, because of similarity in appearance, Koreans have been able to ‘pass’ as Japanese. The vast majority of *zainichi* Koreans, in fact, are naturalized Japanese citizens. Many adopt Japanese citizenship for practical reasons, such as the attainment of passports and voting rights, while some naturalize because they may wish to renounce or negate their Korean heritage; but primarily they naturalize to fit in. Most Japanese thus mentally categorize *zainichi* Koreans into two groups, those who aspire to assimilation and naturalize, and those who deliberately aspire to differentiation and maintain ethnic identity (Fukuoka 43; Chapman 23).³² Furthermore, as Terence Ranger postulates, identities are disputed within an ethnicity (23; Roy 60). The 1953 partition of Korea is an important factor in the politics of *zainichi* Korean identity in Japan because, from the moment of partition, the identities of Koreans were also, as it were, partitioned and the *zainichi* Korean community was seen as a divided community.

Since *zainichi* Korean ethnic identity is not defined by skin colour or other physical features, Korean-ness in Japan has generally been politically rather than phenotypically defined. Since a majority of *zainichi* Koreans supported North Korea during the early post-war period, a stereotypical view of *zainichi* Koreans as violently activist or Communist is entrenched in Japan. Moreover, Japanese terminology about

³² Too little is known about differentiation and assimilation to say which is more likely under specified conditions (Peterson et al. 26).

Korean nationality has complicated the issue for *zainichi* Koreans, who have found it very difficult to distance themselves from politics on the Korean mainland. All *zainichi* Koreans (who have not naturalized) are identified by the terms *zainichi Kankokujin* and *zainichi Chōsenjin*. Both terms literally mean ‘Japan-resident Koreans’. The former, *zainichi Kankokujin*, denotes South Korean nationality. However, the latter term, *zainichi Chōsenjin*, unbeknownst to most Japanese, has two different connotations. For the Japanese it stands for a North Korean ‘national’. For *zainichi* Koreans it may stand for a North Korean ‘national’ or, conversely, it may stand for a ‘national’ of *the formerly unified Korean Peninsula* (the original and accurate meaning of the term). In other words many *zainichi Chōsenjin*, are mistakenly presumed to be ‘North Korean’ when in fact their ‘nationality’ – at least to them – represents a symbolic condemnation of the division of the peninsula or a rejection of the Republic of Korea (ROK) or both.³³ Nevertheless, both terms, to the Japanese majority, respectively connote South or North Korean nationality and *zainichi* Koreans, holding one or the other, are unduly presumed to be hyper-political, which works to unfairly stereotype *zainichi* Koreans (cf Lie *Zainichi* 191). Authoritarian police states, associated with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) until today, and with the ROK until 1993, have been associated with *zainichi* Koreans in Japan – mapped on to their bodies, as it were. This was especially true throughout the early post-war period, a point that is evident in the texts analysed in this thesis. As explained earlier, many *zainichi* Koreans simply do not wish to adopt Japanese nationality or hold either South or North Korean ‘nationality’ for practical rather than political reasons. While they may hold North Korean ‘status’ (or South Korean ‘nationality’) it does not follow that they support the North Korean (or South Korean) political agenda. Thus the terms *zainichi Kankokujin* or *zainichi Chōsenjin* conceal a great variety of realities and forms of consciousness. This point goes largely unrecognized amongst mainstream Japanese and causes considerable consternation amongst *zainichi* Koreans.

At the same time, tensions continue to exist between *zainichi* Koreans who *do politically* affiliate themselves with South Korea and those who *do politically* affiliate

³³ As explained earlier, this does not constitute a legal nationality as there are no diplomatic relations between Japan and the DPRK nor is there a unified Korean state to which these *zainichi* Koreans claim to be affiliated with.

themselves with North Korea. The politics of Korean identity is more complicated still when one member of a *zainichi* Korean family is pro-South and the other pro-North, or when respective in-laws of a family endorse different sides of the divide. Additionally marriages between *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese are rapidly increasing. Unless the parents take special measures, most of the children of these marriages will be raised as Japanese nationals, learning only to deny their biracial status (Fukuoka 39). The requirement to deny one part of their heritage makes biracial individuals vulnerable to a sense of disloyalty to one parent (Pinderhuges 77). Those few who are raised biracially, or as ethnic Koreans, face significant problems fitting into dominant Japanese society. Japanese society discourages non-Japanese cultural expression. Japanese schools, for example, do not provide Korean language programs or bilingual bicultural schooling (Miyawaki 1).

There are also inter- and intra- generational issues. Clearly the relationship of the first-generation to the Korean mainland is different to subsequent generations, mediated by memories of what was left behind and by experiences of disruption and displacement. The second-generation *zainichi* Korean experience of Korea proper or sense of possessing an essential Korean subjectivity is elusive at best and he/she may have to negotiate complex sensations of hybridity. Third-generation *zainichi* Koreans exhibit a closer affinity or a more distant enmity to their first-generation elders than do second-generation *zainichi* Koreans. Intergenerational marriages pose issues as well; when a first-generation Korean marries a second-generation Korean, self-identification for progeny, in terms of generation, becomes difficult. I met many Koreans who describe themselves as one point-five-generation or two point-five generation Korean and so on.

Identity Orientation of *Zainichi* Koreans

To simplify the issue of *zainichi* Korean identities in Japan, sociologist Yasunari Fukuoka has identified four “types of orientation” amongst the Korean population in Japan (xviii). He calls the first type the naturalizing type. This type aspires to become Japanese in any way possible. This, according to Fukuoka’s research, is especially true for young Koreans. They tend to live in Japanese neighborhoods, use Japanese names and distance themselves from, or deny, their Korean ethnic identity, and attempt to

devote themselves to being Japanese, often by ‘passing’ as Japanese. “For them Korea is nothing other than a place their grandparents happened to be born” (Fukuoka 52-53). I turn to the phenomenon of “passing” in the next section.

The second type, the nationalist or ethno-centric type, views themselves as ‘overseas nationals’. As explained, to date they have been typically affiliated with the DPRK, while some strict nationalists, including authors Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, refuse to endorse either the southern or the northern states, insisting they are citizens of the once unified Korean Peninsula. As evidenced in Sonia Ryang’s 1997 book, *North Koreans in Japan: Language, Ideology and Identity*, nationalists affiliated with the DPRK and *Chongryun* usually attend ethnic schools and learn the language, history and culture of North Korea. The pro-North nationalist type has always been very critical of Japan and opposed to naturalizing or appropriating political rights in Japan for fear that these actions would discourage *zainichi* Koreans from the aspiration to return ‘home’. Ryang explains, ““Nostalgia for a past golden age that never was” approaches very closely *Chongryun* Koreans’ relation to North Korea when they think of it as their home” (*Homeland* 48). They only use ethnic names, live in the confines of ethnic Korean society or enclaves, speak Korean in their daily lives and generally do not consider working with Japanese. Despite living in Japan, they maintain very ‘Korean’ lifestyles and associations (Fukuoka 51). However, over the last few decades, thousands of *zainichi* Koreans have distanced themselves from the Northern regime and *Chongryun* for many reasons, including the negative reports about life in the DPRK from repatriates who ventured there in the late 1960s during the Repatriation Movement, which I take up in the body of the thesis. Other more recent issues have contributed to tension between the *zainichi* and the wider Japanese community, including, the kidnappings of Japanese nationals by North Korean state sanctioned spies, which took centre stage in the Japanese media in the early 2000s, and North Korea’s underground testing of a nuclear bomb in October 2006 (Chapman 140). Finally, the more isolated, despotic and financially unsound the DPRK has become and is perceived, the fewer Koreans in Japan align themselves with the regime or *Chongryun* or both.

The third type is the ethnic solidarity type. They are similar to the nationalists in their ethno-centric approach to constructing a cultural identity via the building of ethnic-based skills, such as Korean language skills and knowledge of Korean culture.

However, their key concern is to foster positive relations amongst *zainichi* Koreans as well as between Koreans and Japanese. They use Korean names and claim to feel attached to both South Korea, which they label their mother land, and Japan, which they label their residence. They campaign against discrimination, defend human rights and demand war reparations from Japan (Fukuoka 54).³⁴ According to Libretti, “Resisting racial oppression for many people of color has meant not assimilating into the dominant culture and economy... but rather challenging the prejudicial aspects of the system” (Libretti 120).

The fourth, the individualist type are indifferent to their ethnic heritage. The chief concern of the individualist type is to establish themselves professionally and financially through upward mobility – without regard for either Japanese or Korean ethnicity. They aim to study abroad or graduate from a high-ranking Japanese university and perhaps gain employment with a foreign company. They tend, according to Fukuoka, to view any problems they experience as circumstantial. They wish to simply ‘get on with life’. They feel devotion neither to Japan nor to Korea (52-53).

Unfortunately, Fukuoka points out, naturalized ‘Japanese’ may always be considered ‘foreigners’ by mainstream Japanese. Simultaneously the nationalist types may never attain the ideal of ‘being Korean,’ as they have been brought up in Japan and inevitably assimilate to some degree and are not necessarily considered ‘Korean’ by Koreans on the mainland (57). In fact, according to Fukuoka, it is quite typical for each individual to have a unique mix of elements related to several of the different types (57). People articulate different identity positions to empower themselves. It may be that a *zainichi* Korean feels far more at home in Osaka than in Seoul or Pyongyang, but may insist upon defining him or herself as Korean, as a way of affirming an identity which he or she perceives is being denigrated. Another *zainichi* Korean might seek to reject the same process of exclusion by asserting a Japanese identity. In fact, each may embody both of these positions at different moments.³⁵ “Individuals may occupy ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ positions simultaneously, and this has important implications for the formation of subjectivity” (Brah 189).

³⁴ They tend to be affiliated with *Zainichi Kankoku Seinenkai*: the Korean Youth Association in Japan (KYAJ) (Fukuoka 54).

³⁵ Refer to Brah 193.

Naturalization and Assimilation

In Japan, where civil society vis-à-vis the state is weak, non-Japanese residents are readily excluded from various spheres of social activity simply because they are not Japanese. Fukuoka Yasunari explains that, “A simplistic dichotomy between Japanese and foreigner pervades thinking on ethnic identity in Japan so that Koreans are expected to behave like Japanese or they face ostracism and stigmatization” (xvii). According to Kim Tae-young, “The Japanese mono-cultural perspective has contributed to prevalent beliefs that, in Japanese society, difference does not belong and that assimilation is the only possibility for those who are not ‘Japanese’” (qtd in Chapman 128). Generally speaking, most Japanese assume that if *zainichi* Koreans want political rights they should simply naturalize and assimilate; it does not occur to them that Japan should provide *zainichi* Koreans with rights without stipulating that they ‘become Japanese’ (Kim, C. J.). Poet Chong Jang asserts that civil rights should be offered to *zainichi* Koreans on the basis of their special permanent residence, not on the basis of their adoption of Japanese nationality (18 Dec. 2001).

The common phenomenon of “Passing” – hiding, denying or negating one’s ethnicity – used by the vast majority of Koreans in Japan, is an example of an attempt to fit in to the dominant society (Pinderhuges 82, Hutchinson and Williams 12). Passing is expedient when people feel ambivalent about their own identity and when their social standing is weak and visibility is low (Nakano 59; Lincoln 216-17). Trinh T. Minh-ha refers to the phenomenon of passing as a very prevalent ‘reversal strategy’ (215-16). The vast majority of *zainichi* Koreans have found it expedient to “pass” for Japanese in pursuit of common rights and to avoid ostracism (Lie *Narratives* 343; Fukuoka xxxvii, 44). As Catherine Ryu points out, “At the level of perception, *zainichi* Koreans confound the very physical and linguistic distinction between the Japanese Self and the Other” She observes that this compelled the Japanese to create a more finely calibrated notion of ‘Japaneseness’ (313).

The absence of the bipolar Black-White categories that dominate racial discourse in the West allow Koreans to pass fairly easily.³⁶ Physically-speaking, Koreans in Japan are almost identical to the Japanese (Nakano 59; xxxiv; Iwabuchi 58).

³⁶ Refer to a similar line of reasoning in Falcón 200.

Up to ninety percent of *zainichi* Koreans use Japanese names all or much of the time to avoid discrimination (Hanami 139; Fukuoka xxxiv, 27-28).³⁷ Indeed, when using ethnic names first- and second-generation *zainichi* Koreans are still regularly denied employment, even if they graduate from Japanese universities (Fukuoka 27-28). Research suggests, however, that while first-generation Koreans were forced to use Japanese names by the government, second-, third- and fourth-generation *zainichi* Koreans who grow up using a Japanese name simply get used to it, and continue to use a Japanese name for practical, rather than political reasons (Fukuoka 27-28). Only a very small minority of *zainichi* Koreans use their Korean names all or most of the time, including those who attend DPRK sponsored Korean schools, those involved in campaigning against discrimination and those who have a strong ethnic consciousness (Fukuoka 27).

The irony is that naturalized Japanese are still legally and in other civil ways defined as non-Japanese, despite their Japanese upbringing, simply on the basis of their different ethnic lineage (Fukuoka xxxiii). “Even with Japanese nationality naturalized *zainichi* Koreans face the pervasive discriminatory consciousness of Japanese society... today their descendants, though born in Japan, are regarded as foreigners and are subject to avoidance behavior, especially in the field of marriage” (Nakano 55; Fukuoka xxxvii). According to Fukuoka, “The day their Korean-ness is discovered is the day they cease to be viewed as fellow Japanese” (xxxiv). Some Koreans do not discover that they themselves are Korean until later in life; this means they may have internalized the negative images of Koreans held by some Japanese over the course of time. When they discover that they are Korean themselves, it usually comes as a great blow (Suzuki and Oiwa 24).

There is strong adversarial sentiment against naturalization amongst some *zainichi* Koreans – especially nationalist or ethno-solidarity types – many of whom regard naturalized Koreans as traitors to the community (Nakano 60; Chapman 134, Field 644). As far as these *zainichi* Koreans are concerned, naturalized Koreans have overlooked the fact that true autonomy for *zainichi* Koreans is the only means for true

³⁷ James Weldon Johnson’s novel *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912) takes up the complex theme of passing in a highly sophisticated and multi-dimensional way. The protagonist, a white-appearing mulatto – the tragic mulatto – moves between the two worlds of white and black, and must find an identity.

autonomy for all.³⁸ Chapman explains, “Assimilation is seen by many as a process in which *zainichi* (Korean) culture and identity will eventually meet its demise” (122). Conversely, some naturalized Koreans have themselves avoided or, worse, ostracized ethno-centric *zainichi* Koreans. In both instances *zainichi* Koreans could be said to be cutting themselves off from an alliance that might contribute to greater civil and social rights for Koreans in Japan.³⁹

Passing is considered to be counter-productive by some scholars (Pinderhughes 79). Eva Beutell maintains that it does not usually provide minority communities with access to agency or power (152). More importantly, to deny or denigrate one’s Korean heritage means to conform to a system that condones racism against Koreans. “Assimilating into any dominant culture, which entails adopting the values and worldview of that culture, would mean embracing and even internalizing the racist norms already informing the dominant culture and hence would result in the maintenance of that cultural and racial hierarchy rather than the gradual elimination of it” (Libretti 120, 125; Mortimer xi). Japan scholar Gavan MacCormack writes, “Nation-states all too often endorse the image of one particular dominant nationality within the state, and minorities in them are put on the cleft stick of denying their own identity for the sake of full citizenship or asserting their identity at the price of non-recognition or non-participation as full citizens” (127).⁴⁰

The ‘Third Way’ and ‘Fourth Choice’

In his recent 2008 monograph *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity*, David Chapman gives an expert account of the complexities of *zainichi* Korean identity and the discourses and debates surrounding it during the post-war period until the present day. He emphasizes that “Until the early 1970s the exclusion of the *zainichi* population from membership in Japanese society was a result of the attitude of the Japanese state combined with the subject positions adopted by the Korean population as only

³⁸ Refer to Brathwaite 204.

³⁹ It appears that newcomer Koreans have little resistance to naturalization. Name Kim claims it is because, “They have more of an essential identity so even if they naturalize they still feel intrinsically Korean and they can speak Korean” (Kim C. J.).

⁴⁰ As the poet Rose Romano argues, because Italian Americans can ‘hide,’ by camouflaging or rejecting their ethnic identity, they can assimilate into the mainstream, but at the cost of losing cultural identity and internalizing self-hatred (qtd. in Giunta 50).

temporary residents” (25).⁴¹ By the mid-1970s demographic changes meant that “almost 80 percent of the *zainichi* population did not know, or at least had very little knowledge of, the Korean homeland” (Kang Jae-eun qtd. in Chapman 38-39). The realization that the reunification of the Korean Peninsula might not take place advanced the conviction that *zainichi* residence in Japan was permanent (Chapman 37). In 1979, in a debate with Inuma Jirō, Kim Tong-myung articulated the alternative of a ‘Third Way,’ which rejected a return to the homeland as well as conflict-ridden political commitment to either North or South Korean political ideology associated with first-generation Koreans (Chapman 38, 47, Field 646). Chapman describes this in terms of “the temporal change of power where authority and control transferred from one generation to the next” (47). Along with Kim, Yang Tae-ho, another *zainichi* Korean intellectual articulated an argument known as ‘*Zainichi* as fact’ that called for *zainichi* Koreans to exist in a position of coexistence with the Japanese majority. This was in opposition to the assertions of well known think-tank, Kan San Jun, who proposed ‘*zainichi* as method’ insisting that “The teleology of resident Koreans unequivocally directs them to the Korean peninsula” (Field 647). Yang, like Kim Tong-myung, endorsed an independent *zainichi* subjectivity that adopted a critical stance toward the two Korean nations and their associated nationalism (qtd. in Chapman 50). As Norma Field explains, “For this generation of Koreans, alienated from both *Mindan* and *Sōren* ...the time came to work out a third way, looking neither to naturalization, which would require them to abandon their ethnicity, nor to returning to a divided or *even* a unified homeland” (646). However, as Chapman explains, while the Third Way dissociated itself from the hegemonic control of first-generation political interests, it nevertheless marginalized *zainichi* Koreans who were naturalized or so-called ‘mixed-blood’ (53, 58-59). He explains, “Kim and his supporters were adamant in preventing what they perceived as any dilution of ‘Koreanness’” (142).

To challenge the limitations of the Third Way, Ha Byung-uk proposes a ‘Fourth Choice’ that promotes naturalization under one’s Korean name (Chapman 133). In this approach naturalization would secure “all legal rights normally associated with citizenship but also the right to assert cultural identity” (Chapman 81). The Fourth Way

⁴¹ Chapman uses the term *zainichi* as opposed to *zainichi* Korean because “it avoids the inclusion of nationality as a defining element in identifying the community” (5).

would resist negative associations of coerced assimilation and affirm ethnic and racial alterity in Japanese society (Chapman 122). There still remains the problem of systemic racism; moreover, as stated earlier, naturalized *zainichi* Koreans are doubly marginalized – by both Japanese and other *zainichi* Koreans (Chapman 54, 135). Chapman makes the following observation:

The many layers of prejudice facing *zainichi* communities as they struggle against a highly conditional citizenship are beginning to be recognized and expressed through various emerging discursive forums. As argued, the battle is not always against the Japanese state and its limited definition of its subjects. The struggle is also against the limitations imposed by perceptions within the *zainichi* population but also contribute to practices of exclusion. The social construction of *zainichi* identity is influenced by the *zainichi* population as well as the Japanese state (143).

A Discrete *Zainichi* Korean Identity

Even as *zainichi* Koreans are becoming increasingly assimilated into Japanese society – becoming hyphenated Korean-Japanese – they seem to be concurrently asserting a discrete ‘*zainichi* Korean’ identity and denying the enforced choice between a purely Korean or Japanese identity (Hanami 143; Chapman 122). We see Derrida’s concept at work here – they are endorsing their own *différance* – a discrete identity that conforms neither to that of their ethnic heritage nor necessarily to that of the dominant host society. *Zainichi* Koreans are bound together as a national identity by a distinct cultural ethos and historical experience, which does not correspond to that of either the Japanese or the Korean dominant culture.⁴² *Zainichi* Korean identity is actually radical in its refusal to be completely contained by either of these homogeneous words *Japanese* or *Korean*.⁴³ The term *zainichi* Korean itself connotes a particular history, which arguably works to condemn Japanese historical, political and social failures as well as endorses difference.⁴⁴ Clearly poststructuralist notions of multiple and complex identities have been influential in contemporary debates on *zainichi* Korean identity, which is increasingly recognized as characterized by diversity (Chapman 142). Tessa Morris-Suzuki writes, “The realities of a multiethnic Japan are gradually being acknowledged. Young *zainichi* Koreans no longer have to struggle as the older generation did” (35). She also observes:

⁴² Refer to Libretti 124 and Serebriany 96.

⁴³ Refer to Saenz 79.

⁴⁴ Refer to Saenz 95.

Though the Korean Peninsula remains divided, in the Korean community in Japan a remarkable reunification has been taking place. Today, younger members of the South Korean-affiliated *Mindan* and the North Korean-affiliated *Chongryun* – organizations that were until recently sworn enemies – play friendly soccer matches and organize Korean cultural festivals together (248).

A new cultural politics is emerging that engages rather than suppresses difference, which I refer to by ‘closing the distance,’ and where difference no longer implies an unbridgeable separation, but ‘different’ positions, which can be mutually inclusive.⁴⁵

This phenomenon is evident in the literature analyzed in this thesis. The three writers approach the question of *zainichi* Korean identity in different ways but their fiction informs us that *zainichi* Korean identity should be and is based on the cultural politics formed by the meeting of Japan and Korea. The three writers and their narratives posit that the identities of *zainichi* Koreans were fractured by their interiorization of Japan’s racist discourses. The aspiration of achieving a positive identity in the face of a racist program of economic exploitation and political disenfranchisement permeates and shapes their literature. Though identity is neither fixed nor monolithic and ethnicity does not exist in isolation from class, gender, or religion in the narratives, the writer’s nevertheless show that *zainichi* Koreans still had to recuperate the term ‘Korean’ from its negative and politicized connotations. This was a particularly hard task for those born during the colonial period, when being ‘Korean’ was not only disavowed, but culturally, linguistically and otherwise quite literally disallowed. In short, their novels delineate the kinds of cultural distances that existed for *zainichi* Koreans in early post-war Japan, but also reveal how these distances might be overcome through transformation and redemptive change.

⁴⁵ Refer to S. Hall “New” 226.

Chapter Three

金石範 Kim Sok Pom

「鴉の死」 *Karasu no Shi* [*The Death of the Crow*] (1957)

What can a spy story tell us about the *zainichi* Korean experience in post-colonial Japan? By inviting his reader to conceptualize the ‘*zainichi* Korean identity’ of his characters, Kim Sok Pom arguably inspires a more sophisticated understanding of Japan’s Korean *diaspora* than is generally available in mainstream Japanese scholarship. His narratives also offer an unconventional interpretation of post-war Korean history.⁴⁶ Set just after the little-known 1948 Yon San Massacre, on the southern Korean island of Cheju, formerly known by its Japanese name, Saishūtō, Kim’s novels are models of a ‘post-colonial literature of *renascence*’ that endorses adaptation and survival in post-war Korea and post-colonial Japan.⁴⁷ In his seminal 1957 spy story, *Karasu no Shi* [*The Death of the Crow*] the author examines the subjectivity of the individual caught between two worlds, reveals the ruptures that inevitably attend such an existence and scrutinizes the possibilities open to him for self-acceptance and survival.

While *Karasu no Shi* did not enjoy popular success in Japan, it did become the subject of vigorous discussion amongst *zainichi* Korean and Cheju-based intellectuals, as well as a small number of Japanese intellectuals. In terms of historiography, the events stemming from post-war politics and American imperialism in Korea are significant for interpreting this novel. Yet there are also other, less visible but no less important influences apparent in the text. Shades of Sartre’s existentialist philosophy and the twentieth century psychoanalytic concern with object relations can be discerned

⁴⁶ Kim Sok Pom is the author’s pen name. The Japanese pronunciation is Kin Sekihan. Ordinarily a Japanese who sees Kim’s name in print will pronounce it as Kin Sekihan.

⁴⁷ Saishūtō is the former Japanese name for the island used during the colonial era. The Korean name of the island is Cheju(do). Kim, other writers and former residents of Cheju use the Japanese name, ‘Saishūtō’ when referring to events that took place during the colonial era, and prior to the Korean War. As Kim’s stories take place both during and just after Japan’s colonial era he refers to the island throughout his works as Saishūtō. Both terms, ‘Saishūtō’ and ‘Cheju,’ will be used in this thesis depending on the context.

*In his article ‘Marvelous Realism The Way out of Negritude: Towards a Redefinition of History,’ Michael Dash uses the concept of ‘a “literature of renascence” to describe ‘a literary aesthetic and reality based on the fragile emergence of the third world personality from the privations of history’ (Dash 199-200). He highlights the role of the imagination as a source of protest for the contemporary writer. I will elaborate further on how this pertains to Kim Sok Pom’s fiction in a later section.

in the prose, as can the ethical principles of humanism and Buddhist religious thought.

Philosophically speaking, the novel can be read as a poetic enquiry into the self-other relationship. Kim deliberately creates a certain artificial distance between the various characters and objects in his text in order to understand them better and to reveal the hidden qualities and affinities between seemingly dissimilar entities. He creates an effect of distance through the use of certain symbolic tropes, such as the spy and the ghost, as well as through the way he manipulates his characters and the objects. For example, Kim places people and objects in unexpected settings, thus juxtaposing elements that one would not ordinarily associate with each other. By using his imagination in this way he succeeds in destabilizing identity and he dissects it to find its component elements and its metaphorical and hidden qualities.

The massacre of communists and suspected communist supporters on Saishūtō that followed upon the American post-war occupation of Korea profoundly disturbed the young Kim, influencing the direction his work would take. Kim writes on a variety of topics including ethnicity, nationalism, racism, assimilation, naturalization and the dilemma of writing in Japanese as a Korean. What distinguishes Kim, however, from other *zainichi* Korean writers is his life-long and unwavering commitment to writing fiction that highlights the massacre that took place on Cheju.

The events that transpired on the Korean Peninsula during the immediate post-war years are both little known outside of Korea and complicated (Hart-Landsberg 72).⁴⁸ Nevertheless, a general understanding of the political landscape of Korea between 1945 and 1950 helps explain why countless Koreans, including over forty thousand Saishūtō islanders, fled to Japan to become a unique type of *zainichi* Korean, having arrived in Japan, after the conclusion of WWII. It will also provide a context from which to better understand the events and characters of Kim Sok Pom's novel.

In 1910 Korea lost its independence at the hands of the Japanese Imperial State. It remained a Japanese colony until 1945, when the Japanese army withdrew in defeat, Koreans jubilantly celebrated their long-awaited 'independence' and, according to most Western accounts, welcomed the 'liberating army' of Americans (Hart-Landsberg 72).

⁴⁸ A good coverage is provided by Bruce Cumings in *The Origins of the Korean War* (1990).

However, in *Karasu no Shi* Kim describes the growing distrust islanders felt as the American army began to intervene in local politics:

A week after the US army landed on Inchon, they came to the island and it's true that at first, for a short time, it was really like a dramatic liberation... (But) soon after the US landing the conflicting aspirations of American imperialism and Korean independence became apparent. The August 15, 1945 liberation of Korea was nothing more than a myth. American imperialism, behind the mask of democracy, could hardly be called a liberating force (113-14).

The US government was concerned that the U.S.S.R., which had previously occupied much of northern Korea, might try to occupy the entire peninsula. This prompted the US military to quickly outline a plan for a holding zone, which involved US troops occupying southern Korean territory up to the 38th parallel. The Soviets stopped at the 38th parallel on the northern side and Korea was divided into what were supposed to be two temporary zones of 'allied' occupation. Thus the joy of the recently 'liberated' Koreans was short-lived as the country faced an externally-imposed division and headed towards a devastating war for which both the US and the USSR shared responsibility.⁴⁹

Originating from the left-wing struggle against Japan, the internal Korean communist movement was still extremely powerful and the US was surprised by the enormity of communist sentiment and opposition to their presence on the peninsula. This combined with the proximity of the communist USSR and concerns about Chang Kai Shek's imminent defeat gave way to grave concerns in US official circles about the political future of the entire Asian region. As left-wing groups tried to seize power, the US military and South Korean police fortified their resolve to wipe out communism in Korea, devising what Kim calls a doctrine of "Partisan Hunting" (Kim, S. P. qtd. in Okaniwa 322). 'Partisan hunting' involved the capture, imprisonment, torture or death of suspected communists and communist sympathizers.

Over the centuries, even up to the modern era, political prisoners had been banished to Cheju Island. Famous for its 'rocks, wind and women,' Cheju soon became stereotyped as a repository for anti-government intellectuals, left-wing political prisoners and refugees (Ono 24).⁵⁰ Essentially the inhabitants of the island consisted of

⁴⁹ Many scholars place the responsibility clearly on Japan (Aizawa 64).

⁵⁰ *Ishi, kaze to onna* Cheju is known for having more women than men because so many women lost their fishermen husbands at sea. It is said that if people did not build stone walls to border villages and homes, the island would be an uninhabitable pile of volcanic rocks. Apparently Cheju is often negatively stereotyped on the mainland as backward or inferior due to its high population of farmers and fishermen,

the families or widows of apolitical uneducated farmers and fishermen and hyper-political left-wing supporters or exiles (Cumings *Korea's* 217-24; "The Question" 2).

Cheju islanders opposed to the American sponsored May 'South Only' election carried out an armed uprising on April 3, 1948 and the island soon became a battle zone. According to Kim, "American plans to exterminate all communists involved sending huge numbers of right-wing police and barbaric terrorist youth groups loyal to Syngman Rhee to the island" (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 114).⁵¹ Kim writes, "By day the island was controlled by the Americans; by night, the communist guerillas" (qtd. in Ono 25). The US military and South Korean police responded to the armed uprising violently, killing communists and their suspected supporters during 1948 and 1949, in what became known as the *Yon San* Massacre (Cumings *Korea's* 217-24; "The Question" 1-5; Ono 24-26, Takeda *Zainichi* 101).⁵²

While there are no firm statistics, according to Kim, "the American enterprise to rid the island of communists led to the torture and death of over 80,000 communists and suspected sympathizers, out of a total of 200,000 islanders" (qtd. in Ono 22-3, Cumings *Korea's* 221). Morris-Suzuki observes that, "Now that research can be conducted openly, the figures have been revised downward, but they are still chilling" (55). She puts forward figures of between 15,000 to 30,000 casualties (55). Over 40,000 islanders are said to have fled to Japan, giving rise to a particular type of *zainichi* Korean (Cumings

though nowadays it is a honeymoon destination (Tazaki 11 Jun. 1999; Koh I. S. 18 Feb. 2000).

⁵¹ Kim refers to these groups as the *Seiboku Seinen Kai*, but also as the *Halla Dan* and the *Daido Seinen Dan* (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 114). Cumings refers to them as "ultra rightist party terrorists... overseen by the US military who exercised more police power than the police themselves, and their cruel behavior invited the deep resentment of the inhabitants" (Cumings *The Question* 3).

⁵² In the American psyche the Korean War mistakenly begins in June 1950, but in fact warfare on the peninsula started much earlier. The US backed right-wing Rhee regime started ousting the numerous leftist 'local peoples committees' from central areas and formed right wing counter organizations (Ono 25). Leftists migrated towards the south intent on controlling villages still isolated from central power. Rhee loudly proclaimed that the southern leftist communists were at the beck and call of the North and thus were mere puppets of Soviet sponsored Kim Il Sung. But according to Cumings, the southern communist party, led by Pak Hong Yong, was an entirely independent entity with a very strong southern base (*Korea's* 218). The Armed Uprising is known as *Saishūtō Yon San Busohoki* (Ono 25). Beginning on April 3, 1949, it quickly became known as the *Yon San Jiken* which translates as the Yon San Incident, *yon*, signifying the fourth month, April, and *san*, the third day. Tessa Morris-Suzuki refers to it as either the '*Yon San Jiken*' or 4/3 (50-55). It was referred to as the Saishūtō Massacre at the 1999 Annual Conference on Peace and Human Rights in East Asia (Dennehey). Chicago University Korea scholar, Bruce Cummings, referred to it as both the Chejudo Uprising and the Chejudo Insurgency in his 1998 conference paper, "The Question of American Responsibility for the Suppression of the Chejudo Uprising," presented in Tokyo.

“The Question” 1). As Kim describes it, the savagery of the massacre was horrendous: “Islanders were forced to spear ‘communist’ family members with bamboo swords, bury them alive, cut off their hands and feet... and other unspeakable acts that are impossible to describe without becoming nauseated” (qtd. in Ono 22-23; Takeda *Zainichi* 109). Within a year, one third of the island’s inhabitants had been slaughtered (Ono 26, Cumings *Korea’s* 221). “Firing squads killed tens of thousands of villagers, including women, children and the elderly” (Cho, U.). In addition, thousands were left homeless when, one after the other, villages suspected of providing food or shelter to partisans were burned and razed to the ground. As Morris-Suzuki explains, “The *Yon San Jiken*...is engraved on living memory” (50).

Ideological and political dissent between right wing and left wing camps on Saishūtō worsened, mirroring the dissent on the mainland and foreshadowing the Korean War. “By 1950 the North and South became the sites of two antagonistic Korean regimes based on diametrically opposed principles and sponsors” (Oberdorfer 7). Although fighting had been going on since 1948, the Korean War only “officially” started in June 1950. It resulted in an embittered and lasting division, “desperate poverty and the deaths and dislocation of millions” (Oberdorfer 11).

For people unfamiliar with the history of the region, and especially for people unfamiliar with the history of Saishūtō, *Karasu no Shi* is a difficult novel. This is because Kim refrains from giving a clear-cut description of the uprising and its background until midway through the novel. For example, in *Karasu no Shi*, early references to ‘clandestine meetings’ and ‘last year’s rebellion’ are made but their meaning remains unclear without a detailed knowledge of the island’s history. Kim fills in some blanks in the third chapter but it is not until chapter five that a solid historical account of the massacre is provided. Readers have noted this lack of historical detail and overview (Omote; Takahashi; Fujii).

However, according to Song Ha, a friend of Kim’s, the author’s deferral of the historical details is intentional; it actually emphasizes the idea that an understanding of the present – either of the story line or of *zainichi* Korean circumstances – requires a working knowledge of history. Furthermore, Kim’s reticence to give a detailed historical

account communicates the idea that *zainichi* Koreans are tired of explaining themselves (Song). Many Japanese are ignorant of *zainichi* Korean issues and do not know why Koreans are in Japan, what Koreans suffered under colonial rule, or what they have suffered or continue to suffer in present-day Japan (Fukuoka xvi, xxvii, xxxv, 2, 17, 23).

Both *zainichi* Koreans from Saishūtō and Cheju islanders today insist that the *Yon San* Massacre is as historically important as other well-known massacres, such as the 1937 Nanjing Massacre or the 1972 Bloody Sunday Massacre, and they lament how little known it is.⁵³ Few South Koreans on the mainland know about the *Yon San* Uprising since it remained a taboo subject in the Republic of Korea until the 1990s and is not taught in schools (Cumings *Korea's* 140; Kim, S. H.). By deferring the historical account Kim effectively exhorts the reader to take responsibility for knowing 'their' *zainichi*, Japanese, Korean or American history.

Set in the winter of 1949, just a half-year after the massacre, *Karasu no Shi* traces the movements and thoughts of a young Korean, Jong Ki Jun, who, upon Korea's liberation in 1945, leaves Japan to return to his native home, the village of Song Ne in Saishūtō. Ki Jun's story and the structure of the novel can both be related to the geopolitical position of the island. Situated at the crossroads of China, the USSR, Japan and Korea, Saishūtō is caught between a number of powerful forces over which its inhabitants have little control. As we have seen, in a short period from 1945 to 1950, the Korean War was set in motion, hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives and the political landscape was irrevocably changed. In line with this, the story takes place over a short five-day span and highlights how Ki Jun finds himself caught in an uneasy intermediary position between various different political and ideological convictions, losing almost everything including his own convictions, but ultimately reconciling himself to his circumstances.⁵⁴ Around the central character Jong Ki Jun, Kim introduces a number of

⁵³ The Nanjing Massacre started on December 13, 1937 after Nanjing fell to the Japanese Imperial Army and continued for over six weeks. It is said that Japanese soldiers killed anywhere between 10,000 to 300,000 Chinese depending on the source (Cumings *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* 139, 185). Bloody Sunday refers to the events of 30 January 1972, when British soldiers killed thirteen peaceful Irish protesters during a demonstration in Ireland.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of this notion of "different modes of existence emerging in the juxtaposition of the different ideological beliefs and personal experiences of characters" with regard to the Negritude writers see Boehmer 115.

other characters who stand for the principal players on the Korean stage after Japan's defeat and just prior to the Korean War. As communism is allegorized in the character Jang Yong Sok, so is capitalism allegorized in I Sang Gun, the masses in Denbo Jiji, and traditional Mother Korea in Ki Jun's object of love, Jang Yang Suni.⁵⁵ Jong Ki Jun is the individual caught in the middle of antithetical forces and as such he is evocative of *zainichi* Korean identity.

The story begins with a description of Saishūtō: the sea, the wind, the wooden houses, the stone walls, the women with baskets on their backs, the market place, and the meandering road, all of which are set in opposition to the ongoing sinister military presence. The former Japanese imperial presence looms in the background alongside the current overbearing and unwanted presence of the US military and the right-wing South Korean police and militias. From the steps of the American-controlled police department, where he works as an English-speaking interpreter, Jong Ki Jun can see dead bodies lying under the cherry trees lining the courtyard that were planted by the Japanese Imperial Army. He can also see the Stars and Stripes waving from the roof. In his mind the Japanese and American presence reinforce each other. Critic Isogai Jiro, writing of the following passage, observes, "Almost immediately Kim conflates pre and post-war imperialism, making them one project" (*Shigen* 225).

The little cherry trees the Japanese planted as part of their former plans to 'Cultivate Imperial Subjects' now only looked knotted and old, the dead branches stabbing the trunk... Ki Jun could not emancipate himself; a festering burned continually in the dark depths of his soul. The scars of those endless dark days when they'd lost their mother country were affixed to his consciousness like a pleat on a skirt. Those cherry blossoms were beyond a shadow of a doubt anything but cherry blossoms. They were the companions of bayonets from the days when the festering first began (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 70).

The town cripple, Denbo Jiji (Old Man Boil), whose "job involved pressing his lips against people's boils and sucking out the pus," is in the market place clutching a gruesome, bloodied head and demanding that someone identify it (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 71). There is trouble in store for anybody brave enough, or foolish enough, to identify the head! The villagers pretend they don't recognize it because they understand that "Misfortune would reach the family and village of anyone who identifies it" (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 77). Denbo Jiji is being paid to tell the police the names of those who do

⁵⁵ The surname I of I San Gun is pronounced like the I in 'ink'.

recognize the dead communist. His vulgar shouts arguably act as a wake-up call to the reader still slumbering in a veil of ignorance or indifference to Korea's colonial history.

“Hey, whoa, hey there, how about some prize money for this head? He's a handsome one. Hey ladies, sisters how about this sexy guy? Ha ha ha ha. This gentleman is from one of the villages. Don't you recognize him? Isn't there anyone who recognizes this guy's head? Who was he? Tell us for your country. For 100,000 yen.”...The head of the youth, suspended in the winter sun, looked as if it were a face in water. His head had been cut off just below the chin hence he had no neck. “Why aren't his eyes peeled and his nostrils swollen and why doesn't his tongue hang out of his mouth?” Ki Jun thought, “Why isn't the agony of his existence, his broken cheated spirit, written on his face?” (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 71, 76)

The scene of the unaffected old man dispassionately carrying a severed head in a bustling market place is carnivalesque in several respects. For one thing, there is the theatrical market place setting, a feature which is unmistakably Rabelaisian. As David Danow explains, “The role of the market place or central square... figures as a principal feature of the carnivalesque... The street is a real life stage upon which the most unexpected drama may be enacted” (20) and “The “grand disorder” of the market place represents... a hallmark of the carnivalesque” (47). For another, Kim turns the marketplace on its head; what was once a lively bustling center of *life* is turned into an exhibition place of *death*.⁵⁶ But invoking the carnivalesque is only one way to read this scene. Another is to see it allegorically. In such a reading, the separation of head from body may also be read as a condemnation of the separation of leadership from the people, as well as a sickening display of the disunity (and consequent division) of the nation. *Karasu no Shi* is a novel that censures modern authoritarianism and tyranny. After all, Lacan says the drama involving the separation of body parts comes at times of aggressive disintegration of the individual (4). Indeed, bodily trauma is a prime example of this process of psychological disintegration. Dismemberment and re-evaluation of the resulting fragments has been a long-standing cultural practice in Japan (Trede). For example buildings, paintings and calligraphies, and even garments have been dismantled and reassembled in other places and contexts, assuming divergent social, religious and cultural meanings. Despite the ubiquity of this phenomenon, there is little conceptual or empirical research dealing with the mechanics or meanings of such fragmentation in Japan. This is not the case with regard to the representation of

⁵⁶ Refer to Danow 8.

fragmentation in European history. In her 1995 book, *The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity*, art historian Linda Nochlin notes clearly how a sense of anxiety and crisis came to be represented in the art work of European writers and artists of the late eighteenth century in terms of a partial image, a crop, a fragmentation, ruin and mutilation. These images represent for Nochlin nostalgia and grief for the lost totality of the past from antiquity on. These partial images or ‘crop’ formulate a distinctly modern view of the world and even the essence of modernity itself.

The movement known as Surrealism attempted the disruption of certainties through the use of techniques that privileged the fragment, the double image, the chance encounter and the strange juxtapositions of objects, techniques arguably used by Kim himself to explore the relations between previously unrelated objects such as a bayonet and a cherry blossom. I suggest here that Kim deliberately sets out to create the illusion of distance between symbolic objects so that he can put them back together again using the transformative powers of literary form. He creates this distance through the symbolic use of certain tropes, such as the spy and the ghost, and in the juxtaposition of unexpected settings. The everyday market-place and the evil presence of the military, or the Korean Ki Jun in his western suit smoking American cigarettes, are just two examples of objects or locations that otherwise would remain apart. Strange juxtapositions also question the normalizing process that familiarly placed objects tend to obscure. Arguably, the juxtaposition of two cultural identities creates a third identity, one that results in a hybrid subjectivity that is of a different quality from all that went before, yet retains traces of the old. It is through the use of a similarly dialogic process that Kim reminds us of the ways in which history imbues the present with formative qualities.

Lastly, this scene of the market place evokes a central tenet of *Karasu no Shi*, which is that the identity of the protagonist, the spy, is always in question, even to himself. It does this by showing that identifying another human being is no simple matter. The scene also highlights how little the ‘majority’ is prepared to identify either the perpetrators or the victims of atrocities, be they fictional characters or marginalized peoples. Indeed, the scene is a powerful metaphor for the ‘blind eye’ people turn when faced with the ugly consequences of colonial history or the presence of *Others* – simply

put, the oppressed fear the oppressors. In a related vein, Danow analyzes Eli Wiesel's Holocaust novels, *The Town Beyond the Wall* and *The Gates of the Forest*, saying that, "Wiesel imagines the response of the spectators: to be tantalized is, evidently, what is wanted... Wiesel finds the spectator, of the triangle of killer, victim and spectator, the least comprehensible and perhaps the most reprehensible... He who is not among the victims is with the executioners... What is blameworthy is 'the silence of the beholder'" (59-60). While Kim's scene also interrogates silence as an abettor of evil, it also shows how people are forced into silence, for to speak up is to incur the wrath of the powers that be. Kim thus demonstrates the impotency of even those who wish to speak out.

Ruth Wajnryb, a second-generation Holocaust survivor, has written about the enforced silences of the disenfranchised in *The Silence: How Tragedy Shapes Talk* (2001). She states that, far from being an absence or a lack, silence may be a palpable presence, a complex activity that is open to interpretation but which nonetheless defies language as a medium. Wajnryb concludes in her book that certain experiences go beyond the limits of language because "plain factuality could not portray the enormity of the event" (81). Under the circumstances, she says, silence becomes "the only appropriate response to such a catastrophe" (82).

The trajectory of events at war's end explains how Ki Jun's life circumstances compel him to become a spy. In 1945 Ki Jun is thrilled to leave Japan and overjoyed to finally return to a liberated Korea. "Those days were happy ones for Ki Jun" (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 114). He and Yang Suni, a childhood friend from the same village, are in love. Together with Yang Suni's brother and Ki Jun's best friend, Yong Sok, they jubilantly look forward to a promising future. It was very common for first generation Koreans already living in Japan, after Korea's liberation and Japan's defeat, to turn towards their homeland and pledge their loyalty to Korea. Takeda Seiji writes, "Suddenly the idea that they were Japanese imperial subjects was shattered and they felt they owed it to themselves to turn to their homeland. It was a powerful moral drive" (*Zainichi* 100). In fact, until recently, this teleology worked to unite the Korean *diaspora* in Japan (Lie *Narratives* 343).⁵⁷ Like other Koreans who returned to Korea at war's end, Ki Jun did

⁵⁷ At the same time, however, it can work against them, for it preserves them as 'exiles' (Lie *Narratives*

not foresee the civil war that would ensue. In effect, he jumped ‘out of the frying pan, into the fire.’⁵⁸

A young intellectual, Ki Jun accepts a promising and prestigious job as an English-speaking interpreter for the American military and is proud to serve both his country and the liberating army of the United States. In his Western garb, smoking Lucky Strike cigarettes, Ki Jun is visibly “the handiwork of the US military” and is despised by the villagers, who consider him a traitor (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 75). But Jong Ki Jun is not what he appears to be. It is not until the second chapter that the reader realizes that Ki Jun is a spy for the communist partisan guerillas based at Halla Mountain. Ironically he is the villagers’ covert ally. Using the trope of the spy, Kim suggests how easy it is to misjudge someone and reinforces his message that external appearances are not true markers of identity.⁵⁹

As the novel progresses, *Karasu no Shi* develops into a suspenseful spy story.⁶⁰ However, this is only one way to read the novel. The other way is to read it as an allegory for the problematic existence of the *zainichi* Korean. Arguably the poignancy and power of the novel lies in its penetrating depiction of the spy caught between two worlds and his reconciliation to this divided state of *being*; Ki Jun had no personal ambition to become a spy nor did he find joy in accepting the role. On the contrary he finds *being* a spy almost unbearable. The circumstances that compelled him to become a spy then inform the entire narrative and the existential dilemma of Kim’s fictional hero.

As the political atmosphere changes for the worse, so do the destinies of Ki Jun,

343).

⁵⁸ In a 1980 *Ryūdō* interview, Kim said, “At the time of liberation in 1945, had Korea been unified surely there would not be this many *zainichi* Koreans in Japan, but in any case there are... There are people who came to Japan from Korea for the first time at the war’s end but there are also people who returned to Korea from Japan only to come back to Japan. These people went back to Korea and almost died there due to poverty; they faced so much despair there that they had to return to Japan, despite that they had already suffered in Japan. They had no choice but to cross the Genkainada (the ocean, on the Korean side, that separates Korea from Japan) and come back to the Japan they had been so thrilled to escape. Japan is actually a hostile place. This is one type of *zainichi* Koreans” (Kim, S. P. et al. 192). Ki Jun is symbolic of this type of *zainichi* Korean who went back to Korea from a defeated Japan with hope in his heart. This is true of Ki Jun, who goes back to Korea only to face persecution from the US military and Syngman Rhee (Takeda *Zainichi* 120).

⁵⁹ Kim’s literary tactic is especially relevant in Japan, where *zainichi* Koreans have been stereotyped as dirty, lazy, smelly and aggressive (Ha). In a 1980 interview with literary journal *Ryūdō*, Kim asserts, “I’ll tell you the long held impression that Japanese have had of *zainichi* Koreans. It is that *zainichi* Koreans are the lowest, the worst, dirty and poor, it’s entirely bad” (Kim, S.P. et al. 194).

⁶⁰ The novel has been likened to Frederick Forsyth’s *The Day of the Jackal* (1971) and *The Odessa Files* (1972) (Kaku).

his friends and the woman he loves. It isn't long before the US military starts to sponsor attacks on the many left-wing organizations on the island. Ki Jun's best friend Yong Sok is a member of one such organization. The situation became so dangerous that he and his partisan band are forced to go into hiding. Ki Jun, for his part, wants to quit his job and join Yong Sok in the fight for independence, but Yong Sok exhorts him to keep his position in the US military so he can gather intelligence for the partisans. Ki Jun agrees, "for the sake of the communist party and the country" (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 119). Under strict orders by the partisans to conceal his 'identity' as a spy, even from his lover Yang Suni, Ki Jun is forced to pretend to be pro-American when in fact he is not.

In this way Ki Jun's inner world was cut off from his outer world and his agony started. The way people looked at him dramatically changed, as if he were now an enemy... He became a loyal disciple of the US military and he abandoned a grief stricken Yang Suni (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 114).

From this moment on, Ki Jun must learn to live a new life as a spy. In order to carry out his counter-intelligence, he is forced to sever all relationships with his compatriots, except for the occasional clandestine meeting with Yong Sok. Forced into loneliness, deprived of love and despised by the villagers, Ki Jun wishes he were made of steel. From time to time he finds satisfaction in passing valuable information to the guerillas, but the price he pays is high because in this role, he must sanction the prison sentences and murders of friends, acquaintances and strangers on a daily basis. "Ki Jun didn't want to reveal the nature of his work even to himself; the fact was, in order not to die in vain, one had to kill even one's own allies" (Kim, S.P. *Karasu* 84, 86). Ki Jun regularly agonizes over his position, grieving that historical circumstances have forced him to live a lie, forced him to be someone he is not, and forced him to hide his anti-American or communist feelings and identity. Gradually his real self – his true identity – becomes indistinct even to himself. His situation is clearly an allegory of *zainichi* Koreans who must pretend to be Japanese to survive in Japanese society. In addition, Ki Jun's position is one in which he is marginal to both 'right' and 'left' political cultures; a metaphor for the marginal position of the *zainichi* Korean vis-à-vis both Japanese and Korean cultures.

Ki Jun describes himself as 'behind a mask' or 'behind a mirror,' two enduring Kim motifs. Indeed, as Okaniwa observes, "Ki Jun's biggest task is to overcome his emotions because in his world, emotions won't work" (328). In assuming a mask, Ki

Jun does, to some extent, overcome his emotions but in doing so he becomes dehumanized and increasingly alienated from the people around him. Kim Sok Pom uses the metaphor of the mirror when speaking of his own sense of displacement in Japan, saying: “It feels like I am looking at myself in the mirror at a stranger’s house” (qtd. in Isogai *Shigen* 224). Isogai effectively argues “This paradox is deeply inscribed in Ki Jun... It is not only Ki Jun’s circumstances. It is his consciousness, his actions, his psychology, all of which is twisted and furrowed. He is a superbly formed character, whose torn existence and struggle as a member of the Korean intelligentsia under American military control is keenly described” (*Shigen* 223-24).⁶¹

Kim also emulates Dostoevsky in his use of the double or the shadow figure. At the same time, he highlights Ki Jun’s divided condition by figuratively positioning him between two antithetical characters or shadow figures, Jang Yong Sok and I San Gung, who are clearly meant to symbolize Korea and Japan respectively. Dostoevsky is well known for surrounding his protagonists with people, who act as “vehicles for competing ideological issues” (Stange). Examples include Dostoevsky’s *The Double*, in which the protagonist Galyadkin meets his look-alike and goes insane, and *Crime and Punishment*, in which “Raskolnikov is so torn apart by conflicting thoughts and desires he seems to be two characters” (Stange).

In *Karasu no Shi*, Kim places Ki Jun between his best friend, the communist Jang Yong Sok, who represents Korea, and his nemesis, the conservative I Sang Gun, who represents Japan. However both mirror Ki Jun’s inner self and reflect the dual nature of his personality. Even the spaces in which Yong Sok and Sang Gun dwell signal their opposition in relation to Ki Jun. Yong Sok, who occupies a lofty position on top of Halla Mountain or on U Hill, exists almost in the realm of spirits and personifies Ki Jun’s unrealizable bright side.⁶² Sang Gun, on the other hand, dwells in back alleys, on

⁶¹ American poet Sylvia Plath was attracted to Feodor Dostoevsky, Kim’s favourite author, and uses the mirror image in her own narratives to express a feeling of being distanced from the self. She too intimates that a figure’s appearance in the mirror enables a glimpse of a self of inner despair and the insubstantial self that is the product of other people’s expectations. The reflected image is here merely the shadow of a self signified by others, in Plath’s case a self usually created by the male other (Axelrod 197-212).

⁶² Japan is consistently depicted as a wasteland in early post-war fiction. See, for example, the work of Abe Kōbō, Dazai Osamu and Mishima Yukio. For a discussion of the dissolute Japanese youth in post-war Japan, see Chapters 2-3 and p. 85 of Susan Napier’s *Escape from the Wasteland: Romanticism*

the dusty roadside or in run-down taverns; unsettled and disaffected, he personifies Ki Jun's dark side. By placing Ki Jun between these binary opposites who are also his shadow figures, Kim suggests three different modes of existence legitimating each one. Additionally, Kim illustrates Ki Jun's extreme alienation by underlining his increasing ambivalence to the two shadow figures, and yet he must resign himself to them both in order to survive. Nonetheless, Ki Jun's presence is so pervasive that it overpowers the others, ultimately confirming his status as the most important, which validates his hybrid or intermediary position.

Yong Sok represents all that Ki Jun admires and aspires to be: he is young, brave and selfless. Yong Sok is the consummate nationalist guerilla whose commitment to the cause and his country is unlimited. Unlike Ki Jun, he is sure of himself and his position in the world.

Behind his beard, the youth didn't yet look twenty-three. Ki Jun recognized Yong Sok's fearless baby face... Ki Jun admired the optimistic uncomplaining Yong Sok. You could call him simple, so be it, he never worried unnecessarily (Kim, S.P. Karasu 88).

However, for Ki Jun to effectively carry out his counter-intelligence work he must remain cut off from his communist comrades. Nor can he make contact with Yong Sok. The following passage demonstrates how limited is Ki Jun's connection to the partisans and how alienated he actually is from those with whom he most wants communion. It also suggests how his relationship to both 'the Communist cause' and 'the mother country' is important, but tenuous to Ki Jun, and by extension, to *zainichi* Koreans.

Of late Ki Jun only met with Yong Sok on top of U Promontory. But since the fighting was getting so fierce they were, more often than not, unable to contact each other... and so Mount Halla was the only link between Yong Sok and Ki Jun... Even if there were communist companies in Song Ne or in the remote villages Ki Jun had no relationship with them. In a sense Yong Sok could be likened to the narrow neck of a translucent bottle. Only through this could Ki Jun just barely manage to come into contact with the atmosphere of the world inside the bottle. If not that, let's say that Ki Jun's mission was nothing more than to be an instrument living in the vacuum of a bottle stopped up with a cork (Kim, S. P. Karasu 96-97).

Later in the novel Ki Jun comes face-to-face with his double, I Sang Gun who, with an almost homo-erotic proclivity, has shadowed him throughout the novel.

Ki Jun was behind the partition as if hiding. Suddenly he lifted his head and saw

someone's shadow. I Sang Gun was standing there and Ki Jun started ...

"You really are something finding me in this dark corner."

"Nah, I'm in the bad habit of always sitting in this corner when I come here."

"So that means I've taken your spot." ...Ki Jun didn't quite feel this was a chance encounter (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 124-25).

Sang Gun embodies the stereotypical 'Japanese' characteristics of the era; he is the aimless and somewhat debauched son of a prominent conservative, with no particular ideological interests or convictions. Hayashi Kōji endorses this analysis, remarking that,

In *Karasu no Shi* the rich, fast-living I Sang Gun neither gives the impression of being on the side of the Americans or the partisans; he resembles modern Japanese youth and could be called 'Moratorium Man.' He resembles Japanese youth in his dissipated and over indulgent lifestyle, and yet there is something quite appealing about him... His lack of direction conveys some hope. The question of how modern Japanese youth should live is intimated via the question raised in the novel of how I Sang Gun should live (*Sengo* 95).⁶³

To the extent that moratorium signifies hiatus, interlude or breach, it does indeed convey Sang Gun's position as an intervening shadow or mirror image of Jong Ki Jun. For instance, Sang Gun, with his self-seeking, devil-may-care attitude, challenges Ki Jun's intellectual commitment to communism. In broader geopolitical and economic terms, viewing Sang Gun as a metaphor for Japan is instructive; it conjures Japan's relationship with the US during the US-led occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952. At least in the 1950s and 1960s, Japan was neither wholeheartedly committed to American objectives in Korea nor entirely opposed to them. This is confirmed by Japan's somewhat reluctant yet compliant role as a weapons manufacturer and base for American operations during the Korean War, from 1950 to 1953, a move which stimulated the Japanese economy (Lee, K. C. 155-70; Stockwin 246; Reishauer and Jansen 114, 315).⁶⁴ Japanese civilians were struggling just to survive – at least in the early post-war period – and disassociated themselves from militarism and ideological

⁶³ Hayashi actually uses the English term, moratorium, spelled phonetically in katakana モラトリアム人.

⁶⁴ Japan under occupation was more or less powerless to curb US aggression in Korea, despite some limited but vocal opposition. Also, Japan was heavily dependent on ongoing US financial aid and goodwill. Finally, Japan profited from its manufacturing and strategic role in the Korean War, much to the chagrin of angry Koreans, who bitterly resented Japan's role in the war. Most scholars claim Japan's period of economic growth (1960-1977) was activated and enabled by its profitable role in the Korean War (Kaku; Ha). The Korean War and its impact on *zainichi* Korean-Japanese relations would make an interesting research topic.

conflict, hence the persuasive symbol of Japan embodied in the politically ambivalent Sang Gun.⁶⁵

Hayashi claims that Sang Gun's character points to a crisis in modern Japanese youth, who, in the aftermath of the strident 1960s student movement, appeared disenfranchised, disenchanted and finally disaffected (*Sengo* 95). The student movement mounted a hostile response to the US-Japan Security Pact, ANPO, which allowed US armed forces to keep their bases on Japanese soil. It was also a rebellion against the Vietnam War (1959-1975). It gradually disappeared mainly because of state and police obstruction, but also because of a lack of solid cohesive organization. The 1970s saw a Japanese populace with little will or capacity to challenge the state, and student or people power became an obsolete or disparaged notion. American-style capitalism and rapid economic growth, which promoted an indulgent consumer-oriented lifestyle, not only minimized any necessity to demand change but moderated the desire to commit to any ideology, erstwhile or otherwise. This would over time manifest in what some would characterize as the spiritual bankruptcy of post-war Japan. This is what Sang Gun arguably symbolizes; while he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he is isolated, disillusioned and disoriented.

However, Sang Gun's character symbolizes more than the crisis of Japanese youth. For several reasons he can also be seen as evoking the condition of *zainichi* Korean youth as well, for then as now, *zainichi* Korean youth and Japanese youth were physically indistinguishable. This is suggested by the phrase, "without his coat, Sang Gun was the same black figure that Ki Jun was" (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 125). It is also suggested by his isolation and disparagement. Complaining, "No one likes me," he is ostracized by his peers and stigmatized as an "aimless good for nothing drunk." *Zainichi* Koreans, especially in the early post-war period, were similarly stigmatized in Japan (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 106).⁶⁶

It is also important to note the nature of the attraction that Ki Jun exerts on Sang

⁶⁵ Furthermore, the reticence of the Japanese 'war generation' to talk about the war, combined with improved economic conditions, living standards and materialism, substantiate the notion that Japanese youth in the 1960s conform to Kim's characterization of Sang Gun as 'rich and fast-living' (Hayashi *Sengo* 95).

⁶⁶ This argument still points to a metaphor of Japan, given that Japan was ostracized in the international, especially Asian, community in the post-war decades, even to the present. The similarity between the two men may also evoke how *zainichi* Koreans living in Japan inevitably assimilate to a certain degree.

Gun, something neglected by Japanese or *zainichi* critics. A close reading of the text reveals that beneath the surface of Sang Gun's loathing lies an intense desire that he directs towards his alter-ego, Ki Jun. A similar ambivalence also characterizes the relationship between Japan as the "post-colonizer" and the *zainichi* Korean as the "post-colonized." Sang Gun's obsessive desire to know Ki Jun is instructive for what it says about the arbitrariness of what it may mean to be 'Japanese' or 'Korean' or 'zainichi Korean' or categorize people as such. Sang Gun's desire to know Ki Jun directs him to a more realistic appraisal of 'difference' and 'sameness.' For the reader, however, Ki Jun is as much a mirror for I Sang Gun as vice-versa, establishing an equality or a 'sameness' between them, which perhaps accounts for the hint of eroticism inherent in the descriptions. This in turn acts not only as a banner of narcissism, but harks back to Hayashi's description of Sang Gun as 'Moratorium Man;' for in as much as Sang Gun is a hesitating indecisive 'Moratorium Man,' he is weak, and looks to Ki Jun for that which he feels he lacks, a sense of strength that is embodied in the seeming masculinity of Ki Jun.

He imagined seeing the lean naked body of Ki Jun for the first time. But when he did so he couldn't visualize Ki Jun's mask-like expression along with his naked body and what came back to him, from the mirror, was a reflection of his own face (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 126).

In their ensuing conversation the two characters attempt to negotiate their mutual suspicion and fear of, as well as interest in, one another. Their efforts are aimed at reconciliation through overcoming the misunderstandings that haunt minority-majority relations, and so consequently their meeting can be viewed as prescriptive. For example, Ki Jun muses, "This guy seems a lot nicer than I thought" (Kim S. P. *Karasu* 126). Ultimately, Kim deters the reader from generalizing about *zainichi* Koreans by positing two ways of conceiving the identity of 'the spy' (*zainichi*), one ostensibly fictitious and the other ostensibly authentic. Once joined together, however, the boundaries between what is real and what is not blur, and we are presented with a more sophisticated image of what *zainichi* Korean existence might be: one that does not misrepresent the complexity of a given person's identity. The figure of the spy, which in *Karasu no Shi* stands for a state of inauthenticity, ambivalence and hybridity, is originally attributed to Sang Gun. Yet, as the novel proceeds, these attributes gradually come to characterize Ki Jun. We see this idea of interchangeability in the passage where

Sang Gun discovers he has an identity that may not be that dissimilar from Ki Jun's.

In these chaotic times no one has a foothold, and in this position, people insulate themselves. I Sang Gun was close to that, as if he were sinking inside himself... He had nothing to hold on to for support inside himself, no interior self. Ki Jun stood up to go... at that moment the grief on I Sang Gun's face flickered like a light... Wasn't it supposed to be the other way around? Then Sang Gun was suddenly seized by his own imagination and surprised himself. It just occurred to him that Ki Jun might actually be a spy. He kept rejecting this notion but as he did, it took hold (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 130).

In his review of *Karasu no Shi*, Odagiri Hideo contends, "I Sang Gun only appears at the end of the story and is the weak point of the novel, neither convincing as Ki Jun's shadow nor as his own self, but remaining unfinished" (14). Odagiri's criticism is not groundless, but it may be too harsh. It is true that Sang Gun's character is not definitively constructed early on, and his pursuit of Ki Jun involves some bizarre antics, such as inspecting Ki Jun's used cigarettes. However, his sporadic appearances, however, may be intentional and designed to keep him in the shadows. Kim's depiction of him as a furtive, unsure figure is consistent throughout and is generally persuasive. In my view Odagiri neglects to carefully consider the significance of the character of Sang Gun in the novel as a provocative counter point to Ki Jun and as a personification of becoming.

Under strict orders from the partisans to conceal his identity as a spy and to terminate his relationship with his lover, Yang Suni, Ki Jun's predicament of hiding the truth from her mirrors that of many first- and second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, who also hide their identity, in particular, from lovers.⁶⁷ Yang Suni pleads with Ki Jun to give up his interpreting job but Ki Jun is unresponsive, determined not to show any emotion in front of her. Indeed, controlling his emotions so preoccupies Ki Jun that he becomes incapable of relating to her: "He had the impulse to confess but he had his pride. There are things a man will not tell his wife, and it gave him satisfaction and pleasure when he overcame the risk... At the end of the day she was just a woman" (Kim, S. P. *Karasu*

⁶⁷ This was more pronounced at the time the novel was written. Also it poignantly brings to mind the well-documented phenomenon of the Japanese tradition of hiring detectives to investigate the racial or 'caste' background of potential marriage partners for their children (Takeda, Satomi). While this is still practiced, particularly among the Japanese elite, it was most prevalent in the early post-war decades, and indeed countless Koreans were rejected as potential marriage partners by Japanese once their 'identity' as Koreans was discovered (Fukuoka 32-35).

115). Ki Jun's sexism causes Yang Suni to react negatively. She curses his Lucky Strike cigarettes, rips a poster of a sexy woman off his wall and bitterly calls him a traitor. Their parting quickly becomes explosive, and a silent but seething Ki Jun rapes her. She in turn protests by scratching her nails down his back, sealing their separation. By Western and contemporary Japanese literary standards the scene is oversimplified and unconvincing, but warrants analysis.

Takeda Seiji argues that Ki Jun is forced to live a lie and thus wear a mask. Being a spy means he can't be like a real human and, since that is the case, he wants some compensation. "By raping Yang Suni, Ki Jun successfully proves he can *be* a spy, in other words he can achieve a state of being 'non-human' and simultaneously he obtains some compensation for having to give up his former life and for losing her" (25 Oct. 1999). I take issue with the idea of rape as compensation for an unrealized life: conversely, I argue that in this instance Kim explores the difficulty of exerting his will in the face of conflicting forces. The rape of Yang Suni is a way to assert the independence of his ego and in part an overcoming of the self created by the past.

Jean-Paul Sartre reasons that when a person looks at themselves from the viewpoint of another they become aware of how much like an object they are in the presence of a judge. As an object of another's gaze, the person is placed in the uncanny position of seeing themselves as a being whose contingency is entirely based upon the perception of the Other (261). Yang Suni's gaze constructs Ki Jun as a traitor who ought properly to recognize his past origins and former loyalties. Looked at in this way, the rape is a symbolic confrontation, a rejection of the self caused by others. In raping Yang Suni, Ki Jun asserts his freedom and his desire for choice. Not to assert this would be to give way to an act of Sartrian 'bad faith' (Santoni 5-10). Ki Jun therefore chooses to become involved in an act of dominance and enforced submission of the other. For Sartre, love is a form of conflict, a struggle to enslave another without becoming enslaved oneself. This need for domination of the other-within might have special resonance when it involves a rejection of the already abject flesh of the female.

The ill-fated love affair between Ki Jun and Yong Sok's sister, Yang Suni, is also arguably a microcosm of Kim's allegorical approach to loss and separation. Yang Suni is a symbol of Korea; thus the failure of the relationship is not only a symbol of the impending national division, but also of the enforced separation from 'home' experienced

by *zainichi* Koreans. Kim depicts Yang Suni as a symbol of the nation as it was prior to the Korean War by displaying her in traditional white Korean dress, abiding by feminine ethical codes and fiercely loyal to her peasant/communist brother and parents. In short, she personifies communism, the peasant masses and traditional values. It is widely recognized that the gendering and sexualization of the nation are striking elements in post-colonial literature.⁶⁸ When evaluating Yang Suni's character, Yuval-Davis' hypothesis that "women play a pivotal role in the construction of ethnicity and nationality: as biological reproducers and as boundary markers; as transmitters of the culture; as crucial symbols, for example, in notions of the motherland" is worth considering (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 8-10).

In his article, 'Just Framing: ethnicities and racisms in a 'postmodern' world,' Ali Rattansi takes up the metaphor of 'rape' as if he himself were analyzing the rape of Yan Suni in *Karasu no Shi*. He writes, "If 'woman' is a key signifier of both culture and territory, then the sexual violation of her body is an assertion of masculinist ethnicity, or nationality or race" (Rattansi 264). Ki Jun, as representative of a *zainichi* Korean position, appropriates his right to Korean space and territory as embodied by Yang Suni. In other words, he stakes out a territorial claim to her body and to the nation, notably, at their separation.⁶⁹ Her subsequent death at the hands of the Americans signals the end of an era, the death of communism in the south, and the beginning of another era: a neo-colonial existence for the survivors who stay in Korea or a post-colonial existence for those who migrate to the metropolitan Japan.

Thereafter, Ki Jun, who is soon to be reassigned and transferred to the mainland, makes a trip back to his village hoping to see Yang Suni one last time. But the village is deserted. All that he finally sees is her ghost, the disturbing premonition of her impending death.

⁶⁸ See a discussion of this in Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin *Key* 104.

⁶⁹ The lovers' conflict alludes to the misunderstandings and ambivalence that sometimes characterizes the relationships between Koreans at war's end concerning their relationship with the metropolitan Japan. Some Koreans who stayed in Korea (Yang Suni) felt that compatriots who either chose to stay in, return to or depart for Japan or align themselves with the enemy (Ki Jun) were traitors (Koh). In the scene Kim Sok Pom is able to convey the complexities of decision-making for Koreans caught in uncompromising circumstances, and the ensuing misunderstandings and the feelings of guilt and betrayal that accompanied separation and disunion. Many Koreans who had established businesses or had financial opportunities or relatives in Japan and/or faced either abject poverty or persecution in Korea, felt compelled to leave Korea. The decision to stay in or go to Japan was often a rational one, but invited emotional backlash from Koreans who stayed behind (Koh 2001).

When he entered the village there wasn't a soul in sight... Not only that, it was just too quiet. The doors of all the houses were closed and the atmosphere was weighed down with a sense of desertion... "Hey, wait. I think I hear something" he thought. 'Yes I did.' ...A young woman wearing white high heels and white *chogori* appeared in the alleyway.⁷⁰ "It's strange that she doesn't acknowledge me." He was stunned and felt dizzy and called out, "Yang Suni, Yang Suni. It's me!" She flitted away and there were no more sounds... He still didn't realize it was an illusion. When it occurred to him that she might not have been a real person he shook all over... He felt the night and the day descend on him all at once (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 102-03).

Ki Jun is like those *zainichi* Koreans, especially first- and second-generation Koreans who, when they made the trip, 'back home' to the ROK were disillusioned (Tazaki 2000). Ki Jun's 'home,' like that of most first-generation *zainichi* Koreans, is rooted in childhood memories that have little in common with reality.⁷¹ Many *zainichi* Koreans who journeyed to the southern state felt unwelcome, rejected, or were even arrested upon arrival as communist or Japanese *spies*, only to serve decade-long terms in South Korean prisons.⁷² They were forced to forsake the idealist notion that Korea was 'home' and yet they could never consider Japan 'home'.

At the tragic climax of the novel on a visit to a prison camp, Ki Jun is forced to watch Yang Suni's execution. He battles his emotions to feign indifference in front of his American superiors and eschews Yang Suni's parents' pleas for help, refusing to compromise his position, even for love, "like a stone" (Hayashi *Sengo* 95).⁷³ For Hayashi, "Kim presents an extreme representative of the Korean intellectual class at war" (*Sengo* 95). In contrast, Kim's striking rendition of the peasant couple indecently quarrelling before their execution has won him the praise of a number of critics because it is "an extremely realistic portrayal of 'ordinary commoners' at death's door" (Odagiri 12, Ono 19).

They fought with their necks sticking out, looking like two birds pecking at each other. The old woman's cries could be heard from all over the grounds, "I don't want to die! Oh, it's all because of Yong Sok. I'm going to die because you gave me a son from that decayed, spoiled tool of yours and it's for him I'm being

⁷⁰ Chogori is the traditional Korean dress worn by women.

⁷¹ See a discussion of this regarding British and Jamaican writers in Joan Riley's 1987 *Waiting in the Twilight* or Vernella Fuller's 1992 *Going Back Home* (Jordon and Weedon 232-36).

⁷² See *Gokuchi Jūkyū Nen Kankoku Seijihan Tataikai* [*Nineteen Years in Hell: Fighting Crimes of the South Korean Government*] (1994) by Sō Sun.

⁷³ Unlike the 'commoner' protagonist, Pak Be Song, in Kim's earlier novel *Kanshu Pak Soban* [*Prison guard Pak*] (1967) Ki Jun, the 'intelligentsia' doesn't follow his lover to his own death.

murdered. It's because of your old putrefied penis, you rotten old man. I don't want to die." The old man took his cue. Twisting in his ropes he kicked her hard showering her with vitriole. "You Jezebel! You and your rotten worthless hole! What was it good for? He came out of there didn't he? And I'm going to die for him too. I don't want to die either, you ugly bitch" (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 121-22).⁷⁴

The final scene of the novel makes clear the meaning of the work's title and it also illustrates the hero's hard-won reconciliation with himself and his circumstances. Ki Jun, upon leaving the police station, sees the body of a teenage girl who resembles Yang Suni. A crow, overhead, sets its sights on her. The crow is a symbol of Ki Jun himself, who is always dressed in black, and, like the crow, is viewed as an unwelcome predator. Both survive by exploiting the death which surrounds them in Saishūtō.

A crow was squawking loudly overhead. Ki Jun glanced up and saw a big one perched high in a dead branch of a cherry tree. Its head wobbled up and down like it was nodding and it made eyes as if searching for ground upon which to place its feet. A girl's body was lying crosswise under the tree. Only seventeen or eighteen, looking upwards, legs spread, chest contorted, the body faced Ki Jun. Blood trickled from her swollen half-open mouth. Because her twisted chin touched her shoulder the whole area was soaked in red as if she'd vomited blood... The crow suddenly spread its wings and did a descending dance towards the girl (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 138).

The very literal 'death of the crow' can be interpreted in a number of ways. The crow, in deciding to sustain its life by feeding on the girl, reminds Ki Jun of his own decision to ignore the pleas of loved ones in order to survive himself. However, his shooting of the crow also seems to be a demonstration of self-recrimination for his betrayal of Yang Suni. Parallel to that, the shooting of the crow may intimate Ki Jun's rage at himself – he symbolically shoots himself – to atone for sacrificing her, for the sake of his survival. Thus the dead crow may also symbolize the part of Ki Jun that died with Yang Suni and his acknowledgement of that loss.

The police captain emerges from the station at this juncture saying, "I never liked crows." The significance of his words should not be lost on the reader. Ki Jun's decision to shoot the corpse of the girl, rather than the captain, clearly symbolizes his – the *zainichi* Korean's – decision to sever his emotional link to Yang Suni – the mother

⁷⁴ This climactic scene can be compared to the execution scene of Ah Q, a farm laborer who suffers a lifetime of humiliation and persecution, dreams of revolution and ends up on the execution grounds in Lu Xun's famed 1921 *The Story of Ah Q* (Okaniwa 325-26; Ono 36; Isogai *Shigen* 79, Takeda *Zainichi* 105-09).

land, Korea. He is also a link with the past and colonial recollections – and an era that he cannot retrieve – an essential pre-colonial way of life from which he is cutting loose. It thus ensures his own survival and powerfully signals his decision to accept his role as a spy – an intermediary *zainichi* Korean type of identity – and his willingness to overcome any emotional barriers incompatible with it in order to survive. Mourning Yang Suni and lost possibilities, as well as castigating himself, are no longer viable solutions for a man who intends to succeed as a spy. Kim tests Ki Jun a number of times but, with this final act of shooting the girls' corpse, Ki Jun proves he is able to control himself and he emerges a successful *spy* – *zainichi* Korean – both committed to an independent Korea and to an independent subjectivity of his own. In conclusion, then, '*The Death of the Crow*' may be read as a metaphor for Ki Jun's emotional metamorphosis and acceptance of who he is and his position in the world.

It is easy to assume that Ki Jun nihilistically resolves to remain a spy at the end of the novel, willing to sacrifice love, even himself, in the name of a socialist revolution. However, a close reading of the text demonstrates that as Ki Jun is forced to condone unimaginable suffering, his political convictions are slowly undermined; he understands this only after he loses Yang Suni. "The party and the country can't make up for the value of even one of Yang Suni's tears" (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* 119).

In fact, in the midst of a massacre it is hard to hold on to any beliefs. The reality of suffering and physical survival becomes more significant than any political ideology or doctrine. Ki Jun continues to resist the massacre but with a new-fashioned sensibility, one in which his determination is based, not on a nihilistic commitment to communism, but rather to Korean independence, to the masses and to his responsibility to himself to be the best '*spy*' that he can be.

Ono Teijiro and Okaniwa Noboru both recognize that a major theme in Kim's fiction is what Okaniwa calls 'the twentieth century demise of the value of human life'. Okaniwa is the only critic, however, who really explores the philosophical significance of this theme. He refers to the 'modern' belief in the 'value of human life' that accompanied the Enlightenment and argues that, in *Karasu no Shi*, Kim deliberately attempts to illustrate that even this value has died, right along with hundreds of thousands of

casualties of war in Korea (319-26).

Indeed, in the post-war era, as portrayed in *Karasu no Shi*, neither life nor death is sacred. Okaniwa claims that, “The horror of the Saishūtō Massacre rivals that of Auschwitz, where people (communists) are merely ‘game to be hunted’ and human value is reduced to the gold stolen from the teeth of the dead, the candles made from human fat and the fertilizer the corpses become” (320-21). In a terrible cycle, the more death humanity encounters the more inhumane death becomes. Kim portrays a place and time where all the old norms have been destroyed, nothing is as it should be, and people behave in irrational and ruthless ways. Bloody heads are displayed for identification in the market place, public executions are routine, people are forced to kill their own family members and crows are feeding on the countless corpses that line the streets. Okaniwa maintains that Kim persuades the reader that no existing philosophy can rationalize events on Saishūtō, and in this way he communicates the collapse of humanity as a new paradigm of the post-war period confirming our fate as victims of ‘enlightened’ modernity (323).

Okaniwa’s interpretation of *Karasu no Shi* extends well beyond some earlier, shallow analyses that tended to focus on Kim’s unusual use of the Japanese language, such as that of Hiratsuka. Unfortunately, though, neither Okaniwa nor Ono *explicitly* link events on Saishūtō or Kim’s post-war vision directly to violent imperialist interventions, either Japanese or American. This seems to prevent Okaniwa from seeing *Karasu no Shi* as an allegory. In fact, the title of his review, “*Hiyu o Norikoerunomo*” ‘Transcending Allegory’ establishes his premise that *Karasu no Shi* is not allegorical. Okaniwa is so focused on Kim’s realistic portrayal of the collapse of humanity that he somehow fails to discern the transparent message Kim conveys about imperialism or conditions of life for *zainichi* Koreans in post-colonial Japanese society. Ito and Isogai, although they recognize it, also undervalue what I deem to be one of Kim’s central objectives: to articulate the complexities inherent to ‘being’ a *zainichi* Korean. Finally, critics overlook that even in the midst of so much carnage and tragedy, *Karasu no Shi* is ultimately a story of survival, even of hope.

Kim Sok Pom told me that the act of writing *Karasu no Shi* saved his life, saying, “Had

I not written it I would have been long since dead” (Kim, S. P. 1999). How does a novel save a man’s life? Born in 1925, Kim spent most of his youth in Osaka but made a memorable visit to Saishūtō as a boy. In 1943, at the age of eighteen, he revisited his “mother country” and made lasting friendships with some Koreans in Seoul who were involved in the underground struggle for independence from Japan. Not long after he returned to Osaka from a short stint in Seoul, following Japan’s 1945 defeat, one of his nationalist friends, Chang Yang Sok, was shot and killed by police in an anti-US and anti-Syngman Rhee demonstration in Seoul (Aoba 469). Kim told me that had he stayed in Seoul he would have no doubt been with Chang at the demonstration (Kim, S. P. 2000). Kim survived the post-war political strife on the Korean Peninsula precisely because he was a *zainichi* Korean who had a Japanese residence to which he could return. The ensuing complex feelings of grief, relief, guilt and shame were so persistent that Kim was unable to shake them until at the age of thirty-one he articulated a positive reconstruction of history in *Karasu no Shi*.⁷⁵

Michael Dash takes up the theme of survival and literature in his article ‘The Way out of Negritude: Towards a Redefinition of History.’ He emphasizes that survival is only possible for many former colonial subjects – either real or fictional characters – if they acquire a ‘new re-creative sensibility’ in the face of unbearable circumstances (200). Though Dash is interested in the post-colonial literature of Haiti, his insights can be applied to an analysis of Kim’s experience as manifested in his fiction. Writing *Karasu no Shi* allowed Kim to express his anguish over the past and to memorialize the sacrifices nationalist friends made for Korea, especially that of his friend Chang, on whom Kim based the heroic and beloved character, Jan Yon Sok, the partisan guerilla (Takeda *Zainichi* 116, Tazaki 2000). But importantly, *Karasu no Shi*, in its portrayal of Ki Jun, endorses the new identities people are sometimes forced to acquire in order to survive. It also validated Kim’s own personal choices. Unquestionably Ki Jun’s narrative echoes the life story of Kim Sok Pom, for he too had to reconcile himself to his own personal life choices and circumstances as a *zainichi* Korean in Japan.

Dash laments that “Third World writers often make it difficult to see beyond the

⁷⁵ In the afterword to *Karasu no Shi* Kim writes, “During my youth, I never thought about becoming a writer. Due to the vicissitudes of life I started my life as a writer after I reached middle age. Now, thirty years after writing *Karasu no Shi* I think this first novel, in a manner of speaking, influenced the entirety of all my ensuing creations. In fact it was my starting point” (Kim, S. P. *Karasu* Afterword).

tragedy... to the complex process of survival” (200). But in the two works of fiction treated in this study, Kim Sok Pom provides a profound exploration of adaptation and survival in the “besieged environment of a colonized people,” thereby exemplifying Dash’s ideal. In *Karasu no Shi* adaptation and survival are achieved through sheer rational resolve, and in Kim’s *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan*, the subject of the next chapter, through faith, love and spiritual integrity. Urging contemporary writers to choose survival over “pure protest,” Dash holds that, “What can emerge is a literature of renaissance – a literary aesthetic and reality – based on the fragile emergence of the Third World personality from the privations of history” (199-200). At the end of *Karasu no Shi*, after enduring tremendous anguish, Jong Ki Jun emerges from the privations of history as just such a survivor – he successfully closes the distance between his past and present, and his former self and current self. Able to let go of the past without losing sight of it, accept his multiform identity and live in the present without undermining his ideological convictions, Ki Jun does more than resign himself to his ‘quintessential subjectivity,’ as mandated in most post-colonial prescripts: rather, he transcends it.

The first piece of fiction to treat the theme of the *Yon San* Massacre was Kim Sok Pom’s *Kanshu Pak sōban* and *Karasu no Shi*, both respectively published in 1957, in the August and December editions of *Bungei Shūto*, a Japanese literary journal. These two novels and *Gwandokchō* became known as his ‘Saishūtō Series,’ but he went on to publish a number of other novels set on Saishūtō. It was in 1984 that Kim finished his acclaimed seven-volume epic novel, *Kazantō* [*Volcano Island*]. Volume three of *Kazantō* won Kim the exceptionally esteemed *Osaragi Jiro Prize for Literature* in 1984. Kim’s epic novel has a greater word count than Noma Hiroshi’s *Seinen no Wa* [*The Ring of Youth*] (1971), the *Japanese* novel known partly for being the longest ever written and partly for its greatness (2000). Kim jokingly told me, but not without some serious intent, that the Japanese literary establishment will not formally acknowledge that a Korean or a *zainichi* Korean wrote the longest *Japanese* novel in history.⁷⁶

Kim’s first three novels, *Kanshu Pak Sō Ban*, *Karasu no Shi* and *Gwandokchō*,

⁷⁶ Many years earlier, when Lee Hoe Sung won the Akutagawa Prize, he was referred to as a Korean, a *zainichi* Korean or a foreigner. The tendency to call *zainichi* Koreans, ‘Koreans’ while no longer common, is discernable.

were published together in book form in 1968 by a small independent *zainichi* Korean publishing house called *Shinko* Publishing, which subsequently went out of business.⁷⁷ The books would have been doomed to oblivion from the Japanese public eye had a Kodansha publisher, Tamura Yoshiya, not happened upon *Karasu no Shi* in a second-hand bookstore. Tamura was so impressed with the unknown tour de force that he arranged for its publication by Kodansha, a major publishing house, sixteen years after it appeared in a journal (Koh I. S. 2000). *Karasu no Shi* was necessarily reviewed; its favorable reception made it the catalyst for Kim's acceptance into the Japanese literary establishment. His career as a writer was firmly established.

Kim Sok Pom's novels were deemed subversive by the ROK and banned throughout the right-wing military regimes of Syngman Rhee (1948-1960), Pak Chung Hee (1961-1979) and Chon Doo Hwan (1979-1987).⁷⁸ For decades Kim could not travel to South Korea or Cheju for fear of arrest, imprisonment by South Korean police, or worse. But even had he permission to visit South Korea, Kim would have refused to go (Koh I. S. 2000). Kim was like many other *zainichi* Korean intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s, a majority of whom were leftist, who refused to visit South Korea. They did not wish to tacitly acknowledge the division on the peninsula or condone the existing Korean military regimes by accepting visas from the ROK Embassy. Those who did visit South Korea were generally criticized by *zainichi* Korean intellectuals (Kim, C. J.). However, long after these regimes had ended any restrictions on 'subversive writings,' and due to the South Korean restriction on *Japanese* cultural imports, Kim's novels remained banned in the ROK until 1998, when the ban was lifted.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, some of Kim's novels were secretly introduced to a small group of sympathetic Korean literati, probably in the early 1970s (Koh, I. S. 2000). Then, in 1988, some thirty-one years after Kim wrote *Karasu no Shi*, but twelve years before it would be officially admitted into the ROK, it was secretly translated from Japanese into Korean, giving it more accessibility among Cheju islanders (Kim, S. P. 2000, Hiratsuka). In due time, Kim Sok

⁷⁷ *Gwandokuchō* (*Kantokutei* in Japanese) is the name of both a building and a site, where executions were held in Cheju.

⁷⁸ For more on these 'right wing military regimes' see, in particular, Cumings (1995, 1997, 1998), Oberdorfer 10, 38, 109-11; Hart-Landsberg 189-97.

⁷⁹ An interesting research project might be an investigation of either the 'nationality of culture,' 'cultural exports' or the implications and ramifications of this specific 'cultural' policy on Japan-Korea relations or on *zainichi* Korean cultural producers in Japan.

Pom's fiction inspired a number of writers to take up the *Yon San* Massacre of Saishuto in their literature. He is credited with starting what is known as, the 'Yon San Literature' movement (Hayashi Sengo 93-94).⁸⁰ Now it is no longer a crime to discuss the massacre. Tessa Morris-Suzuki points out that, "South Korea's central government has recently published an exhaustive report on the history of 4/3, and the president himself, Roh Moo-Hyun, has visited the island to bow his head in apology on behalf of the government of the ROK for the events that occurred in 1948 and thereafter" (Morris-Suzuki 50).

Elleke Boehmer and Dennis Walder, though not writing about Japan or Korea, agree that in the post-war climate of the 1950s and 1960s, nationalist and post-colonial writers elsewhere were concerned with cultural retrieval and nostalgic portraits of home. Boehmer writes,

Across geographically separate regions, writers were interested in exploring historical beginnings and aetiologies as the basis for a new selfhood... Culturally in exile, the effort of nationalist writers was to retrieve or invent edenic homelands... They attempted to transform their experience of cultural schizophrenia into a restorative dream of home... the approach can be traced in nationalists' choice of subject matter: childhood, homecoming, and return (115,117).

Boehmer's discussion focuses on the Bengali writer Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), and the Irishman, William Butler Yeats (1839-1922), as examples of post-colonial writers who focus on cultural and historical authenticity together with retrospective and patriotic imaginings of 'home.' She characterizes these writers as men who, "valued the artifice of nostalgia, and sought to shape the future by redescribing the past" (119).⁸¹

⁸⁰ Adherents of the movement include Korean writers living in the Republic of Korea, especially in Cheju, and some *zainichi* Korean writers in Japan. Early examples of 'Yon San Literature' include *Suni Obasan* [Mrs. Suni] and *Toriyon Toge no Karasu* [The Crows on Toge Ridge] published in 1979 in South Korea. Other 'Yon San Literature' writers include Korean novelists 吳成贊 O Song Chan, 玄吉彦 Hyong Gu On, キムソヒイ Kim So Hi and poet イーサナ I Sa Na. The names are transcribed here just as they are transcribed by Hayashi (Sengo 92). Some of their literary works including I's epic poem *Halla San* (Mount Halla) have recently been translated into Japanese. Kim Sok Pom himself translated Hyong's *Suni Obasan* into Japanese in 1984.⁸⁰ In Japan, *zainichi* Korean writer Kim Tae Sen 金泰生 published *Matsue* [Progeny] in 1958 and *Sudachi* [Leaving the Nest] in 1977, two more examples of *Yon San* literature. Human Rights activist 金明植 Kim Myong Shoku, who was an exchange student in Japan in 1987, is also associated with this movement (Hayashi Sengo 92-95).

⁸¹ An interesting research project might be a cross-cultural comparison of 'first generation' *diasporic* writers from various 'post-colonial centers.'

Even Japanese writers of modern literature, such as Shimazaki Tōson (1872-1943) and Abe Kōbo (1924-1993), considered themselves exiled in Tokyo in the modern era and recreated, in their fiction, an edenic homeland that they had abandoned (Marcus).

Certainly, the general makeup of the early colonial and post-colonial nationalist writing in Japanese by first-generation *zainichi* Korean authors, in terms of its focus on ‘home,’ is comparable to that of other such nationalist writing. First-generation *zainichi* Korean novelists invariably write about ‘home and country,’ Korea, and their enormous sense of displacement in metropolitan Japan (Takeda *Zainichi* 101, 112, 114-17). In this sense Kim resembles first-generation *zainichi* Korean writers (Kim, S. P. et. al. 181,183). Kim’s preoccupation with ‘home,’ however, is considered exceptional, not only because he grew up solely in Japan but because his commitment to writing about Saishūtō is so comprehensive.

At first sight Kim’s exclusive treatment of Saishūtō may appear obsessive or, at least, repetitious and it may deter readers from exploring more than one or two works in the Saishūtō series. But generally his portrayal of life in early post-war Saishūtō earns him praise, “There is no one like Kim so committed to our history and what it means to be from Saishūtō. His fiction depicts the voices and concerns of Koreans from Saishūtō so eloquently and powerfully” (Koh I. S. 1999). Kim explains,

I wrote a number of works that take up Saishūtō as a theme. The main reason I write about Saishūtō is because that island is my ‘home’ and runs in my blood and I am one of the people whose tears are not all cried out. If literature pursues human existence in its totality and the circumstances in which ‘humans’ find themselves on all levels without limitations, then for me as long as I am involved in a tangible way with Saishūtō I think I will continue writing about it (in Hayashi Sengo 101).

Since each of his novels introduces new characters, themes and plots, the reader does not necessarily go away with a static view of Saishūtō (Hayashi 2000). At the same time, characters who make appearances in novels such as *Kanshu Pak Sōban* [*Prison Guard Pak*], *Kuso to Jiyū* [*Shit and Freedom*], *Kyomutan* [*The Nihilist’s Tale*] often resurface in one or another of his stories and of course in *Kazantō* [*Volcano Island*]. Just as circumstances change, so identities vacillate accordingly, and in this way Kim’s narratives and characterization confirm the transience and malleability of identity. His technique of reintroducing characters allows him to portray their development, maturity and, in some cases, their decline. It bonds the reader to certain characters in one novel,

only to have them question their devotion to them, when faced with what may be awful truths about them in another. Moreover, the tactic of setting multiple novels in Saishūtō and reintroducing characters that still struggle with the past reminds the reader that the impact of history has long term and vital consequences. Ultimately Saishūtō emerges as a fluid changing space and, as such, it can be conceived as a ‘universal’ place, which conveys the idea of ‘home.’ As Kim himself says, “I started to transcend the reality that Saishūtō was a geographical place; for me, it took on an ideational presence. In this way I was able to redevelop my understanding of ‘home’” (qtd. in Hayashi *Sengo* 101).

Although the Saishūtō Massacre forms the framework of his fiction, Kim keeps it in the background. By putting the spotlight on just a few individuals in the village of Song Ne in Saishūtō, Kim gives the reader a sense of just how significant the massacre really was. Okaniwa Noboru calls this strategy Kim’s “backward logic” (323-24). Kim puts a human face on misery by giving personalities to the victims of atrocity. By meticulously detailing the pain of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans who came to Japan from Saishūtō, Kim’s fiction “cuts like a knife through our complacency” (Ono 9).

In a 1980 four-way discussion with *zainichi* Korean intellectuals including Takeda Seiji, Kim denounces assimilation and naturalization, linking them to the Japanese state doctrine of exclusive mono-ethnicity (*tan’itsu minzoku*) that was used to justify Japanese colonialism in Asia in the early part of the twentieth century (Kim S. P. et al. 192-94).⁸² Today, the doctrine of mono-ethnicity is, for the most part, still wholeheartedly embraced by the Japanese masses, who may or may not consider that ideologically it continues to sanction notions of Japanese racial superiority, denies difference and endorses the marginalization of Koreans and others in Japan.

The idea that Japan is a mono-ethnic state (*tan’itsu minzoku*) is not just a political creed but is the way most Japanese think.⁸³ The Japanese State simply does not recognize difference... Non-Japanese are regarded as threats to public order or seen negatively or as a security problem. The premise behind naturalization, here in Japan, is to eradicate ethnicity and the ‘Koreanness’ of *zainichi* Koreans. The states’ strategy is to do away with *zainichi* Koreans (Kim,

⁸² Three and four-way discussions amongst intellectuals and cultural artists are very popular in Japanese journalism.

⁸³ For discussions of *Tan’itsu Minzoku* and notions of Japanese homogeneity, see Ross Mouer and Yoshio Sugimoto 97-184, Reishauer and Jansen 33-34, 395-96; Smith 269; Wagatsuma 328-30; Weiner 214; Eisenstadt 136-37; Bachnik 94-95; Henshall xi, 174; Kawasaki 15; Chapman 9, 15, 24, 38, 45, 148.

S. P. et al. 192-94).

Kim's statements shed light on his commitment to what Takeda calls a "Recovery of Koreanness" as a means of resistance to assimilation and a source of self-determining strength for younger generations of *zainichi* Koreans. Kim literally calls on second- and third-generation *zainichi* Koreans to hear the voices and experiences of their first-generation ancestors.

For Kim and other first-generation *zainichi* Korean writers, such as Kim Tal Su and Kim Tae Seng, being Korean is/was both a matter of fact and a source of strength and pride on which one relied in the face of extreme circumstances. Takeda explains that, "For first generation Koreans, Hangul and their ethnicity are physiological, inbred or intrinsic."⁸⁴ Nothing was more patently clear to them than their *being* Korean.⁸⁵ The existential question for *zainichi* Koreans, throughout the first three decades of the post-war era, thus tended to be, 'Why am I *zainichi*?' For Kim, to be *zainichi* was a deficiency and merely signified a departure from his true essence, his 'Korean-ness,' it was just a postponement of his real life and his eventual return to Korea" (*Zainichi* 114, 117). Many Koreans of Kim's generation share the opinion of activist Kim Yu, who said, "We always thought we had to get back home to Korea. Japan was just a lousy place for us. In concrete terms, no matter how wealthy you might have become, until 1965, you were disallowed to build a house in Japan. You saved your money for a golden opportunity to get back to Korea. That was our consciousness (Kim, S. P. et al. 219). One common theme of Kim's literature, and that of other first-generation *zainichi* Korean writers, is a "Recovery of Korean-ness."⁸⁶

An orientation towards Korea and 'Korean-ness' is certainly inscribed in *Karasu no Shi*, in which Kim offers a vision of Korea as an ideal, as 'home' and as a final refuge. Kim juxtaposes a portrait of a mythic Saishūtō with that of an island tainted by colonialism but which remains one's 'home,' the object of one's allegiance and one's

⁸⁴ Hangul refers to the Korean language.

⁸⁵ Kim himself said, "That *zainichi* Koreans are considered a minority group will not do... Formerly, just after liberation, *zainichi* Koreans were not a 'minority' group. We were living proof of independent Korean nationals. But at some point or other the turn towards minoritization engulfed us" (Kim, S. P. et al. 215).

⁸⁶ Tachihara Masaaki (1926-1980) is an exception. He was a first-generation *zainichi* Korean who 'passed' as Japanese and did not write about, or even allude to, *zainichi* Korean issues, except on very rare occasions, causing intellectuals to reject the notion that his literature can be considered '*zainichi* Korean literature.'

ultimate destination. Notably Ki Jun is a ‘returnee’ to Korea from Japan and intends to die there. Though the protagonist in *Karasu no Shi*, Ki Jun, reconciles himself to his post-colonial circumstances and hybrid ‘identity,’ he is certain, “I have a duty to this land, this is the land where I must ultimately die.” Isogai Jiro asserts, “One can not read that line without recognizing the author’s determination to “*become Korean*” (*Shigen* 226).

Takeda takes issue with Kim’s steadfast reliance on ‘Korean-ness’ as a solution, or way of life, for *zainichi* Koreans living in Japan. Takeda claims “Kim’s outlook is too ‘essentialist’ and drives a wedge between post-war *zainichi* society and Japanese society” (*Zainichi* 126). Concerned that Kim is so attached to ethnicity, the homeland (*sokoku*) and the Korean masses that he neglects the problems of younger *zainichi* Koreans, Takeda writes:

“First-generation discourse, such as Kim’s, narrowly views the trend towards assimilation and the loss of ‘Korean-ness’ as an intolerable problem. This perspective forcefully ignores or discards second-generation concerns such as discrimination, subsistence, marginalization, self-determination, family life, and reconciliation (with Japanese society).”⁸⁷ The more Kim’s fiction “revisits the past,” the more Takeda suspects Kim of “avoiding reality” (*Zainichi* 126).

Takeda’s position that “We should look at the questions before us now, or else we will alienate or invalidate the concerns of the next generation” is surely legitimate (*Zainichi* 126). However, Takeda’s concerns seem superfluous, almost ironic, in an era where the voices of second- and third-generation *zainichi* Koreans far outnumber those of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans.⁸⁸ Not only are the numbers and influence of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans in rapid decline, but so few examples of first-generation cultural production exist that they can hardly be said to represent a powerful corrective to that of their younger counterparts. In contemporary Japan, first-generation literature is virtually unknown, unread and, ordinarily, out of print

⁸⁷ Takeda reiterates it in a 1980 conversation with Kim, remonstrating, “First generation Koreans paint ‘Koreanness’ as an ideal and as a model for second-generation Koreans without really thinking about our actual lives” (Kim, S. P. et al. 190).

⁸⁸ This is especially true of intellectuals. Unlike second- and third-generation *zainichi* Koreans, most first-generation *zainichi* Koreans were unable to attain education or unable to develop writing careers.

(Tazaki 2000).⁸⁹ Furthermore, publications by second- and third-generation writers are far more numerous, widely recognized and easily obtainable. While Takeda's appeal for a greater focus on contemporary issues is sound as an autonomous recommendation, it lacks persuasiveness as a critique of either Kim's or first-generation *zainichi* Korean literature, particularly given that 'Recovery of Korean-ness' was a stated mission of their work.

In Chapter three I contend that Kim Sok Pom explores the concept of identity by using the trope of the spy – the individual caught in a web of constantly shifting identifications – to consider what constitutes an established or essentialist identity and what might constitute a new or transformed identity. Kim illustrates how colonialism, massacre and war, which he associates with modernity, initiated a break down of the old established order in Korea, resulting in chaos, moral degradation and ruptures to subjectivity. Indeed, his story reveals how the breakdown of the old order generates identity fragmentation, but Kim is equally intent on showing how it can also offer the individual the possibility of a new beginning. Such revelations point to a readiness in Kim's work to close the distance between the past and present as well as the ideal and the real.

Karasu no Shi is a narrative that effectively articulates the creation of a hybrid identity. It tells the story of how history forced Korean exiles to reinvent themselves or to see themselves as both the 'we' and the 'other'. A Renaissance, in other words, a positive emergence of third world personality from the privations of history, while it may generate identity fragmentation, also may allow for the manifestation of a positive split subjectivity or fluid set of identities. The figure of Ki Jun the spy embodies the complexities of difference and draws specific attention to the minority / in between – *zainichi* Korean – experience. Kim's protagonists develop a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. These markers of hybridity, along with their transgressive qualities, can then be worn with pride. Ki Jun emerges a successful spy, not merely because he has the skills of 'a successful spy' but because he accepts that his own survival and that of a larger cause depend on his adoption of such an identity.

⁸⁹ Graduate students at Kokugakuin University told me they were unable to locate Kim's *Karasu no Shi* in book stores or libraries. It is generally available, however, in large or well-stocked libraries.

Finally, Kim emphasizes the need for adaptation in the complex process of survival. Adaptation and survival is aided and abetted through resolve. Ki Jun's evolution into a comfortable hybrid mode of being points to transformative potential in each of us; we can and often must remake our lives. The spy realizes his own survival because of his willingness to transform his identity. So while Kim demonstrates how the past informs the present he also emphasises the idea that the future cannot be determined by the past; a driving force – agency – is pivotal. To enact survival we need to live by our own principles – this will help the individual tackle adversity. Kim places importance on the role of the human spirit in resolving issues. In the end we have to reconcile ourselves to our choices.

Chapter Four

金石範 Kim Sok Pom

「万特幽霊忌憚」 *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan*

[*The Extraordinary Ghost Story of Mandogi*] (1971)

Kim Sok Pom's 1971 novel *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* is, as its title proclaims, an unusual ghost story, about a sweet but simple blundering temple boy of mixed cultural identity. Nameless and without family, he sees his world crumble around him during the 1949 Cheju Massacre and naively believes that he has become a ghost after his bungled execution. By writing a ghost story about a character with a hybrid cultural identity, Kim explores notions of similarity and difference. The ghost, like the spy, functions as a trope to examine aspects of a lost and confounded interiority. The tropes of the ghost and the spy enable Kim to suggest an alternative to the rigid binary oppositions that characterize monoculturalism. Kim blurs the center-margin distinction – even that of life and death – and champions contingency rather than fixity. Also explored is the continuity with the past and future, as well as the negative effect that a lack of continuity or disruption has on identity, especially for the *diasporic zainichi* community, about which, and to whom, the novel speaks so eloquently.

Mandogi Yūrei Kitan is a “double-coded” narrative. One code – the popular code – caters to a readership interested in a good yarn or story. The second code incorporates literary techniques such as allegory and magical realism that point to a subtext about the historical effects of colonialism and war on Japan's *diasporic* Koreans (Jon Thiem 243-244; Foreman 296). The post-colonial literary critique of *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* that this chapter offers demonstrates how Kim's novel can be read as both an astute study of cultural identity and a critique of twentieth century modernity. In addition, I show that, as with *Karasu no Shi*, it can be read as a search for repressed interiority.

Magical realism, though a ubiquitous category, is one literary mode of writing that Kim uses to address the complex issues of identity as well as tradition and modernity in *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan*. In the telling of Mandogi's ‘ghost story’ Kim offers readers an extraordinary vision of reality – specifically of the Cheju Massacre – that draws

attention to ‘the mysterious relationship between man and his circumstances’ (Leal 122). However, Kim Sok Pom should not be considered a ‘magical realist writer’ as such, since magical realism is used only sporadically in his works, and political and historical issues are more matter-of-fact than in most classical magical realist texts. However, the magical and carnivalesque images that appear in his story, not least the trope of the ghost, suggest his desire at moments to transcend realism. According to renowned Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez, realism is a literary form that offers “too static and exclusive a vision of reality” (qtd in Simpkins 148). Kim applies magical realist devices to his narrative to highlight the inadequacy of realist accounts of the Cheju Massacre, and to effectively convey the surreal quality of life and death on Cheju in the lead-up to the Korean War.

Additionally, a running discourse in *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* draws attention to a Buddhist philosophy, one that sharply critiques colonialism along with vice, and easily lends itself to the magical realist discourse that articulates a nostalgic return to tradition. For Kim Sok Pom draws a clear distinction between tradition and modernity while highlighting the moral dimension of each in order to discredit a dissolute modernity. He juxtaposes the imperialism and corruption of the modern world with the integrity and spiritualism of the previous age and offers the latter as a strategy for maintaining psychological integrity in the face of cumulative catastrophes. Nevertheless, Kim’s narrative also makes the case that to live in the past is to sustain the memory of trauma, which is ultimately unproductive. At this point his sentimental attachment to the past and tradition gives way to a distinctly modern stance – but one that eschews corruption and imperialism. Kim Sok Pom applied Buddhist metaphysics to his novel to illustrate the indomitability of the human spirit. When reading *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* a dialectic between dehumanization and human dignity is clearly observable. Buddhism, unlike ethnicity or culture, is a code that anyone – any where and using any language – can adopt. Buddhism, unlike ethnicity, offers a set of stable and un-ambivalent principles, the observance of which can enrich an individual’s or even a community’s sense of identity.⁹⁰ It is on Buddha and Buddhist principles of charity and compassion that Mandogi comes to rely on, in order to cope with his ‘unreal’ world.

⁹⁰ See Oliver Roy’s discussion of religion and how it can define a community in *People Nation and State* 62.

At the beginning of the novel Mandogi recalls a scene from his early childhood. This scene is crucial to his adult sense of identity since it reminds him that he didn't always possess his current name.

He remembered walking up the mountains holding hands with someone like a mother who called out "*Keton Keton*" (Dog Poo or Poopy) whenever he turned in the wrong direction. These were the only words of hers that he could recall and he remembered sitting on the lap of an old man at the temple, with a very long beard, who patted his head. His mother was at his side saying his name, "Poopy Poopy." In fact this memory is accurate – his mother did bring him to the temple... The child did not have a family name. He had been nameless since birth so he was anonymous. Though he was later given the name Mandogi, it was some time before people stopped calling him by his nickname Poopy (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 3, 10).

In this scene Kim instantly establishes the child as someone of humble birth and questionable identity; but he also reveals that such a background is by no means rare for temple boys.

His being of humble birth wasn't all that unusual. No one paid any attention. There were lots of beggars in those days around Seoul station who became temple boys or *konyanju* so it didn't matter if they had a name or not... No one could be sure of their age or where they were from, or their family... Take Mandogi for instance; even though his life was short no one knew his age for sure. On the execution registry they had it as twenty-four but it was just a guess. He himself did not know. They made this guess during Japan's colonial days when he was forced to work in a chrome mine in the north of Japan (3-5).⁹¹

Because the nameless hero resembles countless other anonymous beggar boys of 'humble birth' at war's end in Korea he immediately assumes the responsibility of representing the Korean masses.⁹² He has the rather unsavory nickname of Poopy and has no knowledge of his genealogy, thus preventing easy ethnic identification. Through the device of memory and the voice of the narrator we learn directly that the hero had been forced to work in a chrome mine in Japan as a young man, which establishes him as a first-generation *zainichi* Korean, at least during his conscription in Japan.⁹³ Indeed, his 'humble birth,' his lack of an authentic name, and the fact that his worth is defined

⁹¹ Cf. Elizabeth Kim's autobiography *Ten Thousand Sorrows* in which she writes, "There was no record of my age, so a birth date was chosen by an official at the orphanage – the month that I entered the orphanage. Someone looked in my teeth and estimated the year of my birth. I have no personal possessions, no family records, no name. I had no identity at all except for what my new American parents chose to give me" (40).

⁹² "She has no name my aunt told the orphanage official. I don't know her birth date or how old she is. She's nobody... It was an old, familiar story in post-war Korean society" (Kim, E. 30).

⁹³ For details about conscription refer to Mitchell 79.

only by his capacity to work all typify the conditions of existence as a *zainichi* Korean of the era.

Upon arriving at the picturesque Kannon Temple the woman relinquishes her loveable if scatterbrained bundle of a boy to a gentle priest. The child has thus been displaced, transferred to a new 'home'. The priest inquires of the young mother how she came to bring her boy to the temple:

The old priest asked who the father was and she said she didn't know but she stammered that a strange man had come and called her to the closet and she just did as she was told. Then she had a baby! And she had cared for the baby, but now she had brought him to the Kannon Temple at Mount Halla to have him raised to be a good human being. She left his small packet of toys and flimsy clothes and, after three days, went back to Japan (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 10-12).

Here then is a far more compelling reason to understand the child as possessing a hybrid identity and being representative of Japan's *diasporic* Korean minority, for it would seem that he is a biracial child – the illegitimate product of a rape. This is no coincidence as *zainichi* Koreans, especially first-generation Koreans, sometimes characterize themselves as the victims or products of Japan's colonial rape and plunder of Korea (Ha). The boy's father's ethnicity is ambiguous, but presumably Japanese. Indeed, the orphan is, on the face of it, a bi-racial child, half-Japanese half-Korean – highly symbolic of the *zainichi* Korean in cultural and linguistic terms.

However, the absence of information about the child's father serves to highlight his ethnic invisibility.⁹⁴ By leaving the issue of his hero's origins unresolved Kim hints at the notion that ethnicity is a social construct.⁹⁵ The father's ambiguous status leaves open the question about how one should construct the racial identity not only of the child but of his family – symbolic of the *zainichi* Korean community at large.⁹⁶ The hero himself has no knowledge of his genealogy, thus preventing easy ethnic identification, nor does he have a bonafide name, which further strengthens his "ethnic invisibility."⁹⁷ By making the protagonist ethnically unidentifiable Kim is able to disclose the distance or emphasize the continuum between 'authentic' Koreans and *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese.

⁹⁴ Refer to Giunta 59.

⁹⁵ See Marcos Fraile's discussion of African-American writer Zora Neale Hurston in Meyer 99.

⁹⁶ Refer to Griffith and Silverman 110. *Zainichi* Koreans are not generally considered bona fide nationals either in Japan or in Korea.

⁹⁷ Refer to Giunta 59.

What identity he may have had as a small child is profoundly altered upon his arrival at the temple, where he receives a new name, Mandogi, meaning ‘consecrated with ten thousand virtues,’ “...an exceedingly peaceful name with the exact opposite meaning to Poopy” (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 13). However, it seems that Mandogi had a third name, Mantoku Ichiro during WWII. The fact that the hero has three names points to the significance of the issue of names for *zainichi* Koreans and hints at (an imposed) identity fragmentation.

To name a person is to ascribe a fixed identity. A primary goal of Kim’s in *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* is to obfuscate the boundaries that normally limit a given identity; in so doing he advocates navigating around dualisms and fixed binaries and he privileges notions of mixed cultural identity. How a name can construct identity through association and labelling is an issue that Kim delves into at length, and he does this so that the reader may extrapolate allegorical insights into the cultural identity of the *zainichi* Korean.

Given that a name is a vital element in the construction of identity and is “...often intended as an index to identity” (Lincoln 209-10), and given that “Names in Japanese novels, like in Victorian novels, are often intended as clues to character,” (Pollack 395) we may consider the significance of the protagonist’s three names. It is not uncommon for *zainichi* Koreans to have three or more names by which to identify themselves and to select a name to use in accordance with a given situation (Fukuoka 27). The vast majority of *zainichi* Koreans, whether naturalized or not, have and use a Japanese name – a *tsūmei* (passing alias). Of those who have been naturalized – the majority – predictably use Japanese names. Those who have not been naturalized may use their Korean names or *honmyō* (real name), the Japanese pronunciation of their Korean names or Japanese names. Some use their Japanese names only when in the company of Japanese. According to Fukuoka, very few ethnic Koreans use their Korean names all or most of the time (28).

The hero’s earliest name, Poopy, is a nickname which, is emblematic of a *tsūmei* – a Japanese alias or a ‘passing’ name, his second name, Mandogi, meaning ‘ten thousand virtues,’ is emblematic of a *honmyō* – a ‘real’ or realized Korean name and his third name, Mantoku Ichiro, is an arbitrary Japanese name selected for him by the Japanese Imperial Army and thus emblematic of a colonial name.

Kim does not conceal his sardonic attitude towards the use of passing Japanese names, which, in the case of 'Poopy,' he arguably likens to faeces! However, in an interesting twist, it turns out that, "The only thing Mandogi had to prove his parents must have loved him was his nickname Poopy" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 5). Kim introduces the Korean custom of using a derogatory nickname, such as Poopy, to fool the 'gods' into thinking the child is worthless; not at all a precious treasure worth spiriting away.⁹⁸ Kim's agenda may involve more than introducing Korean culture; the interpretation that Poopy replicates a Japanese *tsūmei* corresponds here equally well. Indeed, in order to protect their children from discrimination from Japanese, *zainichi* Koreans have commonly given their children Japanese names, and in some cases have purposefully concealed their own Korean ethnicity from their children, thus having the children genuinely believe themselves to be Japanese (Suzuki and Oiwa 5, 177). It is well established that first- and second- generation Koreans faced terrible stigmatization and prejudice when using their ethnic names, especially until the late 1970s (Fukuoka 29). While a variety of factors explain the on-going prevalent use of Japanese names amongst *zainichi* Koreans, many still claim that avoidance of discrimination is the foremost reason (Fukuoka 29). Finally, the reinterpretation of the name Poopy – from a derogatory term of abuse into an affectionate term of tribute – shows the potential for the reinterpretation of any label, including a name, as an act of empowerment. This act commemorates self-determination as a constitutive element in the formation of identity.⁹⁹

Kim very pointedly connects pre-war and post-war issues of name and identity by identifying Mandogi by his colonial name Mantoku Ichiro. In 1939 the Japanese assimilationist policy known as *sōshikaimei* forced 80% of Koreans on the peninsula to adopt Japanese-style names and abandon their Korean names (Ryang *North* 2-3, 11). Kim not only condemns *sōshikaimei* as a pre-war practice, but he implies that it is a precursor for the post-war requirement – albeit tacit – of the Japanese Ministry of

⁹⁸ According to Donald Clark, "The family tries not to tempt fate by bragging too soon about a newborn baby or making the baby seem attractive to predatory spirits. It humorous variation on this theme is to give the child a baby name that will repel spirits, such as "Dog Dung" or "Silly One," at least for the first few weeks" (98). Elizabeth Kim writes, "Names are so important in Korean culture that the family often consults fortune tellers before naming a child. A child's name can shape the future, because it brings good or bad luck" (30).

⁹⁹ Refer to Lincoln 210.

Justice that *zainichi* Koreans naturalize and adopt Japanese names. The unpleasant act of registering one's name with authorities is not vastly different today to how it was during the colonial era. The disdain of the authorities and the discomfiture of the boy are easily identifiable as either a pre- or a post-colonial spectacle. Kim's dramatization of an individual instance of *sōshikaimei* accentuates the perversity of the state-sponsored strategy to force people to surrender their most immediate sign of ethnic identification.¹⁰⁰ Kim's placement of Mandogi at a chrome mine in Japan at the instant he experiences *sōshikaimei* emphasizes the close relationship with the assimilation policy and the exploitation of Koreans as forced laborers.¹⁰¹

This boy with no name who had never been registered anywhere in all his life was asked his name, age, parents and origin but he could not speak Japanese and thus could not answer and was deemed troublesome for the authorities. They wrote Ichiro under the name Mandogi and thus he was registered as Mantoku Ichiro but he insisted that he was Mandogi, not Mantoku Ichiro (5).

Here the trope of the child allows the author to highlight the innocence of people born into minority circumstances, and to critique the imbalance of power in the relationships Mandogi subsequently finds himself in. The scene affirms the link that Mandogi at least sees existing between one's name, ethnicity and identity. Mandogi's guileless response to the Japanese authorities ridicules the colonialist policy and divests it of its supposed power over 'the people.'¹⁰²

With the bestowing of a new name on the story's hero we are reminded of the malleability of identity and the influence of how one perceives the self and how one is perceived or labeled by others. The priest, symbolic of a higher spiritual entity, who also represents Mandogi's parent for all intents and purposes, recognizes the boy's value and names him accordingly – ten thousand virtues. Mandogi is now better able to manifest his ten thousand virtues, or at least his name will convey to others his tenure of virtue, thus affording him more credibility in the world at large and revolutionizing his own self perception. For as Lincoln argues, "A name *is* more than the sum of letters; it is a

¹⁰⁰ Refer to Giunta 59.

¹⁰¹ Refer to Kashiwazaki 19.

¹⁰² In *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margins*, scholar Miyata Setsuko suggests that, "Sōshikaimei was preparation for the full conscription of Korean males as the emperor's soldiers" (3). "Hundreds and thousands of Korean men were taken to mines and construction sites in Japan and elsewhere as labor recruits during the war. From 1939 to December 1944, a total of 634,093 male Koreans were brought to Japan to supplement the labor force...61,409 in metal mining (Kim Yōng-dal qtd in Ryang 6).

statement about identity, and identity... may indeed be a repository of power... “A name to go by” is the symbol by which identity is revealed or projected... Self-perception is ever the grist of social refraction...” (220). The adoption of this name seems to advocate the abandonment of an inappropriate false (Japanese) name and the use of a real (Korean) name and in turn achieve a sense of pride.

Kim seems to be calling for *zainichi* Koreans to use their Korean names and thereby reform their identity – specifically by reforming their own and others’ perception of them – as a means to empower themselves. Paul Gilroy writes about the capacity of an individual identity to modify itself or be redefined. He notes that “the malleability of an individual identity may be cultivated and protected as a source of pleasure, power, danger and wealth” (“*Diaspora*” 311). Kim has illustrated this with this vignette of the boy’s change of name from ‘Poopy’ to ‘ten thousand virtues,’ a name that better defines the virtuous temple boy.

Finally, Kim also links colonial to post-colonial history by referring to Mandogi’s experience of enforced labour in pre- and post-colonial Korea. In Cheju, during the massacre, Mandogi is forced to become a sentry man and carry a gun to guard the temple against communist guerillas. Neither in colonial Japan or post-colonial Korea can Mandogi exercise free will.

When they asked him his job he just stuck to ‘sentry’... The police chief was amazed at Mandogi’s persistence. Actually Mandogi got confused when they told him he was a temple boy. It had never occurred to him that he wasn’t. For him being a temple boy just meant he was human, that he was alive. That was who he was; it was not a job. You couldn’t take it away from him like you could a job. Taking that away from him would be like stripping his flesh and bones away... For him the forced labour in the mine in Japan, until a few years ago when the war ended, and the forced sentry position, were just jobs (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 18-20).

Kim emphasizes that Mandogi is able to separate his identity from his occupation, so that the latter does not define him. Mandogi conceives of himself as a temple boy, not as a miner or sentry-man. His identity is determined by his own frame of mind. Without underrating the negative impact unfair colonial or post-colonial conditions have on an individual Kim refuses to condemn his protagonist, who epitomizes the hybrid *zainichi* Korean, to a burden of shame or to an identity crisis.

Kim also emphasizes that one ought to face up to one’s identity or ethnicity. If Mandogi is a temple boy – a metaphor for Korean, be it ‘authentic’ or *zainichi* Korean –

then ‘being’ a temple boy – being Korean – defines him. It is not arbitrary; one cannot take on or dismiss one’s ethnicity at will. This may be read as an anti-assimilationist stance then, one that condemns the common phenomenon of ‘passing’ – assuming a Japanese alias or identity. Kim conveys that even ‘passing’ cannot alter or conceal the truth of one’s ethnicity or hybridity.

Despite being an ‘anonymous’ temple boy, the product of a rape, a victim of both Japanese colonialism, enforced slavery and the Cheju massacre, Mandogi is at peace with himself. His belief in his interior sense of self and his core or true identity sustains him and he is depicted as akin to the Buddha, whose “very eyes seem to peer through his face” (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 18). Moreover, with the character of the unsightly but lovable temple boy Mandogi, Kim demonstrates that appearances are not everything. In Mandogi’s character we are encouraged to see beyond the superficialities of the outer body and look instead to the enduring aspects of the interior self, which, in Mandogi’s case, is entirely virtuous. This, in fact, explains his innate self-assurance. One of the primary premises in this novel re-emerges here: one’s interior sense of self – one’s core or true identity – need not necessarily be undermined by outside forces, be they momentous tribulations or plain derision. The narrator declares, “the taunts of the others didn’t send even a ripple through Mandogi who was completely satisfied and at peace with his life” (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 16-17).

In Chapter Two Kim turns his attention to describing Mandogi’s home, the Kannon Temple on Mount Halla and closely identifying Mandogi with the landscape. All this serves to suggest that Mount Halla is Mandogi’s natural birthplace and birthright. Kim is intent on portraying the land as a symbol of a bygone era. His purpose is to link Mandogi’s identity or the *zainichi* Korean identity to the land – to Korea proper and to Korean tradition. Kim assigns to the land the power of shaping Mandogi’s identity and his relationship with the world. Kim situates him in his peaceful temple in Cheju and this may be read as a prescription for Koreans in Japan to return ‘home’ to Korea. In 1971, when he wrote the novel Kim, like most of his peers, “aspired to settle in Korea one day” (Kim, S.P. 2001).

Mandogi didn't know where in the entire world his birthplace might be, but it was in fact right there in a valley in Mount Halla... Mount Halla was a beautiful place filled with the songs of scores of birds. Towering pine trees reaching for the blue heavenly sky, canopied the winding road. Mandogi knew every tree. These trees were like friends he'd grown up with... Mount Halla was the most harmonious place Mandogi could imagine; being there was like being a babe in a cradle soothed by its own special rhythm (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 21).

Kim assumes the role of cultural sage by invoking Korean proverbs, fables, myths and superstitions throughout the novel. He is interested in what an older ethnography and tradition of folklore studies might teach the reader while perhaps concurrently critiquing Japanese society, which at the time of writing, tended to ignore Korean culture. According to Korea scholar Lauren Kendall, "Nostalgic studies of folk custom may yet help us to see the hand of the past moving in the present and give us a measure of the manner in which the present differs from the past" (224). The image of the past that Kim provides points to a cohesive and harmonious community connected to a specific locality. Recent scholarship inspired in particular by Benedict Anderson (1983) has established that images play an important role in defining a community's self-understanding and identity. What Anderson terms 'the imagined community' spans past, present and future generations and involves unseen millions. According to Rawdon Wilson, magical realism is inherently interested in community life at a grassroots level (231-32) and images of this are inevitably bound up with both the topography of the locale and the past, however irretrievable that may be. For instance, "Magical realism, unlike the fantastic or the surreal, presumes that the individual requires a bond with the traditions and the faith of the community, that s/he is historically constructed and connected" (Foreman 286). Danow concurs, "Magical realist texts invoke an omnipresent sense of the closeness of the prehistoric past to modern life (71). Throughout Mandogi's extraordinary ghost story we are given a clear sense of the proximity of the primordial past to modern life as in the following passage: "Of course it was the country side and there were no lights or signs of people or houses. The woman trudged along, guided by the light of the stars" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 147).

The idea that Mandogi has a home in the form of the temple sustains him in the face of his misfortunes. It is the image of the temple and its surrounding landscape that defines Mandogi and he draws on it for sustenance. Mount Halla may be interpreted then as a symbol of collective or national identification, much as a national anthem or

flag might and arguably becomes a monument to a primeval past.¹⁰³ By painting a picture of an idyllic 'home' that exists prior to the massacre Kim is able to draw attention to the devastating effects of the massacre. He simultaneously uses the land as a symbol for a collective identity which *zainichi* Koreans can appropriate or recover – if not tangibly, then through the telling of stories – even ghost stories. Kim's nationalism manifests through his grassroots or parochial ties to the land rather than to the state. He portrays Korea as a nation distinct from other nations in cultural, geographical and cosmological terms. For Kim the nation state is not a key determinant of national identity. Tradition and the land constitute the makings of national identity, not state ideology.¹⁰⁴

The good-natured priest of the Kannon Temple is reminiscent of the *ancien regime*. His attire and appearance suggest a more traditional era and while his behaviour may appear slightly suspect, he is benign. His affection for Mandogi – on occasion resembling homoerotic fondness – is warmhearted and nothing he does is reproachable in the eyes of the adoring Mandogi.

The old priest told Mandogi to set the cricket free and wiped the sniffles away from the boy's face. Mandogi then slept peacefully and all the while, the old man's kindness drove his troubles away. The gentle priest, with his long white beard, cuddled the innocent rascal and laughing, would grab a hold of Mandogi's little penis, though it was no bigger than a small red chili pepper (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 22).

The priest cherishes Mandogi and admirably fulfils his duty of looking after the boy. He is a loving father figure and proves to be a source of constant inner strength throughout Mandogi's life. When he dies Mandogi is filled with grief.

As time passes the innocent orphaned Mandogi begins to lose any memories he had of his mother, who in this reading, like the old priest, symbolizes Korea. Mandogi assigns the role of surrogate mother, a symbol for Japan, to the only woman at hand, Seoul Bosatsu (Saint of Seoul), the administrator of the Kannon Temple. At times, Mandogi even believes Seoul Bosatsu is his mother. The mere fact that Seoul Bosatsu is a woman of mothering age is compelling for the needy Mandogi, but it is her smell, so reminiscent of his mother that exercises a spellbinding power over him.

¹⁰³ For a discussion of symbols of collective identification refer to Bhikhu Parekh 69.

¹⁰⁴ An issue that may be taken up in future studies is how Kim's valorization of Korean tradition and culture reinstalls gender bias.

He called her mom...He actually couldn't remember his mother anymore so Seoul Bosatsu's image got incorporated into his memory of his mother. It was as if that aroma of camellia oil had opened a curtain on a childhood memory imprinted on his mind. The fragrance was that of his mother who'd left him holding a piece of black toffee wrapped in a white paper (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 24).

However, Seoul Bosatsu is a sadistic martinet who ceaselessly abuses Mandogi. Her brutal treatment of Mandogi, despite his benign and justified residence at the Kannon Temple, seems to symbolically connote the way Japan treated Koreans throughout the colonial period.

Seoul Bosatsu had a tendency towards sadism and she tied up Mandogi and whipped him with a bamboo rod many times a day. His shrieks were frightful... her bullying was endless... Mandogi would bend over in two and take it like a dog, literally cowering to his master. At last dripping blood on the floor he would groan, "ow ow oooh ow" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 15).

Mandogi in turn becomes the long-suffering and uncomplaining victim of his surrogate mother's cruel and debauched physical and psychological torture.¹⁰⁵ According to David Pollack, typically the mother figure in Japanese literature represents corporeality, ignorance, and profanation, while the father represents spirituality, knowledge, and sacredness – an analysis that tallies with this allegorical interpretation (390). The following passage illustrates the distorted relationship Mandogi has with Seoul Bosatsu and evokes the involuntary nature of the relationship between Japan and conscripted Korean labourers, who could not escape.¹⁰⁶

Mandogi was the most suitable for her outbursts so she chose him to suffer them and he endured her whip... Their relationship became like one between an animal trainer and an animal. Mandogi felt his own powerlessness in the face of it but he could not leave that temple in the valley in the mountain, no matter what the beatings (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 26).

When the insurgency encroaches even as far as the small Kannon Temple Mandogi and the other inhabitants, knowing the temple will be burnt down, are forced to relocate to 'S' Temple. This loss of his home nearly drives Mandogi mad and his grief borders on the pathological condition of melancholy.

¹⁰⁵ The scenes bring to mind the character of Justine from the Marquis de Sade's infamous novel *Justine*. De Sade (Donatien Alphonse François de Sade) (1740-1814) wrote *The Misfortunes of Virtues* in 1787, an early version of *Justine*, which was published in 1791. It describes the misfortunes of a girl who continues to believe in the goodness of God despite evidence to the contrary. The companion novel *Juliette*, published in 1798, narrates the adventures of Justine's sister, Juliette, who chooses to reject the teachings of the church and adopt an amoral hedonist philosophy.

¹⁰⁶ This highlights the fact that many *zainichi* Koreans are stateless – without travel papers – if deemed to be affiliated with the DPRK and unable to leave Japan.

The Kannon Temple was one of the biggest and most important temples on the island and boasted honourable origins. The main building was particularly splendid. But Mandogi wasn't aware of that. When the temple turned to ashes so did his heart; it broke in two. Had he been a fish the temple was a deep rich pond. It was as if his connection to everything had been severed, his umbilical cord cut and he experienced his self splinter for the first time (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 35-36).

At this juncture Seoul Bosatsu decides to abandon Mandogi, not unlike the fleeing Japanese imperial army in 1945 abandoning Korea. Mandogi gets a fleeting glimpse of her taking flight, and, sobbing, chases her down the mountain. Seoul Bosatsu, afraid Mandogi might actually get angry, regroups and bestows a modicum of kindness on him. From this time on she is intermittently sympathetic to him: "She clasped his smelly scabby head full of dandruff, rubbed his nose in her bosom and let him sob" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 32).

This scene illustrates the ambivalence that characterizes the Japan/Korea relationship. Seoul Bosatsu's sporadic compassion ostensibly mimics societal shifts in the Japan-Korea/Japanese-*zainichi* Korean relationship during the post-war decades. During that time *zainichi* Koreans were gradually given more civil liberties, especially after the late 1970s, but they remained collectively disenfranchised in economic and political terms compared to the Japanese.

The assembly arrives at their 'new home' 'S' Temple and Mandogi gazes back longingly at Mount Halla, the place he calls his 'real' or 'former' home. Mandogi's melancholic recollections of home and his profound sense of loss summon for the reader the sensation of how some Koreans in Japan might feel vis-à-vis their lost homeland and the division on the peninsula.¹⁰⁷ This alerts readers again to how Kim privileges the notion that Korea – the land – is 'home.'

What Mandogi represents is the interiorised feeling of lost origins that are constitutive of *zainichi* Korean identity. Mandogi experiences melancholia because his loss can only be overcome with difficulty. In *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud distinguishes between mourning, which is the reaction to a real loss such as the death of a loved one, and melancholia (243-340). Melancholia is a theory of subjection – and points to a certain kind of identity that emerges through prohibition and loss. It can be

¹⁰⁷ One interviewee said she stood on her veranda every night for three years, looking in the direction of Korea, and wept with grief at finding herself in Japan, so far away from 'home' (Jang).

argued that Mandogi is a trope for the repression of Korean identity formed as it was by prohibition and loss.

Since the melancholic does not always know what s/he has lost and is in fact sometimes unaware of having lost anything at all, Freud regards it as a pathological condition resembling depression. He argues that instead of accepting the loss and moving on, the melancholic response is to take the lost object into the ego by identifying with it. Identification names the process whereby, according to Freud, the ego is formed. It involves identifying with others, often as a response to loss. Introjection is a related term that refers to how identification takes place; it is a process where the subject takes objects from the outside world into itself and literally installs them in the ego. In later writings Freud no longer saw melancholia as a pathology, rather the ego becomes a repository of all the desires (such as those involved in Korean identity) that the subject has had to give up.

Judith Butler, in her interpretation of Freud's work, notes how melancholia is taken up by the subject. She believes that it is incorporated or preserved on the surface of the body and appears as "the facticity of the body" (*Bodies* 67). The tension between the material facticity of becoming bodies and the spirit of history is actualised in the figure of the ghost. The *zainichi* Korean cannot mourn for his lost identity because of the lack of a public language and forum with which to mourn, dominated as he or she is by Japanese hegemony. So the loss is turned inward, into the psyche. This is the veiled interiority integral to Kim Sok Pom's work and in particular his portrayal of fictional characters.

Judith Butler argues that melancholia is cultivated by the state and internalised by its citizens who are not aware of an authority that conceals itself. Yet melancholic dispositions cannot simply be terminated. The *zainichi* Korean is already constituted by them; they are part of who s/he is. In other words, melancholia has already initiated the psychic life of the hybrid persona. All is not lost however because the subject has within her or himself the possibility for subversion and agency. Following Homi Bhabha, Butler asserts that aggressive melancholia can be marshalled by killing off the critical agency or superego, thereby turning aggression outwards (*Psychic* 190-91). Moreover, there are forms of melancholia that do not lead to self rebuke. Acknowledging the trace of loss that inaugurates the subject's loss will lead to its psychic survival. Bhabha argues

that melancholia does not have to be a form of passivity, but can be a form of revolt that takes place through repetition and metonymy. Both Butler and Derrida argue that recognising the melancholia that has constituted the self will involve accepting one's otherness, since melancholia is a process in which the other is installed as a constituent of the ego (*Psychic* 195-96). This is what I think Derrida refers to when he speaks of "the wind in the sails" where the wind is an allusion to history, which will always have some influence on an existence but at the same time an existence does not have to be determined by it (Cixous and Derrida 85). Acknowledging the constitutive effects of history means one cannot make claim to an essential identity; this must be given up as a fiction (Butler *Psychic* 197).

Seoul Bosatsu personifies Japan in view of her similarity to, as well as close relationship with, the new priest at 'S' Temple. This new priest styled in the manner of Uncle Sam supercedes the former priest, Mandogi's gentle father figure. The new priest is like an absent landlord, who administers temple matters from an undisclosed location. Personifying the United States, he functions as interim ruler or the allegorical guardian, vis-à-vis the Korean Peninsula – hypothetically benevolent and acting on behalf of the less powerful state, the allegorical child, but ultimately giving little thought to the best interests of his needy charge. Kim's allusions to American imperialism – the emasculation and feminization of the indigenous satellite entities (the mistress in every neighbourhood) – American economic self-interest, and American politicking are self explanatory:

Seoul Bosatsu told Mandogi that there were some things he just didn't understand, that there were issues between male and female priests that Mandogi didn't know about. Actually she and the priest were of the same make up. Though his head was shaved and a priest's cloth covered his body, he was different from the former priest. This vulgar priest had kicked the partisans out of the temple. Since the fighting was getting worse patrons no longer came to the temple so there was no pressing need to look after it. And rumour had it that he was a very energetic priest, with a mistress in every neighborhood. He stayed in each of their homes and came up with some get-rich-quick schemes, such as how to become a politician and the like (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 34).

In the second chapter of the novel Kim delineates the breakdown and destruction of the Kannon Temple and is thus able to allude, not only to the destruction wrought by the massacre on the island, but also to the destruction wrought on the entire Korean Peninsula by the Korean War. The troops have been successful in their endeavour to

wipe out communism, at least in the south, so the scene allegorizes the dénouement of the war. Allusions to the Korean War signify a rendering or a split of the self, which is what Mandogi experiences. To demonstrate all of this in a single chapter is to draw attention to the short time frame of both Japan's colonialist enterprise and the Korean War eventuating in the division of the peninsula and putting an end to Korea's long unified history.

In Chapter Three Kim links a particular tragedy on Son Ne – the suicide of the young daughter-in-law of Mr. O – to the larger tragedy on Cheju and implicitly holds US imperialism responsible. It transpires that the young woman's husband, a simple farmer, had gone to the mountains to join the partisans. A policeman with a "Coleman beard... as long as his passion" had taken a fancy to the young woman (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 46). In desperation Mr. O begged her to save the entire family by appeasing the policeman with sexual favours. Rather than defy her father-in-law she took her own life. For, as Kim writes:

We Koreans take enormous pride in chastity and ethical behaviour and have cherished fine customs from time immemorial but of course the word of the parents, especially the father of the husband took precedence, even over the husband. It was a matter of respect for one's elders. She need only humour the cop. Sleeping with him wouldn't be so bad; there was nothing to lose. She would fulfil her filial duty... This is what the people said. Even the poor Shimu Chong threw herself in the ocean for her blind father¹⁰⁸...The next morning... the mother-in-law found the girl hanging, with her neck twisted, twirling in space (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 46-48).¹⁰⁹

This small familial tragedy epitomizes the larger tragedy that faced Cheju Islanders en masse. By showing the awful detail of just one death Kim takes the event from the realm of the abstract to that of the real. By reducing the cast to just a few individuals Kim shows simply how the massacre affected individuals and families.

She was so good-natured and lovely... and whenever Mandogi showed up she never called him a simpleton or a fool she just said "Goddess of mercy here is the Bodhisattva!" For the likes of Mandogi she was as kind and as beautiful as could be; he was steeped in happiness whenever he found himself beside her (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 44).

Kim highlights Japan's neo-colonial exploits by referring to Seoul Bosatsu's

¹⁰⁸ A legendary figure in Korean folklore.

¹⁰⁹ Korean women have always been taught that losing their chastity was a fate worse than death (D. Clark 175).

disappearance from the Kannon Temple some years earlier only to return three years later, having abandoned her ‘bastard sons in various places,’ arguably allegorizing Japan’s former Asian colonies.

She had five sons each with a different last name. God only knew who and where they were. Formerly, she had worked as an entertainer in Seoul and Pusan so one could only imagine her checkered past. She’d come back to the temple ten years ago dejected and in a mess... but now everyone admires her (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 63).

Seoul Bosatsu returns home, “dejected and in a mess” (not unlike the bombed-out and devastated starving Japan of 1945,) with a cryptic history shrouded in darkness and shame, which she refuses to discuss, all the while admired by her contemporaries because of her economic and financial success. The scene of her departure and subsequent return may not only stand for Japan’s departure from the Korean Peninsula in 1945 but may also serve as a reproach to Japan’s neo-colonial capitalist forays into the Korean market in the post-war era. Japan revisited the peninsula in the guise of weapons manufacturer and a military-base for the US during the Korean War, which effectively started *three* years after the Japanese Imperial Army had left Korea. The scene may even stand for the on-going neo-colonialist relationship that exists between Japan and *zainichi* Koreans who, despite the war’s end, remain victims of discrimination on the Japanese mainland.

The novel’s characters call attention to colonialism and war, as well as to post-war inequities but they also serve another purpose. Kim also aspires to interrogate modernity as it manifests in colonialism, war and the dehumanization of humankind. His investigation of the colonial era, the Cheju Massacre, and the Korean War could be regarded as a broad metaphor for the larger cultural problems associated with imperialism and modernity anywhere. In addition to the loss of language and social customs, imperialism and modernity bring about “the depletion of old moral norms without anything to replace them” (Wedell-Wedellsborg 82). Kim takes particular umbrage at the fragmentation of identity and the associated loss of *morés* generated by colonialism and war, since in the aftermath neither victims nor perpetrators are recognizably human(e). The idea that Japanese and American imperialism bring about a decline in moral standards is suggested by the fate of the ‘S’ Temple. According to *Mandogi*, it had become a gambling den occupied by militia men.

Now it was hardly a temple since more than half of it was being used as office space for the police. In fact they had pushed the statue of Buddha into a corner. They came in wearing their shoes and got the floor dirty. Mandogi was always sweeping and washing it (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 56).

Here the 'S' Temple symbolizes the anti-communist southern half of the peninsula and the militia symbolizes the US, which occupied the south. Seoul Bosatsu, again standing in for Japan instead of protecting the temple, consorts with the militia for her own benefit. Paul Gilroy argues that a breakdown of the 'established order' prefigures the move from a religious society to a secular or dissipated society (318). Accompanying the breakdown of the established order or tradition is a loss of moral and spiritual conduct and certainty – exemplified here in the dissolution of the temple, no longer recognized as such. Kim discredits the much-touted superiority of the modern order by having good and evil, represented respectively by Mandogi and tradition on the one hand, and colonialism and modernity on the other. In fact, *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* progressively generates resistance to what Kim sees as a mindless and soulless modernity. This particular aspect of the novel accords with the view of modernity expressed by Michael Novak in *Concepts of Ethnicity*:

The secular, pragmatic style of modernity has lost its halo and has begun to reveal serious moral flaws... Leaders have begun to look again at the moral sources of their traditional cultures... This examination of roots... the drive toward cultural or national awakening exhibits a strong moral dimension, fed by dissatisfaction with a merely modern morality (33).

Novak's observation fits neatly here as Kim sets up an omnipresent sense of the closeness of the harmonious and peaceful prehistoric past in contrast to a disorderly and violent modern life. In Cheju, the relationship between the primordial past and Buddhist tradition that formerly sustained the balance and harmony of the world has become unhinged. As one villager notes, "The world is crazy right now. We can't live by morals anymore... The whole village is in danger. They'll set fire to the village, you watch, it's a done deed already, they'll set fire to it all right" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 47). When the village is burned, its cosmology is revolutionized. The micro tragedy of the woman's suicide and the macro tragedy of the massacre help put the magnitude of the massacre into perspective. Nothing is as it 'should be' in Cheju as is the norm in a magical realist text, in which, according to Danow, "real reality is starkly unbelievable and unreality is hardly extraordinary" (82). The alteration to reality that takes place on Cheju points to the transformation of reality in the world in the aftermath of the Second World War.

According to John Burt Foster Jr. both magical realist novels and stories told by Holocaust victims are preoccupied with terror and with surmounting its effects. Both share the unspoken premise that the onslaught of unmanageable events is inevitable (270-71).¹¹⁰ The breaking up of the established order on Cheju and the burning of the villages are two such unmanageable events. In Kim's ghost story, with the street as her stage, a woman emerges dancing and gives vent to her experience of the massacre. She offers up, in carnivalesque spirit, a true spectacle of theatre, music and dance, pulling readers into her own amplified reality.¹¹¹ Equally, in true carnivalesque spirit, her chaotic performance transforms into an unexpected bloody carnival.¹¹²

There was a woman who did a fire dance as the Kannon Temple burned down. She was mad... The wolves proceeded to pour gasoline all over her and, just like that, she came down into the village out of the burnt wasteland – dressed in gasoline. She lurched forward, chattering and giggling, “What’s that you say? A wild butterfly died in the summer snow? Oh dearie me, did the temple burn down? ...I’m not crazy. Who is that crow following me? There is always a big black shadow behind me, following me.” The crazy woman howled, teetered about and danced in the smoke filled remains of the village and held on to her pregnant belly. Then an officer assigned to defend the country felled her with one shot (Kim, S. P. *Mandog* 39).

In this passage Kim draws attention to the two opposite poles of sanity and insanity, which Danow claims, “reflect the classic opposition between the forces of life and death that occupy the human soul and prefigure the appearance of the ghosts” (10). Kim, however, has us conceive of them as situated on a continuum. According to Danow, “The carnivalesque allows for one polarity to meet and intermingle with its opposite” (25). The images the woman presents are dualistic: life and death, blessing and curse, praise and abuse, youth and old age, stupidity and wisdom.¹¹³ Here is a woman that is simultaneously sane and insane for insanity is a sane response to trauma; after all she was sane before they burned down her village and killed her family. Paradoxically, her response is realistic and normal. She even laughs and as David Danow emphasizes in *The Spirit of Carnival: Magical Realism & the Grotesque*, “Laughter, as a response to horror and a means for survival, is deeply rooted in the Holocaust literary tradition as it is in the magical realist tradition” (37).

¹¹⁰ The vitality of magical realism, according to John Burt Foster Jr., may be interpreted as a response to the Cold War and the continuous threat of an atomic holocaust (270-71).

¹¹¹ Refer to Danow 3-4.

¹¹² Refer to Danow 20.

¹¹³ See discussion of Yoram Kaniuk's *Adam Resurrected* (1972) in Danow 12.

In Chapter Four Kim enquires into the nature of coercion and exploitation, and demonstrates how it manifests in the ambivalent and, at times, ostensibly sexual colonizer/colonized relationship. Seoul Bosatsu seduces Mandogi in the ensuing scenes using a false pretence, which shows up the unequal relationship between Japan and Korea. In the first scene, her sadist impulses are revealed at the last moment. In the second, she shows her cruelty by making fun of his physical features:

She called Mandogi to massage her waist. She looked extremely peaceful... His finger was sucked up by her body and he began to pray out loud. He felt his loins moving and with a surge he got very stiff and (it) stood out straight. In his mind they rolled as one... Her hands grew... and seized him. Suddenly a concert of cricket cries came from all directions. She gripped him really hard... and the holy water spilled... Then she beat the hell out of him until he bled (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 67-71).

It was widely thought that you could tell a man's penis size from the size of his nose so you could say Seoul Bosatsu was confirming this. In fact Mandogi's sausage shaped nose was justifiably the talk of all the temple girls and he was actually quite popular for it; this was a fact. Seoul Bosatsu took one hand off his penis and moved it to stroke his nose '*Nanmu Amida Buddha, Nanmu Amida Buddha!*' he breathed deeply... As she stroked his nose she said, "My, what an ugly face you have. Your nose and ears are at least thirty centimeters long and your mouth is big enough for two fists to fit in." Then she directed him to 'do it' whereupon he cried out, "I don't want to" and ran away (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 74-77).

Seoul Bosatsu's attempts to force Mandogi to have sex with her hint at the Japanese colonial and post-colonial authoritarian dealings with Korea and *zainichi* Koreans and draws attention to the issue of the comfort women. Just as Mandogi is fooled by Seoul Bosatsu's gentle demeanour and promised that everything will be all right, so the kidnapped comfort women were promised good jobs only to discover that they were to be used for forced sex.

The second scene reminds the reader of the stigmatization of *zainichi* Koreans as ugly, inferior and unworthy of marriage.¹¹⁴ Kim turns the tables on this notion by making the symbol of Mandogi's manhood so large as to be enviable. The comic relief Kim introduces into this passage allows him to break the tension, a tactic he regularly applies in his narratives.

Later Mandogi has a dream where he is prevailed upon by a divine female who castrates him:

¹¹⁴ This is rapidly changing as the majority of young *zainichi* Koreans marry Japanese nationals.

In his dream somebody touched him gently between the legs. To his surprise it was the Buddhist saint from the Kannon Temple... She began to lovingly caress his penis. Then suddenly she yanked it from its source... She tore it out completely. Mandogi took a peek at the black hole where his penis had been. Now his penis came from behind him and... hit him on the back. Each time it came down on him it grew a tail from its thick body and became a many-headed snake and wrapped itself around his body and his neck. No matter what, he could not escape. Mandogi screamed as he was being smothered (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 78-79).

Reading between the lines, the divine entity that castrates Mandogi may signify the 'divine' Emperor of Japan, the nominal head of colonial Korea and, by extension, the Japanese themselves, the 'divine' overseers of the destiny of the Korean masses. This image of a castrating monster flies in the face of the prevailing colonial doctrine, which decreed that the Japanese Emperor was a merciful 'god' and that the Japanese themselves were of 'divine' origin (Peattie 122; Chen 245, 262; Duss 419; Chapman 99).

The scene itself is reminiscent of the Japanese colonial enterprise at large. Colonialism depends on conquest, control, and the imposition of new institutions and ways of thought. "Imperial regimes attempt to destroy or control the cultures of colonized people" (Blauner 150-52). Similarly, exploitation and misuse of an individual's physical body and their sexuality, important symbols of autonomy and integrity, by the person in power may be considered an act of psychic violence. Here Seoul Bosatsu's attempt to sexually defile Mandogi is nothing more than an attempt to dominate and humiliate him. As she is like a mother to him it is also an obscene and unethical act against a vulnerable person. The fact that the boy manages to flee before intercourse takes place serves to suggest just how distasteful and traumatic her actions are.

In Chapter Six one of the most dramatic scenes of the novel ensues when Mr. O is interrogated about his political loyalties. It is an illustration of dehumanization at its worst:

The sound of an M1 being loaded filled the room. It was handed to the old man. Nearing sixty, Mr. O had no familiarity with a modern weapon like the M1... Old Mr. O somehow got his voice back and pleaded with the police, saying, "That's my son. Please understand. I'd rather you shoot me dead. My fifty-six years of life is already too long. I've lived too long." Then he stopped speaking; he looked as though he were about to vomit. Suddenly, like lightening, they

heard the sound of the gun go off... The police turned to see what they thought would be the fallen body of the POW... They saw, instead, the old man toppling over; blood poured out of his open mouth. It gushed all the way to the door. There was so much of it... Time stood still in the room and the reality of what just happened was frozen in time (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 116-28).

As the floor fills up with blood *Mandogi* is mentally transported to an earlier era when he worked in a chrome mine in Japan. Surrounded by death and destruction, it is no coincidence that he recalls this experience at this juncture. The juxtaposition of the two scenes unites Japanese colonialism with American imperialism and South Korean anti-communism demonstrating that the transition from WWII to the Korean War was causal and seamless. Kim overlaps the two scenes as an indictment not only of Japanese imperialism per se but in its causal role of the massacre. In particular, Kim suggests throughout the novel that the perpetrators in the narrative, the Korean police, are former collaborators of the Japanese, which makes their horrific deeds particularly repugnant in view of the fact that the Pacific War had ended and peace should have prevailed. In the short space of a few pages Kim puts the nature of the colonial endeavour of forced labour into sharp relief. He illustrates how young Korean men were picked up for cheap labour, how Korean officials collaborated, how shocked and traumatized the young men were and how terrible the mine in Hokkaido was.

Although his neighbour translated the speech into Korean, *Mandogi* still couldn't understand it at all. He asked about it again and again and in the end the only thing he understood was that he was meant to be surprised! In short he had duties to fulfill as an imperial subject of the state and because of his patriotic zeal, he would be sent to Japan to work right away. What? Go to Japan?... You mean I have to leave Kannon Temple? *Mandogi* simply could not conjure up an image of Japan... He pinched his cheeks to see if it were a dream... When they reached the mine in Hokkaido they were greeted by other Koreans who said, "Welcome to hell" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 131-35).

According to Peter Erspamer, in his research on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, the dehumanization of 'the Other' is one possible terrible consequence of a loss of *morés* (174). This phenomenon is apparent in Cheju where the police, despite their own beastly behaviour, labeled communist suspects 'beasts.' Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, in her discussion of identity crises in the works of Chinese writer Yu Hua, calls attention to how the perpetrators of evil are completely without an inner core: the evildoer can behave destructively only when his own identity has been destroyed (79-81). Similarly the perpetrators of evil in *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* seem to be "mindless or soulless shells motivated by nothing other than the violence of their own

history” (Wedell-Wedellsborg 79-81). Thus one effect of Japanese colonialism and the war, according to some Korean scholarship, is the loss of a way of life characterized by Confucianist *morés* including filial piety, chastity and benevolence (Nahm 108; Moon 48; Chandra 28). Mandogi, by contrast with the evildoers of the novel, has not undergone an identity crisis despite having undergone similar adversity. He manifests as the Buddha incarnate, an emblem of an ideal humanity. In this way he becomes a role model of tolerance and compassion, the primary constituents of Buddhist notions of humanity. He is at peace with himself despite the difficult circumstances. This serenity, more than any other characteristic, defines him. Nothing can tamper with the core identity he has fashioned for himself while living in the temple. This is an identity that is ultimately informed by Korean Buddhist tradition.

In Chapter Eight the ghost of Mandogi is introduced and the reader concludes that Mandogi has died after his arrest and execution and has returned as a ghost:

The rumour about Mandogi’s ghost returning to the temple came at about the same time as the rumour that grandma Yǒng had seen the ghost of Mr. O’s daughter-in-law, who had suicided. The rumours became linked and multiplied, then spread far and wide (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 145).

Luis Leal differentiates magic realist literature from fantastic literature, claiming that, “magical realism does not... distort reality or create imagined worlds, as writers of fantastic literature or science fiction do” (121). Wendy Faris and Gabrielle Foreman make similar claims. Faris, for instance, writes, “magical realism combines realism and the fantastic in such a way that magical elements grow organically out of the reality portrayed” (163).¹¹⁵ In Kim’s ghost story, ghosts are not simply a fantastic figment of Kim’s imagination; rather, they spring from ancient Korean cultural traditions and are portrayed in the novel as commonplace. Indeed Kim writes, “The islanders were well acquainted with charms and incantations to contend with them” as befitting a magic realist novel (*Mandogi* 147). The matter-of-fact relaxed narrative voice reinforces the plausibility of ghosts and is a literary tactic that typifies magic realist narration (Delbaere-Garant 258).

The ghost of Mr. O’s daughter-in-law returned to blame Mrs. Yǒng, the

¹¹⁵ See also Foreman 300.

mother-in-law, for having pressured the young woman to liaise with the policeman.¹¹⁶ Despite three days of prayers, chanting, and sword dancing Mrs. Yǒng failed to pacify the ghost and she, herself, expired. Kim writes, “People thought the appearance of the young daughter’s implacable ghost was strange because on this island it was unheard of that spirits came back with vengeance” (*Mandogi* 150).

A feminist reading might argue that the decorum of women within the established social order is at issue, or that Kim places disproportionate culpability on the female character of Mrs. Yǒng, which destroys her. The scene suggests more than Kim probably intended about the situation of women in Korean culture. It is a scene that amplifies the key issues of cultural hybridity, cultural dislocation and the clash of tradition and modernity. The trope of the ghost is the central focal point linking these issues.

Likewise, the trope of the ghost may be conceived as a link between past and present – and it works to close the distance between the material being of the present and the immateriality or ghosts of the past. Jacques Derrida speaks of a relationship between the corporeal and the spectral, or the present and the not so present in his 1994 book, *Spectres of Marx*. What is in question is which elements are to be counted in constituting any given form of reality. As Derrida states, “The spectre is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit. It becomes... some ‘thing’ that remains difficult to name: neither soul nor body, and both one and the other” (6).

Through his reading of *Hamlet* in *Spectres of Marx* Derrida suggests that ghosts figure as casualties of histories in danger of being forgotten (56-58). In acknowledging these ghosts, by speaking to them and mourning with them, we are able to release ourselves from re-enacting certain compulsions as seen in violent histories of massacre, and are therefore not impelled to continue in this way. Invoking the spectre serves to unsettle notions of the present, forcing the witness to acknowledge that which is repressed or excluded. It is a way to also redress injustices of the past. In this way the present is rendered more comprehensible and more comfortable. Invoking the spectre also helps to shed light on particular schemes of ethics or solutions in how to

¹¹⁶ Married Korean women retain their maiden name, hence the mother-in-law bears the name Yǒng.

incorporate what is good in the process of becoming.

According to Delbaere-Garant, one objective of the magical realist text is to present two otherwise diametrically opposed worlds or opposing realms like animate/inanimate, human/animal or sane/insane as wholly merged or profoundly interconnected (256). Indeed, the very hybrid term ‘magical realist’ itself exemplifies such a merger. In *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* Kim gives assurance of an interface between life and death, realms usually regarded as antagonistic, and thus compels the reader to re-examine their cultural assumptions.¹¹⁷ By definition, the magical realist text invokes a reconsideration of accepted norms. Numerous scholars emphasize the contribution magical realism has made to literary expressions of heterodoxy. Jon Thieme expresses it well, “one of the main advantages of magical realism as a literary mode lies in its extraordinary flexibility, in its capacity to delineate, explore, and transgress boundaries. More than other models, magical realism facilitates the fusion of irreconcilable worlds” (244).¹¹⁸

Mandogi has been to the execution grounds and has emerged transformed. The uncertainty about his identity – as ghost or living human is deliberately confused, which, besides giving the text a magical realist feel, also hints at Mandogi’s cultural hybridity. As Rawdon Wilson, in his discussion of magical realism, points out, “A metamorphosis takes place when something extra-ordinary or inconsistent with an ordinary world experience takes place” (225). The blurred boundaries between human and ghost break conventional rules of logic and hint at the existence of what Wilson Harris has called “some occult dimension” of the past (qtd. in Delbaere-Garant 258). The reader experiences not only an encounter with ghosts but also with primordial beliefs as well as with Kim’s capacity to – even his invitation to – identify with disembodied spirits. Here then, ghosts signify the encounter between self and Other (Delbaere-Garant 258). The confusion also serves to place human and ghost on a continuum of existence rather than in a relationship characterized by dichotomy and as such they arguably allude to a ‘closing of the distance’ between a condition of unbelonging and belonging.

Indeed, the trope of the ghost can be seen as something that both constitutes us as human beings whilst simultaneously illustrating that which constrains us. Freud’s

¹¹⁷ See Delbaere-Garant’s discussion of Janet Frame’s literature 257.

¹¹⁸ See also Burt Foster Jr. 268-69 and Danow 26.

theory of the uncanny may be of use here because it enables us to dwell in the interiorised space of fantasy and introspection. In his essay *Das Unheimliche* [*The Uncanny* (1919) 2003) Freud characterises the “uncanny” as a quality of feeling in response to all that is terrible, all that arouses creeping horror (fearful and frightening). Freud describes the uncanny as, “that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar” (340). It occurs in response to repressed infantile complexes or in reaction to situations where primitive beliefs we have conquered, seem to be confirmed. Freud further explains “uncanny” by using the German word *heimliche* (homely or familiar) in consideration with the word *unheimliche* (the unhomely or unfamiliar). These two terms are not opposed, however, because *heimliche* has other definitions, which shade into apparently opposite significations such as weird, concealed and secret. Thus, linguistically, the *heimliche* can become the *unheimliche*. What was once familiar and home-like becomes weird and strange. For Freud this ambiguity is a constitutive feature of “the special core of feeling” that characterises the uncanny.

According to Amaryll Chanady, “Unlike the traditional fantastic narrative in which the supernatural is portrayed as unacceptable and threatening to the world of reason, magical realism... juxtaposes two worldviews without establishing a hierarchy between them, thus relativizing the dominant Western rational paradigm” (141). Kim insinuates that the two worlds – human and spirit – have coexisted peaceably for centuries. The massacre caused a disturbing shift that in turn causes the supernatural world to seek revenge for the devastation brought about by humans. Ultimately Kim privileges the supernatural spirit world, for there can be no doubt that in this novel human beings are far more terrifying than the ghosts. Ironically, even Mandogi and the ghost of the sweet woman appear frightening because they haunt the perpetrators of the massacre, who are forced to reflect on their dirty deeds:

Hearing of old Mrs. Yǒng’s death the date-beard captain got worried. The very next day he left Shimo Valley and moved temporarily into the police station. Before long his shock turned to dread; he had sprouted a guilty conscience. The young woman had been honorable and her ghost had divulged the truth about him. He began to pray (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 151).

It is not until midway through Chapter Eight that Kim Sok Pom divulges that Mandogi’s execution went awry. He reveals that along with twenty others Mandogi had

been brought to the execution grounds where he faced a firing squad. After the soldiers had shot the prisoners, they piled them on top of one another, leaving them all for dead; only it turned out that Mandogi was still alive! Kim thus disrupts the reader's assumptions about the nature of Mandogi's identity as a ghost.

Mandogi emerged at dawn from under a pile of dead bodies. The bullet was supposed to have hit him but... Mandogi returned to life. In fact the bullet heading for the young priest got a shock upon seeing the monk's humongous nose and went off in another direction, or maybe it was his head lice that saved him; their fear mobilized them into a group and they made him itch so bad he twisted and turned so that the bullet missed and simply grazed his ear. Even though the bullet missed he still fell down because when he heard the deafening noise of the bullets he thought he had died. Lying in the middle of a pile of several bodies he was awakened by some headlights. He couldn't open his eyes and thought, 'soon I'll be dead' and he waited for it to happen because he knew that, if you were shot you were obliged to die... Mandogi crossed the execution field through the mist and traversed along Shinjanno looking for a mountain pass with few or no people... he knew he had to avoid being seen... and he perceived that he had undergone a profound and terrible experience. He had miraculously been brought back to life (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 167-71).

Kim's portrayal of Mandogi as a *living* apparition mirrors the near invisibility of *zainichi* Koreans living in Japan. Mandogi's existence is so altered that he himself believes he has died and newly exists – transformed. His new life simulates that of Koreans in Japan, who to escape death in Cheju were displaced to a 'new life' in metropolitan, Japan. What Kim conveys so successfully is the paradox of Mandogi being simultaneously unchanged and changed, for while Mandogi, in effect, has not really died, people *think* he has – and he thinks so too – hence his entity as a ghost. In other words, people think he is 'different' and treat him suitably and he behaves accordingly. Therefore, the defining feature of his new life is not any specific change to his person or character but rather how people perceive and respond to him and the effect this has on him. Here we might extrapolate from Stuart Hall's discussion of black Caribbean identities and think of *zainichi* Korean identities as 'framed' by two axes or vectors that are simultaneously operative: the vector of similarity and continuity (continuity with the past); and the vector of difference and rupture (the experience of discontinuity) ("Cultural" 53). We might also consider the vectors of life and death. One may not be fully alive unless a valid life can be lived, and conversely not fully dead unless a valid death can be experienced. On the surface, Mandogi has had neither – his circumstances were marred by illegitimacy, forced labour, the massacre and his own

faulty execution.

Mandogi hid himself under the altar in the main temple... well now he had a place to sleep but what was he to do next? Obviously he couldn't join the humans and eat or interact with them... even if he wanted to look into the faces of the people around him they would only see a scary ugly ghost with a distorted face... Back from the dead he felt no more significant than an insect to Seoul Bosatsu and he felt that from the beginning he meant nothing and for the first time he felt lonely. Finally he was all alone in the world, [Poopy] would live as the dead by day and wander the ruins as a worthless ogre of the temple by night (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 175).

The trope of the ghost conveys the duality and crisis of cultural and psychic identity characteristic of second-generation *zainichi* Koreans of Kim's generation. For what is a ghost but an invisible, illegitimate scary reminder of the past, an entity from hell to be avoided – something inferior to a living human. The trope of the ghost, then, may be read as a metaphor for how the *zainichi* Korean is understood by the Japanese. Extrapolating from Avtar Brah's discussion of the colonial subject, one can argue that the term 'Japanese' assumes a position of superiority with respect to the term 'Korean'. This discourse remains a primary feature of racialised conceptions of Japanese-ness and Korean-ness. Former colonial subjects can be 'in' Japan but not 'of' Japan. What is at stake here is the way in which the Korean subject position is constructed and represented as 'other'.¹¹⁹ One could extrapolate even further and substitute the words Japanese and Korean for human and ghost and the analogy becomes unmistakable. Brah uses similar language in his discussion of the undocumented worker: "...forced to go underground, rendered invisible, cast as a phantom, an absent presence" (201). According to Fukuoka Yasunari, "The Korean minority has been an invisible presence in Japanese society... (they) are still thought of as non-Japanese and subject to avoidance behavior" (247). Nakano concurs, "Usually, [Koreans] are isolated from mainstream social activities even in areas like Osaka, where we find the largest Korean community in Japan" (58).

Fukuoka laments that, "Many ethnic Koreans feel obliged to conceal their identity... throughout their lives" (xxxvii). The poet Rose Romano points to a similar phenomenon in the US, where "Italian Americans can assimilate into the mainstream, because they can 'hide,' by camouflaging – or even rejecting – their ethnic identity, but at the cost of losing cultural identity and internalizing self-hatred" (35). Edvige Giunta

¹¹⁹ Refer to Brah 191.

emphasises, “The force of acculturation in the United States pressures... ethnically and culturally marginalized groups to learn to speak the language of the dominant, Anglo-centric culture, to adhere to its aesthetics, even to mold their art within its parameters...the culture of descent... is reduced to a ghost culture in the new country” (49). In his ghost story Kim Sok Pom surreptitiously opposes assimilation and passing and encourages *zainichi* Koreans to acknowledge their Korean ethnicity, a position which should not paint their status as ‘Other,’ or ‘inferior.’

Kim is not being ethno-centric as he recognizes the inevitability of hybridity among *diasporic* Koreans, and he also challenges the reader to counter and resist traditional notions of identity defined by rooted-ness, stasis, and fixity. The reader is encouraged to locate other aspects of identity, which he deems more important than ethnicity or its common cohort of cultural hybridity – such as fluidity and flexibility of cultural values. Inviting a new conceptualization of ‘the Other,’ he suggests we see Mandogi’s ‘identity’ as reaching beyond the experience of being Korean or hybrid, or as temple boy or ghost. Antonio Benitez-Rojo argues that one of postmodernism’s major contributions to sociocultural analysis is to provide a ‘lens’ through which one can think about identity in a new light. Such a lens “has the virtue of being (able) to direct us toward the play of paradoxes and eccentricities, of fluxes and displacements... that is, toward the simultaneous play of order and disorder, coherence and incoherence” (271). According to Benitez-Rojo, societal forces make us question who we are while also forcing us to embrace attitudes and ideas that are alien to us. The recovery of the past is part of the process of constructing identity which is taking place at this moment in time and which, it appears, is characterized by conflict, contestation and possible crisis (qtd in Woodward “Concepts” 11). Kim offers a new lens by which to see Mandogi. Rather than being mistaken for a scary ugly ghost, he invites the reader to see Mandogi’s core identity, how he really is: compassionate, decent, humane and beautiful.

The trope of the ghost serves another function for Kim Sok Pom. It is as much a metaphor for the communists as it is for ethnic Koreans living in Japan. As Mandogi lies down in his hiding place he contemplates his new ‘ghost’ identity and he recalls a pleasant incident that took place during his childhood at the Kannon Temple:

The light of Buddha was shining... one day when Mandogi was a boy. Some partisans appeared on horses carrying lanterns... They used to come to the

Kannon Temple and often played with him... Of course nowadays the partisans in this country couldn't be seen in the village during the day. They were just like him! They were attached to the world of the night... and it occurred to Mandogi that maybe this meant the partisans were ghosts! A warm feeling rushed against his chest from inside... He realized, 'that must be what it feels like to belong to a group'. The feeling spread and spread and intensified until he felt it swell into an impenetrable sensation (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 175-77).

Another comparison with Holocaust literature may be drawn here; "In Aharon Appelfeld's works, the Jew appears a peculiar figure strange and estranged, an anomaly... the eternal unenviable outsider who participates only marginally in the physical aspect of life" (Danow 109). Whereas in Kim's novel, it is the communist who appears as such.

The trope of the ghost also acts as a metaphor for another era, a time of peace and harmony, symbolized here by the landscape. The unity articulated in the passage in turn acts as a metaphor for national unity, and a sense of community. Mandogi feels nostalgia for that unity but he also seeks comradeship. The political ideology the partisans fight for holds little significance for him – except to the extent they wish to drive out 'the foreigners.' It is the return to the past and the camaraderie this offers that he covets. The left is symbolized here as embodying camaraderie while the right embodies partition.

In the early post-war period most *zainichi* Koreans were too busy struggling to survive to engage in political pursuits and were aligned with one side of the divide or another often only on an emotional or nominal level. Some Koreans in Japan were educated in North Korean sponsored schools and thus indoctrinated into *Juche* and North Korean political ideology, but many were not. Still the majority of *zainichi* Koreans claimed allegiance to the North. While many were inspired by socialist ideology others leaned leftwards because a pro-North stance offered a sense of belonging. Indeed, the DPRK offered a homeland and an organized platform from which to contest discrimination. Materially the DPRK provided substantially for *zainichi* Koreans until such time as the regime started going bankrupt. Communally it proffered countless organizational ties to bind *zainichi* Koreans together. Nominally and practically it offered a homeland. Most importantly, the DPRK provided a sense of solidarity for ethnic Koreans exiled in Japan. In interviews with *zainichi* Koreans they talked of their early post-war support for the DPRK in terms of an idealization of

solidarity not in terms of specific communist political platforms. In any case, the ROK was considered the worse of two military dictatorships. Likewise, Mandogi shows emotional allegiance to the North. In this way he truly epitomizes the *diasporic* Korean masses in early post-war Japan.¹²⁰

In Chapter Nine Seoul Bosatsu and a number of police officers gather at S Temple to exorcise the ghosts of Mandogi and the young woman, who had committed suicide. The decision to rid the temple of the two ghosts draws attention to Japanese official avoidance of responsibility for the country's violent colonial history. The Japanese government's divestment of culpability and responsibility towards both *zainichi* Koreans as well as comfort women is markedly discernible in such a decision.

News arrives that Shimo village has been set alight and the police and Seoul Bosatsu dash off to the village, leaving the temple and Mandogi behind. It is at this juncture that Mandogi hits upon the idea of burning down the temple and the idea, like a spark, intensifies until it is a full-blown resolution.

Mandogi finally crawled out from under the altar... he wiped away his sweat but the thoughts in his head weren't so easily extinguished and they multiplied and penetrated the soft inner core of his head, like a big nail, and he felt them escalate... Mandogi decided to burn down the temple (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 186).

Filled with trepidation Mandogi makes his way up Mount Halla to seek guidance from the spirit of the beloved priest to whom he was entrusted as a toddler.

"Oh Virtuous old Priest"... Mandogi called out to his former priest the old gentle soul with the long beard, "I am all alone and I am so lonely because you are not here... What should I do? Please tell me... Please old priest, give me power... Soon, from the heavens above the pine forest, came the voice of the old priest who said slowly into Mandogi's earlobe "I am in your heart." Then again, "I am in your heart with Buddha" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 191).

The priest confirms that the temple, the home that had united Mandogi and the Buddha, is no longer necessary as a tangible or material bond connecting Mandogi to his worship of, or relationship with, Buddha. Essentially the message for Mandogi, or the *zainichi* Korean, is that the loss of a home does not necessarily lead to identity

¹²⁰ Throughout the early post-war decades *zainichi* Koreans were touted as third-party observers, immune from domestic propaganda of either the North or the South and able to make evenhanded evaluations of the North and South by both sides of the peninsula – hence their pro-North show of hands was prized by the North.

fragmentation and that Mandogi can maintain his sense of internal integrity and serenity as long as he keeps the memory of his home in his heart. Home is associated with the inner self rather than with a geography of place. In essence his core identity can withstand the absence of material sustenance; it can thrive of its own accord.

For Kim, the question of the meaning of life that comes to him in the midst of the massacre is about taking responsibility for one's convictions and beliefs. Buddhist philosophy maintains that one comes to enlightenment by one's own actions tested under battle (Pollack 395). Mandogi has been tested spiritually and has triumphed. Here a key aspect of the plot – the alienation of man from his religious beliefs as a result of trauma and violence and the ensuing character disintegration, itself a reflection of that alienation – emerges. The authorities, or 'wolves,' epitomize this phenomenon, as do the majority of their victims. Conversely, Mandogi is still connected to his spiritual principles, if only in his heart, despite the massive upheaval he has endured. He has thus remained spiritually sound throughout – even able to exact some form of retribution, "Mandogi took a deep breath in the frosty night and had to sigh. He thought, 'If I don't burn the temple the wolves will!'" (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 187).

Mandogi Yūrei Kitan may be called a Buddhist novel in that it is a record of an acolyte's progress towards the eventual achievement of spiritual enlightenment. In this sense it is similar to Yukio Mishima's well-known 1956 novel *Kinkakuji*, a tragic story of an acolyte who burns down Kinkakuji Temple. The similarities stop there because unlike Kim's protagonist, Mishima's protagonist, Mizoguchi, is an insecure megalomaniac, whose act of burning down the temple is prompted by his anxiety about the impermanence of beauty represented by the temple. Unlike Mizoguchi, Mandogi is neither insane nor anti-social. It is not neurosis that compels him to burn down the temple, but the will to preserve the integrity of what the temple stands for. It is not a question of psychological alienation but of salvation. Mandogi sets the temple alight in a philanthropic gesture – as an act of deliverance for both the principle deity in the main altar of the temple and all that it symbolizes.

Mandogi Yūrei Kitan may be called a Buddhist novel for other reasons as well. The Buddhist injunction 'when ye meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha' proves an oracle; it is the teaching that salvation must be found within as distinct from without the self, and that it involves the letting go of material possessions (Pollack 395). Mandogi has

demonstrably accomplished this with this act of burning down even the central religious icon. Mandogi is able to renounce the temple because he has the wisdom to internalize what it stands for, which indicates that he has achieved enlightenment:

Then he put his hands together for a prayer and took a match and he heard snuffles come from his nose and his eyes filled with tears. The fire lit up a path like a living being and the altar started to burn. The Buddha smiled down on him in the flickering light. Mandogi was not afraid he looked up in wondrous awe at the flames and smiled. Mandogi told himself "Buddha is inside me." The flames flew to the four corners and jumped to the ceilings. Soon enough he started breathing in smoke and with a backward glance at the altar he ran from the building (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 199).

At this point, however, Mandogi hears his name being called out and he remembers Seoul Bosatsu, the woman that he has mistaken for his mother. The profundity of Mandogi's emotional attachment to his mother, but also to 'his father' (represented by the old priest), is palpable. The union of the two voices points to a potential union of or reconciliation between Japan, in the character of Seoul Bosatsu, and Korea, in the character of the priest; it would seem from this passage that the *zainichi* Korean, exemplified by Mandogi, is in a special position to facilitate such a reunion – after all Mandogi saves Seoul Bosatsu thereby reversing the parent-child relationship.¹²¹ Mandogi demonstrates the parental qualities of compassion, mercy, rescue and deliverance.

As Mandogi flees the conflagration with Seoul Bosatsu across his shoulders, carnal lust, linked with visions of fire and flame, pervades him.

Behind his tears Mandogi smiled and with the noise of the explosion of flames he became hard. The bigger the flames got the more his innocent pleasure boiled up... like a whirlpool... He closed his eyes and felt her hands coming to his penis; no it was the hands of the Kannon Saint, who grasped it really tightly. Mandogi felt a limitless explosive power rising all through his being and his body felt light like he could float away and he tried to fly high with her. It was a mysterious power that rose up in his body ...He left the burning temple and could see light on the night road. He opened his eyes and her hand had disappeared from his penis (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 202).

The sexual ecstasy that Mandogi experiences here, unlike earlier in the novel, is Buddhist in essence – characterized by unthinking feeling, and suggestive of universal unity, or of undifferentiated knowing – of pure 'being,' rather than characterized by a

¹²¹ Refer to Erspamer 179.

longing for or dependence on Seoul Bosatsu.¹²² Mandogi has liberated himself from her hold over him.

“The Buddha is in your heart.” Presently the voice of heaven could be heard atop the red flames that engulfed the area. The temple was immersed in flames. Mandogi left the temple there in the midst of the flames and Seoul Bosatsu on the roadside, with her comb. He walked stealthily away in the opposite direction. Before long he was in the middle of the forest (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 204).

The transformation Mandogi has undergone results in a sense of newfound independence. His is now a self-determining identity. He both relinquishes his reliance on his mother and on Seoul Bosatsu. He has spiritually and emotionally liberated himself from a childlike dependence on his ‘mother,’ for the comb had always functioned as a precious reminder of his mother. To relinquish the comb then is to break free also from his ego. The comb also represented his attachment to Seoul Bosatsu, his surrogate mother (Japan for the *zainichi* Korean). According to John Wallace, “Betrayal is perhaps the human act most centrally tied to both submission and subjugation” (197). Mandogi’s ability to relinquish his attachment to her suggests that he will no longer be victim to Seoul Bosatsu’s betrayal and will not succumb to submission or subjugation.

Buddhism also teaches that there is no escape from life, not even in death (Swann 414). In fact Mandogi, in the form of a ghost, is very much alive and well. Mandogi cannot return to his old life; scarred and burned he emerges like the phoenix – a symbol of destruction, re-creation and eternity – to start a new life as a ghost. According to Swann:

In Buddhism the self-nature of the unified whole is a void, an emptiness or embodiment without parts... a unified whole can be integrated into the formless cosmic energy of the universe... In the concept of *muju* (nothingness), things have no independent nature of their own and so have no real existence as separate entities. The center void of their self-nature is one with the formless essence of the universe. The same is true of illumination (414).

Mandogi, manifest as a ghost, has reached total illumination at last. He is empty of thought and action, free of self and desire, and content. The ghost that he has become essentially epitomizes a more unified self or identity than even that of the living human being that he had been, for he has spiritually achieved a more unified state. Death in this context – transformation from living human to ghost – marks an idealistic and dramatic union on a higher plane implying transcendence of a corrupt social order (Wallace 186).

¹²² Refer to Wallace 181-99.

Mandogi Yūrei Kitan offers both a microcosmic and a macrocosmic view of the Cheju Massacre and draws attention to the disintegration of Korean society. At the macrocosmic level it is a meditation on the advent of modernity – one that asks how modernity presents itself in the obliteration of morés and long-held cultural traditions as well as in identity crises. Modernity in philosophical writings by Weber, Heidegger and Nietzsche is, by and large depicted as an experience of loss – a disenchantment with the everyday world, the breakdown of religious convictions and values, the loss of all forms of authority other than bureaucratic (Owen 90). With his famous formulation ‘God is dead’ Nietzsche points to a massive, traumatic event of modern times; it is a metaphor for civilizational failure and emphasizes that the possibility of proceeding as we had before has come to an end, as has the belief in divinity and eternity (126).

Similarly, Kim characterizes modernity as a manifestation of colonialism, massacre, displacement and war and he too sees it as giving rise to disenchantment. However, unlike Nietzsche, who, in simple terms, recommends coming to terms with the ‘godless’ modernity, Kim turns to the ethical beliefs and social morés of the past and thereby attempts to close the distance between the past and present. His protagonist, Mandogi, because of his embrace of tradition can be understood as providing the counterfoil to the modernizing influence.¹²³ Kim, in this regard, is not dissimilar to other disenfranchised, marginalized peoples who look to their roots to find strategies to cope with their feelings of displacement. Michael Novak points to this as at least one trend in writing:

The secular, pragmatic style of modernization has lost its halo and has begun to reveal serious moral flaws... Leaders have begun to look again at the moral sources of their traditional cultures... This examination of “roots”... the drive toward cultural or national awakening exhibits a strong moral dimension, fed by dissatisfaction with a merely modern morality (33).

It is a trend that is common to magical realist writers. John Burt Forster Jr. observes that, “the magical realists characteristically responded to the harshness of modern history by developing a compensatory vision. They sought to create in their art a ‘peace and tranquility’ that had been destroyed by events” (10).¹²⁴ Danow also draws

¹²³ Refer to Hoadley 120.

¹²⁴ Elsewhere Burt Forster Jr. claims that, “This aim closely mirrors Carl Jung’s doctrine of the collective

attention to how magical realism manages to present a view of life that exudes a sense of energy and vitality, even hope. The world, in magical realist terms, promises joy as much as it promises misery (59-67). He iterates, “A hallmark of Latin American magical realism is its presentation... of felicitous possibility” (92). I argue then that Kim’s dominant compensatory vision aligns *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* with other magical realist texts. It is his contention that a spiritual truth can be found, in spite of and in contrast to current corrupt social values. The resolution to the problem of grief and melancholy then, for Kim’s Mandogi, rests in his spirit, endowed with serenity. Rather than capitulate to the notion that God or the Buddha is dead Kim points instead to the idea that Buddha acts as a confirmation of life, if only in one’s interior, writing, “Amongst the faithful in these spurious troubled times all there was to do was cling to Buddha” (*Mandogi* 39).

Ultimately, *Mandogi Yūrei Kitan* is a story about the convergence of life and death or the closing of the distance between life and death. What is at stake in the story is nothing less than the survival of humanity. The inhumane circumstances in which the victims of the Cheju Insurgency died place the survival of humanity in question. Mandogi – exemplar of humanity, both in terms of his charitable heart and the way he identifies with all who died on the killing fields of Cheju – believes his own ghost story to be true. He concedes that he is a ghost, assumes this identity and then proceeds to wander the earth forever more as such. Ultimately Mandogi’s survival – whether as human being or ghost – suggests that both the survivors of the massacre and the dead are equally legitimate entities who can never be wholly exterminated. Indeed, the dead do survive as ghosts in stories such as Kim’s. Using the combined power of love and poetic language Kim has brought them back to life.¹²⁵ By documenting the massacre in such poetic terms Kim has ensured that the reality of what happened is frozen in time. The ‘dead victims’ surreal survival, at the end of the day, legitimates their humanity and affords some hope that the survivors will be able to aspire towards a new humanity.

Mandogi stands out against his adversaries simply because Kim upholds him as an exemplar of human decency. Yet this is a trait the author seems to recognize as

unconscious, which works through artists and other spiritual leaders... in an effort to heal... ‘its psychic ailment’ (271).

¹²⁵ Refer to Delbaere-Garant 259.

inherent in every soul, one that is viable despite all odds. Though Mandogi's experiences exemplify misfortune in the extreme, his unwavering humanity and his moral integrity allow him to triumph – at least spiritually. Mandogi's essential humanity can be seen in his virtue, not in his status, wealth, popularity or even political affiliation.

Given the nature of the story, it would seem that Kim intended Mandogi to epitomize the ideal *zainichi* Korean. Danow emphasizes that the principle goal of Holocaust literature is to bear witness to a world gone mad so that no one ever need bear such witness again, for, "If torture and murder are condoned, it is but a short step to mass extermination" (100). Similarly, Theodor Adorno remarks that, "Auschwitz has provided humankind with a new categorical imperative: For us to so conduct ourselves that the events of Auschwitz are never repeated" (qtd. in Erspamer 173). It would seem that Kim aspires to convey a similar message by reference to another ethnic massacre that occurred on the other side of the world, and one which the world has largely remained ignorant of. It is significant that at the end of the novel Kim writes:

Mandogi whose name was not printed in *The Book of Yama* (book in which names of dead are inscribed in Korea) and who did not have a registry (*koseki*) in the young republic of Korea at least had a name as a ghost and his ghost story was stored away as a treasure and whenever it is told his ghost materializes and wanders around the land...Finally the people called it 'An Extraordinary Ghost Story' and even named it 'The extraordinary ghost story of Mandogi' (Kim, S. P. *Mandogi* 213).

It may be that Kim is saying that until the ghosts of the Cheju Massacre are assuaged and pacified by admittance into Korea's, Japan's and America's annals of history as well as some form of contrition on Japan's part there will be no termination of their advent in our minds and hearts.

Chapter Five

李恢成 Lee Hoe Sung

「砧を打つ女」 *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* [*The Cloth Fuller*] (1971)¹²⁶

Kim Sok Pom's writings are replete with the search for interiority. His subjects are individuals whose conscious access to an authentic self is repressed by necessities occasioned by socio-political and historical realities. Conversely, the subject in Lee Hoe Sung is drawn from narratives that tell of private individual destiny as an allegory of the embattled situation of public culture and society. In a 1973 interview Lee Hoe Sung explained what might be termed the meta-narrative of his early fiction saying, "I wanted to examine the *zainichi* Korean family in my literature... from a second-generation *zainichi* Korean point of view. Indeed family problems, specific to *zainichi* Koreans, have more than likely been experienced by all of us... This has been our common fate" (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 16).¹²⁷ This ambition would ultimately give rise to a life-long career in writing which would earn Lee Hoe Sung recognition as both an exceptional literary figure and as a political spokesperson for *zainichi* Koreans living in Japan. Broadly speaking, Lee's early works of fiction tell the story of *zainichi* Korean family life between the 1940s and 1960s, and in so doing illustrate his progression from a stance of 'imperial fascism' to a utopian vision of 'post-war democracy,' to an espousal of Korean nationalism. The progression is described also as one from being Japanese to being half-Japanese and half-Korean to becoming Korean (Takeda *Zainichi* 32, 38, 97).

These narratives of family life do not explain the whole movement of history

¹²⁶ A *kinuta* is an ironing stone upon which clothes were placed and packed down with a wooden paddle. Traditionally clothes were washed and 'ironed' in this way at the river. The sight of women fulling cloth and the forceful sounds of the rhythmic drumming, in varied configurations, is astonishing and thrilling for a first time viewer. A translation of the novel by Beverly Nelson can be found in *Black Crane: An Anthology of Korean Literature*, ed. David R. McCann, Cornell University, East Asia Papers no. 14 (Ithaca, N.Y.: China-Japan Program, Cornell Univ., 1977). However, the translations from the text in this chapter are mine. Dr. Nelson translated the title of Lee's novella as *The Woman Who Ironed Clothes* whereas I prefer *The Cloth Fuller*.

¹²⁷ 李恢成 Ri Kai Sei is the standard rendering in Japanese. Linguistic rules governing the romanization of the Korean alphabet differ according to South Korean and North Korean convention, thus the name 李, if South Korean, is transcribed as Yi or I (pronounced as the i in ink), if North Korean, as Ri. However, I use Lee because this is the transcription indicated in the copyright pages of his novels. For this reason I chose to transcribe his father's name as Lee also, though Ri would be more technically correct according to scholarly convention, given that his father hailed from the north. Lee Hoe Sung is pronounced Lee Hoay (similar to Fay) Sung.

and social life or nationhood as a single interconnected totality or as ‘grand narratives’ (Rojek and Turner 10, 16, 45, 54) yet are instead ‘little narratives’ of personal suffering and redemption. Phillips notes how ‘little narratives’ are history marked by “the gradual erosion of the positivist model of man ... and the struggle to replace it with a model that more adequately reflects what we humans take to be the nature of ourselves as thinking, feeling, and sometimes rational creatures” (17).

Scholars in many fields have suggested that the study of individual lives – ‘little narratives’ – over time is indispensable for social inquiry (Cremin 1988; Gardner 1994). In psychology, life history has often been part of the study of personality development over time (Erikson 1950) and in sociology individual life histories have been woven into community mosaics (White 1952; Becker 1970; Terkel 1972; Goodson 2001). Such biographical work encompasses C. Wright Mills's contention that “man is a social and an historical actor who must be understood, if at all, in close and intricate interplay with social and historical structures” (158). Ruth Wajnryb uses the metaphor of deconstructing a *painting* as a way of describing the process of gleaning this sort of inherited knowledge from family and acquaintances. She calls the end or summation of her research into second generation holocaust survivors “broad strokes on an emotional landscape, unpeeling the layers, recognizing the shapes and hues” (311). She states that she did not imagine “anything as complex as the organised patterning of tributaries that would emerge – for this is how I see it now, rather as an aerial view of a complex *waterway*” (314).

The examination of the relationship between the personal and the political can be viewed in terms of historiography. I begin this chapter with a brief introduction to Lee Hoe Sung's childhood and early adulthood, detailing those events, so as to provide an explanation for the historical and political dimensions of his early literary works. This is followed by a sketch of the evolution of his personal and political concerns, as they unfold thematically in the novels *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* and *Kayako no Tameni*.

Lee Hoe Sung was born in 1935 in Karafuto, a Japanese colonial outpost of Siberia. It was then called Karafuto and is now referred to by its Russian name, Sakhalin. Lee visited Korea for the first time when he was five. His mother took him to her hometown,

the village of Maoka, now Hormosk, for one month.¹²⁸ During the Pacific War Lee received ‘an Emperor centered imperial education’ at his primary school in Karafuto (Lee and Kaga 15). Sadly, when Lee was nine, his mother died, a loss from which he and others claim he has yet to fully recover (Lee, H. S. 2002).¹²⁹ Within a year his father had remarried a twenty-four year old Korean woman from Sakhalin whom the children resented and disliked. She initially appears in his novels in the form of unfriendly characters, although in later novels Lee portrays her with more objectivity and warmth. In 1945, when the war ended, the Soviet army landed on Karafuto and Lee’s childhood was transformed for “Lee abruptly learned that he was not Japanese, rather, he was Korean!” (Hayashi *Kozarushū* 14). The incoming Russian army was initially ignorant of the plight of the Koreans in Sakhalin who were ‘Japanese nationals’. Many had been sent there forcibly, some as many as thirty years earlier and could speak only Japanese. Unfortunately upon liberation, many of these Koreans were mistaken for Japanese spies and arrested (Morris-Suzuki 106).

I don’t know where I heard it but people were saying that if you meet up with a Soviet soldier be sure to tell him you are Korean... so when I saw them I’d say, “*Kareski Kareski*,” which means ‘Korean’ in Russian. That was odd for me. I think I understood then that I wasn’t just a foreigner. I was Korean (Ito, Hamid and Lee 348).

Until the war’s end Lee’s father was the vice president of the local *Kyōwakai*, [The Harmony Association], a Japanese colonialist association that enforced the assimilation of colonial subjects (Horiguchi). Chapman contends it was “a paramilitary organization, staffed by Japanese officials with Koreans in subordinate roles” (23). Upon Japan’s surrender Lee’s father was called to the home of the Japanese leader of the *Jikeidan*, the *Kyōwakai*’s vigilance committee, and was directed to commit suicide by *seppuku* to atone for Japan’s loss of face in defeat.¹³⁰ He managed to escape, and since the Japanese themselves had to leave Sakhalin as the Russians advanced, he was saved. In 1947, when Lee was twelve, Lee’s father paid a bribe of sake to a Soviet

128真岡町 Maoka. Lee’s father: 李鳳爰 Lee Bon Sop was from 黄海北道 Fanhe Pukkto (Kokai Hokudo) in the north of Korea and his mother Jang Suri 張述伊 from 慶尚北道 Kyonsang Pukkto (Keisho Hokudo) in the Yongil district in the south of Korea. They met and married in Japan and left for Karafuto in the 1930s (Kitada 288).

129 For details of Lee’s mother’s death see Kitada 286.

¹³⁰ Seppuku is a traditional Japanese suicide ritual in which one cuts open one’s belly with three cuts in the shape of a triangle. Often a second person will then cut off the victim’s head.

official to obtain fake Japanese passports for himself, his second wife, and his four children. The family escaped to Japan hoping that this would enable them to get back to Korea, despite the inherent dangers. However, because only Japanese nationals were able to enter Japan they had to pretend to be Japanese as they were departing Sakhalin. Given that the Japanese were the enemy of the Russian forces, this was an extremely risky move. Lee's family left behind his (biological) maternal grandparents, his stepmother's daughter Toyoko, his aunt's family and his biological mother's cousin's family, a decision over which Lee agonized for many years and wrote about in his gripping *Hyakunen no Tabibitotachi* [*One Hundred Years of Travelers*] (1994), a fictionalized account of the family's journey out of Russia and into Japan.¹³¹ Thirty-four years would pass before Lee would be allowed to visit them, as recounted in his travel log *Sakhalin no Tabi* [*Journey to Sakhalin*] (1983).

Though the family intended to return to Korea they were remanded for two years to the infamous Ōmura Detention Center near Nagasaki in Kyūshū, Japan, which was long used to detain illegal immigrants and well known amongst *zainichi* Koreans.¹³² Lee was later to write that, "Even being forcibly sent to the Ōmura Detention Camp... didn't awaken a real consciousness in me that I was Korean" (Ito, Hamid and Lee 351). The Korean War was brewing, a disturbing fact that postponed their trip 'home' to Korea, and the family moved temporarily, to Sapporo, Hokkaido, where they ended up settling permanently (Furui 499; Hayashi *Kozarushū* 14, Kawashima 522). At the age of seventeen, in 1952, Lee entered Sapporo West High School, where he wrote a story for the school's magazine, still using his Japanese name Kishimoto Kaisei.¹³³

There was a period in my life when I hid that I was Korean. During high school I had some really close friends but the closer a friend became the more likely our friendship would fail because I would not refuse to disclose any of the problems existing in my home or heart, even if my friend were willing to (qtd. in Kawamura, J. 66).

¹³¹ Lee's *One Hundred Years of Travelers* (1994) has been likened to Alex Haley's *Roots* 1976, a novel that traces the genealogy of an African American family over seven generations (Koh, I. S. 18 Feb. 2000).

¹³² The Ōmura Detention Center also appears in Yan Sō Gil's novel *Yoru wo Kakete* [*Gambling With the Night*] (1994). It has since closed down. There are many references to the Ōmura Detention Center in Tessa Morris-Suzuki's book *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's cold war* (24, 82, 92, 96, 124-5).

¹³³ Lee's Japanese name: 岸本 恢成

Lee failed the university entrance examinations and left for Tokyo to attend a preparatory school.¹³⁴ While living there with an older cousin, he did construction and scrap-work. In 1956, at the age of twenty-one he passed his examinations and was admitted to the prestigious Waseda University where he majored in Russian literature with Miyahara Akio and Moriuchi Toshio, who like Lee, would become important literary writers in post-war Japan.

As with many *zainichi* Koreans of Lee's age, it was only after entering university that, in the words of scholar Watanabe Sumiko, "Lee took his first steps as a true Korean and began to use his Korean name and call the Korean language his mother tongue; it was the start of his process of self-discovery" (29).¹³⁵ Lee shares with Kim Sok Pom an understanding of the structuring effects of language. These effects are not always immediately obvious but they can nonetheless deny Korean self-authentication. Of his university years Lee writes, "I was completely taken with Korean language as the means to finding myself" (Lee, H. S. *Kaku* 223). Also:

I submitted a graduate thesis on Feodor Dostoevsky at Waseda University for which I was given a grade of ninety. My professor pointed out my mistakes and told me in no uncertain terms, "If you want to be a writer you must further master the Japanese language." But I never paid heed to these words. In the last two years of university I was active with the Korean student movement and I had more or less stopped using Japanese and spoke only Korean. Though I could not speak it fluently it was all I spoke, broken Korean (Lee, H. S. *Kaku* 222).¹³⁶

¹³⁴ In Japan to fail one's entrance exams simply means one failed the entrance examinations of one's preferred choice of university. Lee would have easily passed any number of entrance exams, he merely happened to fail those for a seat at an elite institution.

¹³⁵ Most of the second-generation *zainichi* Koreans aged forty or older I interviewed told me that they had concealed their ethnicity until entering university, at which time opportunities arose to interact with other *zainichi* Koreans and become involved with *zainichi* Korean student support organizations (Pak, Y. H. 4 May. 1999).

¹³⁶ In the 1950s and 1960s most universities had student organizations for both *zainichi* Koreans and exchange students from the ROK. At the time, however, *zainichi* Korean students often considered themselves, and were considered, by their Japanese peers, to be, 'foreign students,' who would presumably 'return' to Korea one day (Lie *Narratives* 343). The most prominent pro-North Korea student organization was *Ryūgakusei Dōmei*, and the pro-South Korea organization was *Kanmintō*. Such clubs still exist in many universities today but are less popular and not very politically active. The student movement refers to violent student protests against the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan (*Nichibei Anzen Hōshō Jōyaku*) or ANPO, signed in January, 1960, which functioned in part, to allocate Japanese territory for US bases from where the Americans could conduct military operations in Asia, the Japanese involvement in the Vietnam War (the US military was using its bases in Japan) and other anti-establishment issues. While *zainichi* Koreans often protested the above-mentioned issues with their Japanese peers, they also protested the normalization treaty Japan signed with the ROK in 1965. Some of these rallies became very violent; primarily with *zainichi* Koreans facing off with rival *zainichi* Koreans; there were confrontations with the police as well.

After graduating from Waseda University, Lee began to work in the Educational Division of the Central Bureau of the North Korean-sponsored organization for *zainichi* Koreans, the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, commonly referred to as *Chongryun*. Indeed, it was while he was working as a reporter for their newspaper, *Chōsen Shinpōsha*, that he experienced “a real surge of Korean-ness” (Pak, Y. B. 3). He also won a prize for an essay he wrote advocating unification, entitled *Tōitsu Hyōron* ‘An Appraisal of Unification’. Though Lee tried to write in Korean, he was unsuccessful and, partially on these grounds, had a conflict with the *Chongryun* bureaucracy. Finally on December 31, 1966 he quit *Chongryun* and at the age of thirty-one decided to establish himself as a novelist writing in Japanese (Hayashi *Kozarushū* 15, Kawashima 522). This was by no means an easy step to take, given that at the time, anyone opting to leave *Chongryun* was aggressively branded a pro-Japanese traitor and cut off from all organizational links. This happened to Lee who found himself suddenly unemployed (Furui).

Lee’s first novel *Chō Ke no Yū’utsu* [*The Chō Family Blues*] was originally published in the prominent journal *Gunzō* in 1969, and it went on to win the twelfth *Gunzō Newcomer Prize for Literature*, thus officially launching his literary career.

I applied for the *Gunzō Prize*, which was especially attractive to me because the novel had to be as long as two hundred forty pages. I wrote *Chō Ke no Yū’utsu*... and brought the manuscript directly to Kodansha in person... At the time I was working at a small newspaper doing advertisements. Those were dreary, grim days for me. My wife got the call. That night, in an exuberant voice... she told me I’d won. The next day I started my life as a writer (Lee, H. S. *Kaku* 223).

Presently *Chō Ke no Yū’utsu* was published in book form by Kodansha and renamed *Matafutatabi no Michi* [*The Beaten Path*]. Its success opened the door to the Japanese literary establishment for Lee. Kawashima writes, “Lee appeared on the scene in 1969 cool, calm and collected with his *Matafutatabi no Michi*... a book, which honestly depicted the pain of the *zainichi* Korean family in Japan” (522).

Matafutatabi no Michi was the first of seven novels Lee wrote during the late sixties and early seventies, which are referred to as Lee’s *seishun shōsetsu* ‘series on youth’ or his ‘adolescent novels’. According to Watanabe Sumiko, *Matafutatabi no Michi* can be

read as the meta-narrative of the whole series (34).¹³⁷ In these early works Lee takes up the theme of adolescence and its painful memories; specifically, “all the difficulties of being a second-generation *zainichi* Korean in a hostile country” (Takeda *Zainichi* 40). In describing the family life of *zainichi* Koreans of the early post-war era, Lee Hoe Sung wrote what Hayashi Kōji calls, “A literature born of grief” (*Kozarushū* 16).¹³⁸ Lee’s series on youth offer heartrending portraits of family strife; disorder, domestic violence, sorrow, discrimination and internal conflict, all of which, according to Takeda Seiji, accurately characterized archetypal *zainichi* Korean home life from the late 1940s to the 1960s. In a three-way discussion with Kim Sok Pom and, Japanese literary Nobel Prize winner, Ōe Kenzaburō, Lee said, “Family problems have more than likely been experienced by all *zainichi* Koreans of my generation. I want to take up the issue of the family, from a second generation *zainichi* Korean point of view, to facilitate a process of self-discovery” (qtd in Takeda *Zainichi* 16).

Representing the sphere of the personal as a pathway to self-discovery is reminiscent of discourses of the women’s movement of the 1960s and 1970s when the personal was declared to be political. Feminists argued that the political domain or public aspect of civil society obscured the personal reality of lived-life (Pateman 107). Women were invited to re-interpret their private experiences of exploitation and violence in a shared, social and political context. Through a process of investigating their own everyday lives and collective reflection women identified their individual experiences as shared, as social, and then in turn as political (Fine et al.). The notion that the personal is political went some way towards describing women’s subordination and oppression. The analogy of race and gender provides insight into the Korean experience in Japan from which we can extrapolate to interpret Lee’s novel *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*.

The author’s poignant rendition of his mother’s life and death in this novella

¹³⁷ In August 1969 Lee published the second novel of the series *Warera Seishun no Tojo Nite* [*In our Prime*] in *Gunzō*, which was nominated for the 62nd Akutagawa Prize for Belles Lettres (Furui 500). Then in 1970, at the age of thirty-five, he published *Shisha no Nokoshita Mono* [*What the Dead Left Behind*] in *Gunzō* and in May *Shōnin no Inai Hikari* [*The Prophecy Without a Witness*] in *Bungaku Kai*; the latter was nominated for the 63rd Akutagawa Prize for Belles Lettres. In the 1970 August and September editions of *Shinchō* he published his very popular novel *Kayako no Tameni* [*For Kayako*]. In March 1971 Lee published *Seikyu no Yado* [*The Blue Hill Lodge*] in *Gunzō* and in June *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, [*The Cloth Fuller*] in *Geijutsu*, and in November *Pan Choppari* [*Half Jap*] in *Bungei*.

¹³⁸ 「悲しみのはてに成り立った文学」

won him the esteemed *Akutagawa Prize for Belles Lettres* in 1972 and brought the writer certified fame, even outside the literary establishment.¹³⁹ Lee achieved widespread recognition amongst the Japanese public as the first ‘foreigner’ to win the prize for promising new writers.¹⁴⁰ Lee thus became the first *zainichi* Korean writer to articulate issues clearly specific to *diasporic* Korean family life in Japan, to the Japanese public. Indeed, his winning of the *Akutagawa Prize* “signaled the canonization of the genre of *zainichi* Korean literature” (Scott) and “heralded a major shift in the perception of *zainichi* Koreans and *zainichi* Korean literature amongst Japanese” (Itō “Zainichi” 20). According to Watanabe Sumiko, “Lee was like a breath of fresh air to the Japanese World of Literature” (27). Significantly, Lee also achieved a heroic stature amongst *zainichi* Koreans as the first *zainichi* Korean to win the coveted prize. Film director Kim Su Gil comments, “In those days the *Akutagawa Prize* was far more distinguished than today. After Lee won the *Akutagawa*, he was very powerful. All of us looked to Lee. He was virtually omnipotent” (Kim, S. G.).

Japanese imperial fascism was the first and foremost political influence on Lee’s generation. “Japanese imperial fascism is one way to describe a system of government characterized by dictatorship, nationalism, racism and the glorification of war. This is especially true for those in colonial outposts such as Karafuto” (Takeda *Zainichi* 22, 30).¹⁴¹ Fukuoka Yasunari explains, “Japanese authorities sought to turn the Korean people into loyal subjects of the Japanese Emperor... Koreans were forced to worship at Shinto shrines... use Japanese language and even forced to use Japanese names under the 1939 law. Assimilation policies extended to every aspect of life: political, religious and cultural” (5).¹⁴² Japanese writers Gōtō Meisei (who grew up in Korea) and Kaga Otohiko describe their own experience of imperial fascism during the colonial era:

¹³⁹ The *Akutagawa Prize for Belles Lettres* in the 1970s was issued only once a year and was extremely well regarded and far more prestigious and respected than today (Chang, J. B.).

¹⁴⁰ In his acceptance speech Lee called attention to Kim Sa Ryang, a first-generation writer who was passed up for the prize during the colonial era saying, “I wish to accept this prize on behalf of Kim Sa Ryang. It is the first time it has been given to a foreigner. I do not underestimate its significance... During times of difficulty I will treasure this prize” (Dai 318). Kim Sa Ryang was the first non-Japanese and *zainichi* Korean to become a runner up for the prize for his *Hikari no Naka ni* [*Into the Light*] (1939).

¹⁴¹ It is usually more moderately termed Japanese Imperialism. Karafuto Siberia

¹⁴² Takeda explains it in similar terms (*Zainichi* 22, 24, 26).

During those days in Korea of course we made our vows to the Emperor every morning at school and the use of Korean was entirely forbidden (Gōtō 128).

We were the Emperor's trusted men and were prepared to die with honor on his behalf. It was a very extreme education... The Emperor was our eminent general and we respected him as a strong military leader. Whoever criticized the Emperor was killed. In other words the Emperor was our life. We were, of course, told to close our eyes in prayer for him, for he was a God (Lee and Kaga 15).

The experience of imperial fascism differs vastly for first and second-generation *zainichi* Koreans. First-generation Koreans privately condemned Emperor-worship and assimilation; they were colonial subjects but their Korean identities were intact. However, many second-generation *zainichi* Koreans ardently embraced imperial fascism and it became a dominant social ideology for them (Takeda *Zainichi* 30).¹⁴³ Well-known *zainichi* Korean intellectuals An U Shiku, O Im Jun and poet Kim Shi Jong were all part of the generation that were indoctrinated in the dictates of Japanese Imperial Fascism. The following quotes from poet Kim Shi Jong and Lee Hoe Sung highlight how colonial subjects can internalize the views and values of the dominant society:

I received a thorough imperial education. I was seventeen when Japan lost the war but I couldn't believe it and spent two or three nights crying about it. Up until then I had been cultivated as an imperial youth. I was only one of many who felt this way (Kim Shi Jong qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 30).

I was born in 1935 so I was ten when the war ended. I never doubted Japan's intentions as anything other than righteous in the Holy War, not for an instant. I was an assimilated youth. Being Korean meant nothing to me. I prayed to die for Japan with honor (Ito, Hamid and Lee 348).

I'll never forget in the textbook there was a story about Tajima Yasu a Korean who went to Japan because the Emperor was sick and wanted a tangerine. Tajima took a tangerine plant and traveled south to the Emperor for ten years but when he arrived the Emperor had already gone to heaven and Tajima stood in front of the throne and cried. We made a song about him and I can still sing it... Also I can still do the soldiers' salute (Lee and Kaga 13).

Lee was the first *zainichi* Korean to write about this phenomenon in prose. In his novel *Shōnin no Inai Kōkei* [*The Prophecy Without a Witness*] (1970) he describes the ideological forces that fostered and sustained Japanese fascist and imperialist thinking; Lee also revealed how such a paradigm or superstructure has psychological implications for both adherents and subjects. For the colonial child it has the power to injure his or

¹⁴³ See also Yoshin: 64-66 and for a more general discussion Ashcroft et. al, *Post-colonial* 1, 9, 29-30, 32, 241.

her fragile self-esteem, and in this way impair identity formation.¹⁴⁴ Lee reminds readers that Koreans who worshipped the Emperor were not necessarily collaborators or traitors, but rather victims of comprehensive ideological indoctrination.

Takeda contends that a negative self-image props up the fascism of *zainichi* Korean youths of Lee's generation. The belief that Koreans were inferior became ingrained for these second-generation *zainichi* Koreans as did the belief that 'Koreans lived the lives of pigs.' As a rule, poverty, trouble and violence characterized the representations of Koreans. The *zainichi* Korean child who then actually experienced poverty, trouble or violence at home understood it as a symptom of his being 'Korean,' the stigma manifesting in a damaged self-image. Enthusiasm for being a Japanese national is the product of a Korean child's efforts to rid him or her self of any Korean traits. Imperial Fascism offered the confused child a chance to become 'a child of the Emperor,' which meant the child could escape his or her Korean-ness, the source of his or her inferiority complex and achieve greatness and respect (Takeda *Zainichi* 25, 30).

Such a belief is unsustainable at the level of everyday life. The Korean colonial subject was forced to face the fact that he or she was Korean time and again. Since one's self-loathing and humiliation was always linked to being Korean, it is reinforced and internalized each time the child is reminded of his or her ethnicity, when it manifests in a terrible inferiority complex (Takeda *Zainichi* 27).¹⁴⁵

Takeda writes, "Lee beautifully symbolizes the danger of being rejected by society and the lengths people will go to be accepted" (*Zainichi* 27-9). In a 1988 interview Lee told an audience an anecdote of a vision he saw as a child, somewhat reminiscent of what Homi Bhabha calls, "a sign taken for a wonder" (29-35). "As for the divinity of the Emperor we heard about his golden lute and one day, while playing with some children, the sky glittered. I looked up and shouted, 'Look! The Golden Lute!' I ran home and told my mom what I'd seen but she turned her back on me. When I wrote this I was called a fanatic, but the story is true" (Lee and Kaga 13). Such a

¹⁴⁴ See similar arguments in Boehmer 189 and Brathwaite 202.

¹⁴⁵ Anecdotally this phenomenon continues even today. Many *zainichi* Koreans pass as Japanese and are thus sometimes exposed to negative statements made about Koreans, by Japanese, unaware that members of their party may be Korean. I heard of one strange case, in which derogatory comments were made by a Japanese person *aware* of the other's Korean ethnicity but pretended to be otherwise, thus exploiting the vulnerability of the Korean person's use of a Japanese alias and desire to keep his ethnicity undisclosed (Chang J. B.).

fantasy might have allowed a Korean colonial youth to imagine a link existing between himself and the Emperor, as depicted in Lee's novel *Shōnin no Inai Kōkei*, [*The Prophecy Without a Witness*] (1970), affording the child an emotional defense against the taunts of Japanese classmates and the humiliation associated with being Korean.

After WWII both Koreans and Japanese were discredited for their fascism. During the seven-year occupation (1945-1952) by allied troops led by American General Douglas MacArthur, Japan's military past was reviled and its mention largely taboo. Watanabe points to Lee's exceptionally considerate stance towards the Japanese experience of defeat, writing, "While he understands why first-generation Koreans resent the Japanese, Lee actually shows sympathy for the Japanese who lost pride in Japan. His bitterness is very different to that of first-generation Koreans" (32). The same bitterness, which accrued from Japan's defeat, helped nourish a new sense of community, a new patriotism and a new identity among Koreans.

All of us, until Aug 14, believed in Japan's Holy War. We believed in the Emperor and were true patriots; we loved Japan as our holy land... We who believed in the Emperor felt betrayed by Japan when the war was lost but this led to the discovery of our own country, of Korea... Japan's betrayal inspired us to discover our own Korean ethnicity... The Japanese, however, lost everything; they lost all pride in their country and had no one to turn to. They could not look to the state or country or anyone. They lost all international support. The whole world hated the Japanese. They had to recreate their nation and national identity unaided. Maybe they had to suffer, in some ways more than we did (Lee, H. S. qtd. in Watanabe 31-32).

Watanabe points to Lee as an example of someone who comprehends and validates the first-generation's antipathy for the Japanese invasion, colonialism and racism, but who urges his second-generation peers to let go of their resentment. She writes, "We see here the active mind of an intellectual, who consciously decides not to carry resentment. Though he is able to be critical of Japan he understands that *zainichi* Koreans have to liberate themselves from living a life of revenge and malice" (31-33).

Kinuta wo Utsu Onna depicts the life of a young woman, Jang Suri, as remembered by her third son, after her untimely death at the age of thirty-three. It is told in two narrative voices, one historical (the child's voice) and one contemporary (the adult's voice). The reminiscences of the boy's grandmother provide further insights into Jang Suri's life. Gōtō Meisei, Japanese writer and friend of Lee, says, "The narrator is clearly

the author himself. The age corresponds and the passion and grief with which the novel is narrated makes it clear” (130). Beverly Nelson, in a 1979 analysis of the novel, observes that the child supplies one kind of highly personal memory informed by childlike perceptions and feelings, while the grandmother (Suri’s stepmother) supplies collective or public memories. The memories of both child and grandmother, Nelson argues, are essential to portraying Suri as a mother, and more figuratively, as the motherland, facilitating the adult narrator’s search for both his private familial identity (as Suri’s son) and his public ethnic identity (as a Korean). Suri emerges as “an archetypal Korean woman, even as a symbol of Korean culture or of Korea itself” (Nelson 136-38). As noted by Ali Rattansi, this is a common feature of much modern literature.

The gendering and sexualization of the nation is an important element in constructions of national identity... Women... play a pivotal role in the construction of ethnicity and nationality... as transmitters of the culture; as crucial symbols... of the motherland (264).¹⁴⁶

The French feminist Luce Irigaray uses the metaphor of the mirror to describe the ways in which women’s bodies are used to construct the identity of the (male) self and by corollary that of the modern nation. Irigaray argues that that the mirror surface does not provide a neutral reflection but is formed from the bodies of women. It is this which makes male personhood and modern nationhood possible:

Women’s bodies are the space and matter whose containment or ‘blackout’ makes male self-projection possible. Until the flat mirror surface is curved back on itself, until it becomes the speculum, it is unable to represent women’s modes of self-reflection (232).

In Judith Butler’s view, psychoanalytic theory, which demonstrated that the very notion of the subject is a masculine prerogative, provided feminism with a way to explain women’s subordination across cultures. Lacanian theory maintains that the basis of all kinship and all cultural relations is the ‘paternal law,’ which establishes male subjects as central through the denial of the feminine. Hence, far from being subjects, women are, variously, the Other, a mysterious unknowable lack, a sign of the forbidden and irrecoverable maternal body, or some unsavoury mixture of the above (Butler *Gender* 326).

For younger-generation *zainichi* Koreans in pursuit of a ‘Korean identity,’ Lee,

¹⁴⁶ See similar literary techniques in Joan Riley’s *Waiting in the Twilight* (Jordan and Weedon 235).

through the figure of the mother, advocates turning to first-generation or ‘genuine’ Koreans for unadulterated cultural knowledge. Only in this way can they authenticate their ethnic identity. Lee thus joins the ranks of nationalist writers elsewhere, who, according to Elleke Boehmer, “did not lose their connection with the teachings of the generation which had gone before... as a way of preserving... continuity with the past” (192). Ashis Nandy similarly defines the nation’s culture as “the accumulated wisdom of a people or a ‘dialectic’ between the past and the present, the dead and the living” (812). In *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, such a dialectic is inherent in the grandmother’s *sinse t’aryong*, a Korean tradition of memorializing one’s own or someone else’s life, especially the struggles one endures, in monologue-song form accompanied by rhythmic drumming or music and marked by weeping and emotive expressions of grief. The *sinse t’aryong* is typically performed by an elder woman.¹⁴⁷ The grandmother recognizes and shares the boy’s need to re-encounter his mother through the *sinse t’aryong*, and the boy gains knowledge of his people’s history through hearing it.¹⁴⁸ Nelson writes, “The form of the grandmother’s voluble tirade against fate is distinctly Korean. We know that this was intended by the author because he refers to her lament with a term that is not Japanese but Korean *sinse t’aryong*, as if there were no way to express this idea in any language but Korean” (141). In the novel, the adult narrator reminisces:

I can still remember the meter. It was such a sad requiem, sung for the souls of the departed, and was as evocative as melodies fashioned by a reed flute. Within its rhythm was a strong force, which flowed like a great river, and yet it also sounded delicate, like the tremulous streaming leaves of the willow. Its beauty was its power to display grandmother’s wrath as well as her grief... Her voice would suddenly tremble. As she became absorbed in her memories, she would begin to shake; her whole body swayed forward and backward and she would slap her knees rhythmically. She recounted stories about Suri’s life, crying and mourning... Grandmother’s voice would break into sobs. Writhing in an excess of grief she seemed to be nodding to the spirit of her dead daughter (Lee, H. S.

¹⁴⁷ 身勢打鈴 (*sinse* is pronounced *shinse*) The *sinse t’aryong* is typically performed by a woman because, according to Chong Jang, women, in their marginalized position in the family and society have ‘more to lament’ and because they are assigned and allowed the roles of the brokenhearted and the noisemaker (Chong J. 15 Nov. 2000). Nelson, in contrast to Japanese reviewers and *zainichi* Korean informants who conflate the two words, is careful to point out that the *sinse t’aryong* is not a written literary genre, it is an oral narrative tradition used to “complain about one’s bad luck, one’s unhappy lot in life.” She situates it within the larger category of *p’ansori*, the Korean tradition of narrative storytelling, an oral literary form (137, 141-42).

¹⁴⁸ See a discussion of oral tradition as history transformed into literature in other post-colonial literature in English discussed in Jordan and Weedon 240-41.

Kinuta 204).¹⁴⁹

The spectacle of the grandmother's emotion is compelling. A requiem for Suri, it also functions as a requiem for Korea. According to Nelson, "The grandmother transcends her role as a character in the story and becomes an artist ...and oracle ...a shaman, a medium in communication with the dead mother and the lost culture" (142). Shamans perform the task of healing rifts between the living and the dead, the present and the past, by becoming mediums with the spirit world (Nelson 143; Kehoe). The storytellers, both the grandmother and Lee the writer, are here likened to the shaman, and as such assume healing powers by the act of their storytelling. Lee's use of the *sinse t'aryong* demonstrates the power of oral tradition as an important means to heal the pain of separation from the Korean homeland, and to sustain and validate memories of it, a process which in turn helps to close the gap between the past and the present and between *zainichi* Koreans and their homeland. Lee as the principal storyteller incorporates the *sinse t'aryong* into the structure of *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* so that the novella virtually mimics the *sinse t'aryong*. Nelson writes, "The *sinse t'aryong* (is) the most fully integrated image in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, becoming the overarching metaphor for all artistic activity, including Lee's act of writing the story" (141-42).¹⁵⁰ Itō Naruhiko likens the entire archive of *zainichi* Korean literature itself to a *sinse t'aryong* ("Zainichi" 27).

Implicit in the ritualized telling of the story is the notion that it must be passed on to the next generation.¹⁵¹ The recital of the *sinse t'aryong* thus serves to preserve the community and keep its members informed of their history. As such it is prescriptive for the readership of the novel as well. By transforming the oral tradition into a written one, Lee encourages *zainichi* Koreans to benefit from and appropriate traditions otherwise unavailable to them. By assuming the task of carrying on such traditions Lee through the adult narrator communicates his filial piety, another Korean value, as well as his commitment to Korea proper. In this instance he perhaps aspires to resolve the differences between first- and second-generation *zainichi* Koreans.

¹⁴⁹ For the second passage I cite Nelson's translation (143).

¹⁵⁰ Nelson uses the romanized Japanese reading of the author's name, Ri.

¹⁵¹ Many writers have turned to history in their search for an answer to the question of where one might find a positive identity in a racist society. Two of the best known in the US are Alice Walker and Toni Morrison, who have looked to African-American cultural tradition in an attempt to authenticate a specifically black women's language and cultural history (Jordan and Weedon 239).

Theorist David Danow explains the implicit value of storytelling for those familiar with suffering. As a literary art form it provides access to ancient myths and rituals from a bygone past which allay the sadness associated with the loss of those very myths and rituals. Danow specifically refers to Isabel Allende's 1987 novel *Eva Luna* and Vargas Llosa's 1987 novel *The Storyteller* to show the power that stories have to harness memories for a community of people as well as their traditional spiritual ideals:

A story teller herself, Eva Luna... and the author Allende... understand intuitively the great human need for stories in our lives. For Eva Luna the story exists "to make our journey through life less trying."... *Eva Luna* demonstrates that storytelling is more than mere entertainment... Vargas Llosa's *The Storyteller* addresses... the importance of the story as a profound cultural entity while the storyteller himself performs a critical role as the memory of the community. The storyteller represents a living source of what Jung calls the 'collective unconscious' ... helping people understand their role and place in the world" (78-79).¹⁵²

The specifically Korean lamentation allows Lee, the 'story teller' to point to Korean-ness – discernible in the culturally informed experiences and Korean identity of the mother – as an anchor. This anchor – the mother, and by extension, the motherland and memories of her – secures the child to a solid 'home' or cultural place of reference. Though the child must set sail on his own course, he has a place of anchorage to which he can return. As we turn to *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* it is apparent that the first lines of the story may be likened to the prologue of the oral tradition of the *sinse t'aryong*: "The day Jang Suri died was a winter day ten months before Japan's long war would end. I remember it well. I was nine years old" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 187). Despite the poignancy of these first lines, Lee quickly diverts the readers' attention to three entertaining and illuminating vignettes, which center on the child's nickname Jojo, his made-up 'Dance of the Octopus,' and his bedwetting, all of which help define the family as Korean.

The boy cannot find his nickname Jojo in a dictionary, leaving it open to interpretation, and Lee seems to want to tease out a positive meaning for it as if to contest the attribution of negative meanings to Korean names in Japan, especially common during the 1950s and 1960s (Bayliss; Pak Y. H. 16 Jan. 2000; Kaku 2 Feb. 2001). The boy is enamored of his name because his mother uses it as a term of

¹⁵² See also a discussion of Guyanese writer Wilson Harris, who apparently also recognizes the possibilities of spiritual conversion inherent in the oral tradition of storytelling (Petersen and Rutherford 186-88).

endearment and it links him to her. Thus Lee invites the Japanese reader to form a positive association with Korean names generally, as well as to identify with the innocent child. The story is a kind of quest for a mythical Korean motherland, which also promises salvation to the child. The adult narrator reminisces, “Jojo sort of fell into the category of ‘precocious,’ ‘ham-fisted’ or ‘near-miss’ but it was Korean and I loved it and because I was Korean I felt lucky. I remember mom called me Jojo with affection and love” (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 187).

As for the boy’s dance, what is striking is Lee’s ability to convey the child’s sweet and self-indulgent use of it to divert attention to himself and entertain guests.

I twisted my neck and promptly juttet it in and out it with great finesse. Seeing me dance, people would absentmindedly recall an ancient sword dance from the days of the *Silla* Kingdom and approvingly say, “Yes that’s it.” Only I took the tempo too fast and lost my balance... As a result it became known as the dance of the Octopus (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 188).

The portrait of the happy-go-lucky dancer is tempered by the reference to strife in the home which, in *zainichi* Korean literature, is a common metaphor for the division of the Korean Peninsula (Konigsberg; Sakuma 10 Sep. 2000). Beverly Nelson notes that Lee equates the hero (the *zainichi* Korean/the author himself) with the *hwarang* warriors who fought for and achieved the unification of Korea during the *Silla* era (AD 356-935). Thus the dance may allude to the nation’s unification and the role *zainichi* Koreans have played in its promotion. Jojo’s dance is designed to distract his parents from their fighting one another. Nelson characterizes the dance as “shamanistic... as a cure for family troubles... a magical recourse to mediate differences” (144-45).¹⁵³ Danow’s reference to Isabel Allende’s novel *Eva Luna* is again applicable: “We are given a clear sense of the proximity of the primordial past to modern life... myth and reality remain inextricably intertwined, making the days of the conquistadors still seem vital and alive” (72-73). The connection between myth and reality mirrors that between the past and the present as well as the nation and the family.

A bedwetting episode introduces the Korean custom of sending a child ‘out for salt’ when he or she wets the bed, a euphemism for a punishment, in Jojo’s case a spanking from his sadistic auntie. With this vignette, Lee presents a humorous, if not disturbing, glimpse into some of the inexplicable perversities of the family – the aunt’s

¹⁵³ Pronounced shilla.

punitive relationship to the boy is managed and sanctioned by his mother, a fact the boy becomes increasingly, albeit reluctantly, aware of.

Mom would call out, “Wake up and go and get some salt from your auntie.” She looked as if she knew nothing of my misdemeanor ... I hung my head. I thought since I’d wet the bed the least I could do was go and fetch some salt but this was not an errand. I’d go to get salt but my auntie would grab hold of my wrist and give me such a terrible beating on my backside that my skin would peel (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 190).

From the start Lee establishes Jojo as an average nine-year old boy, whose world is very narrowly defined by the daily events that happen to or around him. He is given cod liver oil at school but no peppermints due to ‘war rations.’ He enjoys riding in horse-drawn wagons. He squirms when his grandmother tries to cuddle him. He chases red roosters. He runs out of the house when his parents fight. He and his friends get caught stealing sweet bean-bread. These and other episodes convey the naïve but strong-willed mindset of a nine-year old boy in Japan’s colonial outpost of Karafuto.

According to Kohiyama Hiroshi, “One of the most beautiful aspects of *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* is that Lee wrote it from the point of view of the child” (283). Because Lee consciously depicts the world as Jojo perceives it, the novel is very simple, with short sentences and no ‘chapter’ breaks. Lee intentionally keeps the dialogue simple because he is “portraying ordinary situations in the daily lives of simple, uneducated people” (Nelson 134). Writer Gōtō Meisei contends that the simplicity of the novel is often mistaken for a weakness. He defends Lee’s style and argues “It is Lee’s simple style, in fact, that demonstrates the strength of his craftsmanship. The enormity of effort required to write such a piece should not be underestimated” (131).¹⁵⁴

Jojo, unable to fathom death or its significance, is unaware of the gravity of his mother’s infirmity (as well as that of his stillborn sibling). He muses, “She is ‘just having a baby so why the long faces?’” He fails to comprehend that his mother will never return, and describes his leaving school early to visit the hospital and his mother’s funeral as gala affairs. These passages intensify the foreboding that presages the inevitable loss of innocence the tragedy will surely confer on the boy.

A teacher approached the door. I thought it had something to do with me. I was right. Soon my teacher nodded, looked towards me and called my name saying,

¹⁵⁴ See David Danow’s discussion of the role of remembrances of childhood in magic realist works (59-70).

“Go straight to the hospital.” I don’t know why but I felt like it was a grand occasion, maybe because all my classmates looked up at me with envy... I left my seat in a high and mighty manner and felt their envious glances on my back and left the room... My brother was waiting for me with a worried look on his face. “Hurry up,” he said angrily. “We’re supposed to hurry. Don’t you get it?” (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 193)

I finally made it to the hospital and took my time in the ward... It was a gloomy place so when I finally somehow found my mother’s room I was about to shout for joy but when I pushed against the half open door ...I stopped. My brother, who had arrived first, had covered his eyes with his fists... My father was downcast. Even so, I failed to realize that my mother had died (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 193-94).

Nelson points to the mother as the symbol of the lost or irrecoverable motherland but she neglects to point to the boy as the symbol of the orphaned *zainichi* Korean. For example, when at the funeral the grandmother berates Jojo, crying out, “Aigō! Jojo. You really don’t understand at all, do you?” what may be inferred is not just the inability of the child, by virtue of his youth, to comprehend the gravity of his loss but the inability of the *zainichi* Korean, by virtue of his/her location and lack of memories to comprehend Korea proper.¹⁵⁵ This ‘distance’ or dearth of memory can be partially rectified by both the grandmother’s and Lee’s storytelling.

After his mother’s death Jojo spends more time at his grandparents’ home, which he refers to as ‘the cave,’ connoting a sense of shelter, security, and home. There, with a long pipe cradled in one hand, his taciturn grandfather sits like a Buddha. In direct contrast, Jojo’s grandmother is wildly emotional, her voluble admonishments as well as her doting displays of affection disconcerting the boy who looks to his more dignified grandfather for tranquility and reassurance. Nelson explains that the child is afraid of “the violence of feeling” (152) expressed in the grandmother’s despairing *sinse t’aryong*, which starts with the following bittersweet memory of Suri:

Suri danced the *Norutegi* and could leap higher than any other girl. She was so pretty. The sky embraced her...and she spiraled higher even than the pale purple willows... She was so precocious. At springtime she’d dye her fingernails with flower petals and have me decorate her long black tresses with strings of ornaments. You can’t imagine how her beauty stunned the boys in the village. They were all lost in thought, day dreaming about her (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 205).

To identify Suri as beautiful, desirable, and virtuous is to awaken both a sense of yearning and sadness, insofar as yearning accompanies the objectification of her

¹⁵⁵ Elleke Boehmer writes about other post-colonial writers who, like Lee, address “the sorrow of broken cultural lineages and fragmented memory under empire” (190).

physical attributes and sadness accompanies their loss. The ensuing passage describes Suri's departure for Japan, which frames the narrative of her separation from Korea and ultimately her death, thus linking the events. At the age of eighteen, saying she does not want to become a cloth fuller like the other women of the village, she leaves home and her departure for Japan is represented in the narrative as a kind of turn towards modernity. The following passage describing Suri's departure is simple and poignant pointing to the finality of her youth, the irreversible transition and uncertainty that awaits her and her parents upon their separation, the loss of country and home and the grief and worry filling her parents' hearts.

The sun streaks hit the river dancing and it was a day you could hear the women fulling cloth... Suri put her belongings on her head. Her shimmering hair cascaded down her back very neatly done in two braids, tightly bound with ribbon. At the riverbed she removed her sandals and placed them in the basket on her head. She entered the shallow end and cautiously made her way into the shoal trying not to wet her *chima*... and turned and looked back at the riverbank. Her mother and father were there, watching her. She hid the teardrops seeping out of her eyes, nodded to them and, with a shake of her head crossed the stream (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 207).

Suri's parents would lose her for ten years, despite her promise to return in three. Although Korea was technically 'Japan,' Lee points to both the geographical and figurative distance between the two countries, "When Suri informed them she was moving to Hokkaidō, her parents did not know what to think, having never heard of this place but because it was up north, it seemed farther away" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 206). By and by Suri informed her parents she had married a Korean coal miner in Hokkaidō, who would be taking her to the outpost of Karafuto. "Her parents could not conceive of where Karafuto might be" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 206). The geographic and emotional distance manifest in the passage works to challenge Japan's territorial claim to Korea and Sakhalin and evokes the grief brought on by their separation, again very clearly associated with Japan's colonization of Korea and Sakhalin. Thus Suri's departure from her home in Korea can never be separated from the Japanese colonial enterprise. Her parents grieve, "Is it fate? Is it the result of Korea's devastation? Why would she want to go to that country of thieves? Wasn't it enough that they stole our land? Why did they have to steal our daughter too? Oh what a fate. Oh Suri" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 206).

Suri and her husband have three children and, in the fall of 1939, after a ten-year hiatus, she visits her parents in Korea with Jojo, now six, and they stay for one

month.¹⁵⁶ Lee describes Suri crossing back over the river upon returning home, wearing a kimono, a telling spectacle evoking her increasing modernity and cultural hybridity. And yet, as Mizukami Tsutomu notes, “That she could go home wearing a Japanese kimono, in a way, shows up how deeply Korean she was” (251). Though Mizukami does not elaborate, his point is that she is able to show off her exotic travel wear, an act he calls “artistic and powerful” (251). Her parents do not hide their dismay, telling her, “You mustn’t come home wearing a Japanese kimono” (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 211). Japan is portrayed as an unwelcome intrusion, modernity and hybridity as deviations from a better, traditional, and unadulterated Korean ‘norm.’

Throughout the text Lee continues to take pains to depict Suri, the family and their life experience as distinctly Korean. Suri’s Korean dancing and Korean attire notwithstanding, her dignity and pride are always associated with her Korean roots and traditional filial piety. Lee incorporates many Korean superstitions in the story: the purification rite of sprinkling water on visitors; the bad luck brought about by a person crossing one’s path; the omen of death signified by a dog’s digging in the front garden, all of which are clearly designated as Korean. Later, for good measure the superstitious beliefs ‘come true’ which makes the heroes appear almost magically sentient. Nelson is attentive to the fact that for a Japanese reader the story must seem “exotic... giving a foreign flavor, that may be refreshing but no more than that. To a Korean reader, however, these references to things Korean must take on totemic importance... becoming a touchstone for his/her feelings about Korea, a lesson in genealogy by which he/she can trace his/her origins, and an allegory of twentieth-century Korean history” (146). Ritual, tradition and custom are portrayed as uncomplicated, congenial structures of cohesion, and by referring to them repeatedly Lee demystifies them as well, while at the same time familiarizing the reader with them. Gōtō notes, “*Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*...is so Korean at times it makes you wonder what is Japanese about it” (130). And Nelson elaborates further on this point:

Lee shows how culture informs behavior and his intended audience, Koreans in Japan, is in danger of losing that common bond... The novel is a paradigm for Lee’s own attempt through his works to find himself and to help other Koreans find themselves within a pre modern group identity, within a collective memory

¹⁵⁶ Lee and his mother, in a twosome, did travel to her native village for one month when Lee was just five years of age (9 Sep. 2000).

(135).

At this juncture, though rendered in only a few lines, we learn the real reason for Suri's departure for Japan. It was not a turn away from tradition or fulling cloth towards modernity or Japanese capitalism as she had earlier indicated. Pressed by her mother for an explanation, Suri finds her father alone one day and says, "You understand why I left for Japan, don't you? ...If my real mother had not turned up at the time I would not have gone to Japan looking for work. If I'd stayed, there would have been another battle over me" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 211). Her father knows nothing of what became of her biological mother but assumes that she went mad. This passage highlights the intermediate position of the child of estranged parents while also allegorizing the dilemma of the *zainichi* Korean caught between two 'homes' – Japan and Korea. The father's ignorance about what happened to his former wife and his counsel to 'forget her,' neatly corresponds to the ignorance, sense of superiority and careless response not only of the male vis-à-vis the female, but of the Japanese government vis-à-vis Korea and *zainichi* Koreans. Additionally Lee, in my view, wants to convey that it is not just the *zainichi* Korean who grieves for the motherland, it is also the motherland who grieves the loss of the *zainichi* Korean.

The passage alters how the reader perceives Suri's life, the decisions she made and the enormity of her loss. Mizukami writes, "Lee shows his mother's benevolence, describing how she left for Japan for *her own* mother's sake" (248). The similarity between the biological mother's fate and that of her daughter's (both being forced to leave home and both consequently losing each other), is relevant to the whole of Suri's life. Suri's (step)-mother experiences a similar loss, that of her (step)-daughter as described in her *sinse t'aryong*. Finally Suri's children experience the pain of losing *their* mother at an early age, a loss which parallels the experiences of the three women and as stated similarly functions as a parable for the experience of the Korean *Diaspora* at large. Suri's lifelong estrangement from her mother goes unmentioned afterwards, conceivably demonstrating how indescribable and irreparable such heartbreak really is.

After their one-month trip to Korea, Suri and Jojo take her parents home with them to Karafuto.¹⁵⁷ At this point, the story increasingly turns to domestic conflict and

157 Lee's *Jinmen no Oiwa* [*Stone Face*] (1972), an account of the journey Lee's family made from Korea to Karafuto, may be considered a sequel to *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*.

its effect on the family. By this stage Suri's character strikes the boy as unpredictable; he notes, for instance, her intermittent displays of affection and rejection and her idiosyncratic moodiness.¹⁵⁸

My mom would torment me sometimes saying, "You're not mine." When she said it in jest, she'd laugh and say, "Jojo I found you under a bridge." At times the story would change, "Actually I agreed to take you from an old man at the circus." Before I entered school I used to cry a lot about it. Then mom would comfort me and say "Jojo of course you're mine." That would be a good day, but if she were angry she'd say "You're not mine" and I'd feel terribly anxious (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 215).

Suri's volatility increases as the parents' marital conflicts take center stage. The father does not figure prominently in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, yet his powerful presence is tangible. It is the parents' fighting and the father's violence that cause the family to fragment. It is as if the fighting functions as an allegory of the Korean War and its aftermath – a divided country and people. Nor is it just a war of words; the fighting extends to bodily assaults, the stronger male's aggression and brutality only serving to ignite a fierce flame of hatred and resentment in the weaker female, "We timidly looked at our mother... She wore a huge gauze mask and all we could see of her bruised and battered face were her curiously lit eyes... Her lip, cut up so badly, had required two stitches" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 224-25).

Of this scene, Takeda writes,

The first heartbreak of second-generation *zainichi* Koreans is well depicted here. The image of the brutal father, the physical breaking down of the beloved mother figure... the child's disbelief, the suffering, the disorder, the poverty, discrimination, humiliation, all of these are characteristics of almost all second-generation *zainichi* Koreans of that age group, and add up to a form of collective memory... Virtually all of us carry such painful memories... The father, especially in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*... is symbolically recognizable as the father of all second-generation *zainichi* Koreans (Takeda *Zainichi* 13-14, 16).¹⁵⁹

Lee's narratives function as a valuable historical resource for memorializing first-generation *zainichi* Korean men. The narratives reveal for instance that despite exhibiting moments of brutality, they could be incredibly warm and soulful. For instance, Mizukami writes,

158 Mizukami concurs, "She is a whole person. The reader can easily envisage the actual woman" (247).

159 In interviews too, many second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, told me about domestic violence they experienced growing up, it was a fact of life that defined their very existence and identity. Many said when they first encountered the literature of Lee Hoe Sung or Kim Ha Gyong, they identified with it and told me, "It was as if he (either writer) was describing my own family." (Bae C. R., Chang, J. B., Chong J, Kōh; see also Kawamura *Umareta* 168)

There were many Koreans (*Chōsenjin*) in my old hometown Wakasa (in Fukui prefecture).¹⁶⁰ ...Looking back those men really resemble Lee's father as he is portrayed in Lee's literature. I remember how hearty and warm they were... they were loud and animated but completely alienated from Japanese society. They worked at the coal mine. I can still remember the Korean slum near my home so vividly... Lee's novels remind me of that place and time so much (250).

Similarly, Kohiyama's remarks have the effect of making us see the father's attacks on his wife in the context of the physical and psychological degradation that the father himself was undergoing as a Korean male subject to Japanese violence and exploitation.

I was born in Hokkaidō, where thousands of Korean Laborers died in mines, railroads and on the roads so I can never be indifferent to Lee's literature. I'll never forget how shocked I was as a boy of five or six seeing... Korean men with their hands and feet shackled in irons, being trucked to work, like property (Kohiyama 279).

The parental fighting that is described in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* is depicted as a partial result of enmity between Suri's husband and her parents. Nelson aptly describes the rift as one between the older generation or the homeland (the parents) and the alienated younger generation or the uprooted and wandering (the husband) (159). The father's apparent reluctance to settle down is indeed, also a source of friction and a source of an intensifying gulf or 'distance' between generations, husbands and wives, people and their countries.

It seemed as though mom wanted my dad, who was a wanderer, to settle somewhere. She cried, "Shimonoseki was far enough away from home but going as far as Hokkaidō and then Karafuto, it makes no sense. Where will you stop?" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 222)¹⁶¹

Hayashi Kōji, in his appraisal, refers to a lingering sense of homelessness that has accompanied Lee himself throughout his life, an observation that suggests that this element of the novel, like the parents' fighting, is expressively autobiographical. "More than anything Lee's feeling about his mother and father was that they were lost wanderers" (*Kozarushū* 16).¹⁶² In a stirring personal anecdote, Kohiyama recalls

¹⁶⁰ 若狭 Wakasa was considered an entry point for *zainichi* Koreans.

¹⁶¹ Shimonoseki, in the southern island of Kyūshū, is the closest Japanese port to Korea and served, for many, as the doorway to Japan and has a large population of *zainichi* Koreans.

¹⁶² In a similar vein, David Danow cites Isabelle Allende who writes, "Being scattered, rootless, homeless, remains typical of the enormous waves of nomads that characterize the age: ex-patriots, émigrés, exiles, and refugees," a wave Danow likens to "a parade of the twentieth century carnival" (146).

hearing Lee sing a mournful song about a journey, in a small Sapporo pub. What struck Kohiyama most about this incident was not what Lee said about the journeys themselves, but the tremendous emotions the memories still had the power to spark in him, saying, “Lee closed his eyes and sang, his voice trembled... and a tear rolled down his cheek. I couldn’t help but bow my head. It touched me so deeply. I imagined he was recalling his family’s journey from Karafuto to Japan” (276).¹⁶³

In *Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language* (1973) Merleau-Ponty speaks of the child’s acquisition of language not in terms of syntax but as a means to express meaning. Merleau-Ponty makes a distinction between a spoken language and a speaking language. The spoken language is a conventional system whereby we learn the rules for its use and acquired linguistic meanings. The speaking language expresses the emotional essence of our encounter with the world. We speak when we are happy, or sad as in Lee’s case. To speak is to sing the world in a melody of words. In singing his narrative Lee does not simply transmit thought rather he completes it through the use of his body as a gestural intention.

Another reason for Lee’s own parental disputes concerned his father’s role of leader in the local Japanese *Kyōwakai* [The Harmony Association], which had local chapters in most outposts of the Japanese empire. Whether Korean participation was voluntary or coerced is debatable, but certainly a failure to participate was reportedly taken as an indication of belligerence or insubordination (Horiguchi). Nelson observes that by dint of taking a leadership role in the *Kyōwakai*, “The father has become a collaborator in his own unmaning, helping the colonizers in his own colonization and helping to dismantle his Korean self. But he blames his wife rather than history and Japanese colonial policy or his own weakness” (153). His father’s voluntary involvement with the *Kyōwakai* caused Lee lasting confusion and chagrin, and he would consequently write about it in essays and other fiction. In *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, for instance, it appears as an aggravation to the protagonist’s mother, who says to her husband, “Why on earth did you start working for the *Kyōwakai* anyway? Becoming a leader is nothing to write home about. It’s bad enough you became a member, let alone a leader. You’re only digging your own grave” (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 222).

¹⁶³ See a discussion of displacement and dislocation in Brah 204.

What is conspicuous about Lee's accounts of his parents' fighting is his portrayal of his mother's volatility in the conflicts. Generally in *zainichi* Korean fiction, and in my interviews with this generation of second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, the mother is characterized as a powerless, albeit resentful, victim and the father a violent, albeit emasculated, brute. Interviewees spoke of the expression, *areru aboji taeru omoni* (violent father, the long-suffering or resilient mother) (Koh I. S. 1 May. 1999, Kaku 10 Nov. 1999, Pak, Y. H. 4 May. 1999). Chapman observes how this reveals, "an expectation of stoic acceptance of the inevitable consequences of domestic violence" (109). Some of Kim Ha Gyong's literature exemplifies this point. Lee, by contrast, not only expresses sympathy for his mother's subordinate and victimized status, but he draws attention to his mother's haughty disdain for her husband as well as her aggression, thereby displaying some sympathy for his father. The adult narrator writes, "From the point of view of my own chastisements, I wonder if mom treated him like she treated me, acting as if he wasn't really her husband" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 221).

Lee increasingly empathizes with his father in later works, very noticeably in his *Jinmen no Oiwa* [*Stone Face*] (1972). In this way Lee seems intent on reconciling the father and child. His more nuanced portrait of the mother figure also seems suggestive of a thrust towards independence, even allegorically from the motherland. Kawashima calls *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* a memorial to Lee's mother and *Jinmen no Oiwa* a memorial to his father adding, "Lee portrays his father in *Jinmen no Oiwa* with humor and in a bighearted way" (522, 525). Mizukami concurs:

In *Jinmen no Oiwa*... Lee's father is a dazzling, dynamic character portrayed with warmth; he comes across as a good man who expresses himself passionately, be it with anger or with joy. Clearly, distance and time have improved Lee's recollections. Though much of the story is sad, it is humorous too (249).

Kohiyama indicates that Lee's reconciliatory attitude towards his father involved the writer's recognition that his father's violence was a direct consequence of his own personal suffering: "To hate his father's violence was to hate his suffering, but both the violence and the suffering were imprinted on Lee" (282).

When I was younger I was very afraid of my father but time brings wisdom and new sensibilities. For a long time I couldn't understand what drove my father. It was as if he was in a really dark tunnel and there, in that dark space, was a beast driving him to his savagery. Only of late can I see a hint of light shining through that tunnel. Just maybe it is because I have tried to understand my father from a

Korean perspective, as a Korean – from one Korean to another. If that is so, maybe I thoughtlessly underestimated my father (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 15).

In *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* the domestic strife culminates in Jang Suri's decision to abandon her husband and her children. The scene where she attempts this is noteworthy for the way it depicts the child's terror and the mother's anguish:

Mother took her things out of the bureau and put them in the trunk. Suddenly she took out her Japanese kimono and with some scissors, cut it into shreds... and replaced it with her *chima* and *chogori*... Watching my mother's crazed behavior, I was overwhelmed... When she finished packing she... left out the back door. Then we knew we'd been completely abandoned. All at once we cried out to her. When she heard us, she stopped and sat down on her heels and stayed there. She began to look like a stranger and the atmosphere felt colder and colder... We stayed still where we were too, afraid to approach her. I really felt like crying... She finally bent forward as if to hide her face and sobbed. Not long after that she stood up as if nothing had happened and put her trunk back. Jang Suri died about ten months after that (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 225).

This passage contains several important clues concerning Suri's life-experience and her personality. Her departure from Korea, her loss of home, family and culture, and her inability to find happiness in Japan are all signified by her cutting up her kimono.¹⁶⁴ Her capacity to be cruel and insensitive is represented by her cool departure out the door, while her grief at her failed marriage and her experience of abandonment is indicated by her collapsing to her feet and her sobbing. Her strength of resolve is indicated by her ultimate decision to stay. Finally, her death is linked to the pain-filled events that surface in the passage, made clear by the flat and unemotional final sentence. The verdict of both her emotional estrangement from her husband as well as of her death evokes the division on the peninsula as well as the divide between *zainichi* and mainland Koreans.

Kinuta wo Utsu Onna finishes where it starts, with Jang Suri's death, as if to convey the inseparability of life and death, mother and child, and conceivably ethnicity and country; but also the idea that just as one cannot change one's parents, so one cannot escape one's cultural roots.¹⁶⁵ Holding her husband's hand, as if *she* were supporting him, her final expression is one of encouragement, "*Nagasarenaide*," which means, 'Be still,' and seems to convey 'Don't lose yourself' or 'Live as you are with pride' (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 227). The narrator recalls, "Later in life, as dad aged, I often saw him sitting

¹⁶⁴ See also Kohiyama 283-84.

¹⁶⁵ I suggest that this was Lee's assertion in his early career, though from the 1980s he begins to stop representing himself as an ethnic nationalist.

in front of mother's altar. I'd come in the room unawares and he'd be whispering there" (227). In this way, Lee communicates that Suri's life and death remained a permanent part of the family's collective memory.

Gōtō Meisei observes, "The writing of *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* was as much an exercise in coming to terms with his mother's death for Lee as it was in portraying her life story" (131). The narrator's efforts to understand his mother remain somewhat understated in the text confined as they are, much of the time, to musings like, "I wonder how hopeful she was when she met my father at the coalmine. What did she see in the young miner? Did she leave it to fate?" Or, "What did she think about, my mother, as she fulled the cloth?" (Lee, H. S. *Kinuta* 222, 224). By virtue of their impenetrability, these questions hint at Suri's sorrow in life and emphasize her lasting grief but because the son is left uninformed, she remains unfathomable to him, hence his failure to feel closure. Here Gōtō's observation is pertinent: "The death of his mother... weighs heavily on Lee's heart" (130).

The critical commentaries about the novel by members of the 1972 selection panel for the literary prize fall into two camps: those who praise Lee for the emotion and lyricism expressed in the novel – namely Gōtō Meisei, Inoue Yasushi, Nagai Tatsuo, Yasuoka Shōtarō and Takii Kosaku, (*Dai Rokkai*: 312-17). Kohiyama and Mizukami also praise the sentimentality of the novel, seeing it as nicely balancing the novel's other concerns, thus Mizukami's remark,¹⁶⁶ "Lee didn't make the story too sentimental, nor did he remain too distant; he provided a balanced portrait" (251).¹⁶⁷ Other critics claim the work is too histrionic to constitute good literature or that Lee should have produced a work of higher technical merit. These critics include writers Yoshiyuki Yasunari, Nakamura Mitsuo, Funahashi Seiichi and Niwa Fumio. According to Nakamura Mitsuo, "The scenes are too dramatic and are thus unconvincing. Lee seems to get carried away forgetting technique... In fact, I'd go so far as to say it is affected and therefore a failure" (*Dai Rokkai* 314).

Despite these criticisms *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* is a unique work of *zainichi* Korean

¹⁶⁶ Kohiyama 284.

¹⁶⁷ Also see Kawashima 522

literature for several reasons. Firstly, it takes as its primary theme a mother-son relationship. Since accounts of the father-son relationship are a major feature of the *zainichi* Korean literary archive and feature prominently in Kim Ha Gyong's oeuvre, for example, Lee's portrait of a mother-son relationship is noteworthy (Gōtō 130). The novel depicts a three dimensional and strong female character who, in her criticisms of her husband, belies the victim status to some degree. Secondly, it is told from the point of view of a child; Lee thus calls attention to the importance of the little narrative for identity. Indeed, in spite of Lee's emphasis on the determining power of the social structure in the formation of the individual the more important theme in this novel seems to be the value of personal experience. Whilst Fascism, Democracy and Nationalism constitute the meta-narratives that informed the lives of Lee's generation of *zainichi* Koreans, Lee underscores the importance of the little narrative for identity. For example, instances of violence in the story are domestic rather than at the national level – the battle field is at home. Lee links the larger, collective macro issues to the smaller, personal micro issues with allegorical vignettes. He thus discloses and narrows the distance between the meta and the little narrative and between collective and personal memories.

Finally, its very style – a lyrical requiem – in its innovative resemblance of the Korean *sinse t'aryong* makes it highly distinctive in the genre. The specifically Korean lamentation allows Lee, the story teller to point to Korean-ness – discernible in the culturally informed experiences and Korean identity of the mother – as an anchor. This anchor – the mother, and by extension, the motherland and memories of her – secures the child to a solid 'home' or cultural place of reference. Though the child must set sail on his own course, he has a place of anchorage to which he can return. Lee's use of Korean myth, cultural symbols and archetypes serves to document a type of collective memory in order to foster an appreciation of commonality between *zainichi* Koreans and the Korean homeland.

While I have read into Lee's novel an allegory of the nation, as have both Takeda Seiji and Beverly Nelson, I believe a caveat is in order. To only read the novel as an allegory runs the risk of using the bodies of *zainichi* Koreans as a medium for the expression of "Korean-ness" in the same way that feminist theory accuses men of using women's bodies as a mirror to characterise their own identity (Grosz 232). This leaves

women/*zainichi* Koreans with no visible identity except as the dispossessed. By emphasising the *zainichi* Korean family household as a microcosmic theatre of “poor dispossessed Korea” the actions of the individual in that family become symbolic and fixed. Actions of individuals therefore lose their performative potential and have a prescriptive quality. I believe that Lee aspires, on the contrary, to allow for both a past within which to locate oneself as well as an open-ended future – one that is not fixed or imposed but rather one that is created and self-determined.

Irigaray states that if women in particular want to “stop being merely the supporters or underside of the social order, they must develop a horizon, a framework appropriate to them” (Grosz 180). This involves having a validated past within which to locate themselves. However a being situated only in the reflection of the past and the immediacy of the present has no autonomy but is inert and fixed. To be able to live the present as one’s own, it is also necessary to have some conception of the future. This future need not be predictable but rather a trajectory, a broad direction, a mode of becoming. The belief that we should all aim “to be the poets of our own lives” stands out in the philosophy of Nietzsche (299). It is also evident in Lee’s work. In the words of Michel Foucault, “Self is not given but we must produce ourselves like a work of art” (qtd. in Rabinow 432). Lee’s pragmatic approach to becoming becomes increasingly evident in his novel *Kayako no Tameni* to which I now turn

Chapter Six

李恢成 Lee Hoe Sung

「伽椰子のために」 *Kayako no Tameni* [*For Kayako*] (1970)

Whereas the novel *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* is a lyrical tale about the mother-son relationship told from the viewpoint of a child, *Kayako no Tameni* is primarily a novel about the multifaceted issue of identity formation and self-consciousness for the second-generation *zainichi* Korean adolescent male during the late 1950s and 1960s. The story line follows the hero's psychological and emotional quest to foster a positive sense of self, vis-à-vis his cultural identity. The complexities of appropriating a cultural identity amidst highly opposing ideologies and shifting political paradigms – Korean nationalism, Japanese democracy, and finally socialism – demarcate the second-generation *zainichi* Korean experience and that of Im San Juni, the hero of *Kayako no Tameni*. Disenchanted with post-war democracy in Japan, he is inspired by socialist nationalism in North Korea and attempts to realize a Korean cultural identity by learning Korean history and engaging in political activities as well as mastering sociolinguistic skills. However, he encounters unexpected familial and cultural dilemmas, which complicate his quest to become 'Korean.' For one thing he is in love with Kayako, a Japanese war orphan. For another he must decide where to carry out the cultural and political undertaking of his Korean identity construction – in Japan or in the DPRK. San Juni is torn between his love for Kayako and his desire to repatriate and eventually opts to postpone the latter until he can convince Kayako to join him. However, he runs into various setbacks and sees his love affair, as well as his idealized notions of Korean-ness and the homeland break down. The culture of Japan is racist and male chauvinist and the fate of Kayako, the weaker sex in a world that privileges men, is unenviable. Sadly, *zainichi* Koreans would, for the most part, see their dreams for civil liberties in Japan or an agreeable repatriation to the North turn to dust. Those who stayed in Japan would not achieve adequate civil rights for another decade or so. Many of the repatriates were never heard from again. The final scene shows the hero, eleven years later, bleakly cognisant of this very predicament. This chapter outlines the socio-political configurations that influenced Lee's generation of *zainichi* Koreans and

saw them emerge hardened by their experiences of lived reality. This is followed by a close reading of Lee's *Kayako no Tameni*, which depicts how one *zainichi* Korean is found to continually transform himself in order to overcome the difference between his ideals and lived reality.

Though Japan's military rule over Korea ended on August 15, 1945, it would be misleading to imply that Koreans underwent a straightforward, painless transition from being Japanese nationals to reassuming Korean nationality and statehood. Japan's defeat by the USA marked the beginning of a period of self-transformation for this particular generation.¹⁶⁸ The problem for them was how to reconcile their feelings of guilt and shame at having been imperial fascists and having been defeated with their post-occupation feelings of jubilation and nationalist liberation. They were suddenly expected to assume a Korean identity, an identity they had hitherto denied (Sakuma "On Lee" 1).

Moreover, becoming Korean meant becoming socialist (Takeda *Zainichi* 30). Poet Kim Shi Jong voiced both the confusion they felt and the urgency with which they were required to reconcile the two differing ideological stances:

After defeat we felt duty-bound to... denounce the former colonialist masquerade that was imperial fascism and we had to hurry. The change was sudden and drastic... In order to make amends for our devotion to the Emperor, we were expected to put all our efforts into Korean nationalism... Second-generation *zainichi* Koreans had to assume a new identity as ethnic Koreans and we had to commit to socialism (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 30, 32).

Most first-generation Koreans opposed the totalitarian military regimes installed in the ROK and valued the promise of socialism espoused by the then more 'democratic,' DPRK, headed by the beloved anti-Japanese independence fighter Kim Il Sung.¹⁶⁹ Second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, too, were receptive to the paradigm of socialist patriotism that defined the changing era. Lee's views, like those of his peers, were very much slanted to the North and all of his patriotism pointed to the DPRK (McCormack qtd. in Ryang *North* xiii, cf Lie *Zainichi* 178).

¹⁶⁸ 日本人から「一気に」朝鮮人になるという社会原理の転向の経路を示した (Sakuma Takeda/Lee 1).

¹⁶⁹ In the 1950s the DPRK had more welfare facilities and free education and was a richer state than the ROK (Pak Y. H. 2001).

However, the prevalent socialist-nationalist vision became increasingly influenced by rigid *Chongryun* precepts and practices and deteriorated into state nationalism (Takeda *Zainichi* 34-35). Additionally, in the early 1970s reports of corruption and poverty in the DPRK were becoming more common giving rise to disillusionment amongst *zainichi* Koreans vis-à-vis the northern socialist state. Also the pro-democracy student movement in the ROK, which climaxed on April 4, 1960 forcing the autocratic president Syngman Rhee to flee, inspired Lee's generation to look to democracy as an ideal form of representation for the people.¹⁷⁰

Until the April Fourth Revolution, for Lee the ROK was a place to be ashamed of and dissociate oneself from. It was considered a home to corrupt politicians and crooked capitalist entrepreneurs, who were former pro-Japanese collaborators.¹⁷¹ It was a deplorable place that would someday be saved by the DPRK and socialist ideology... For the first time Lee was able to envisage an image of Koreans and Korea as a complete inclusive entity... His view of 'homeland' changed dramatically with the April Fourth Revolution and he realized that there were heroes on the streets of South Korea. He saw how powerful these simple people were, which thrilled him... The April Fourth Revolution filled Lee's intellectual vacuum and it was then... that he decided to put all his efforts into democratization and unification of the peninsula (Kim, C. A. 227-29).¹⁷²

In the meantime, in Japan, during the 1945-1952 US led allied occupation, the US had ushered in massive constitutional reforms to ensure that democracy took root in the Japanese education system and society at large. Lee, like his Japanese and *zainichi* Korean peers, had thus been taught democratic ideals in the post-war era over a prolonged period of time and had been taught to view democracy as an ideal form of governance (Takeda *Zainichi* 81). Lee himself is quoted as saying, "I was educated in the Japanese school system and was versed in democracy" (qtd. in Nakazato 265). And, "Democracy was a good teacher.... It was a superior learning for me who had been a mini-fascist before the war" (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 36).

Democracy rejected notions of Japanese superiority and staunchly denounced racism, so it became a particularly compelling social principle for second-generation *zainichi* Koreans. Additionally, post-war democracy challenged existing feudalistic notions of the individual's place in the family and society. A basic precept of classical

¹⁷⁰ He fled to Hawaii.

¹⁷¹ *Shinnichi ha*

¹⁷² The notion of homeland already had a geographically large significance for the writer because, unusually, his mother originally hailed from the south and his father from the north.

Confucian Korean philosophy was filial piety which demanded the child show respect for the father and sacrifice self-interest for the good and honor of the family. First-generation *zainichi* Koreans tended to endorse the Confucian beliefs that people necessarily occupy hierarchical positions in the family and society, that an individual is only one member of the more important family unit and must accept his or her fixed standing within that unit. Pak Hwa-mi calls attention to prejudice against women who do not match the commonly expected role of wife and mother. She suggests that “The *zainichi* Korean family is feudalistic and patriarchal, and is itself responsible for the oppression of women in general and the exclusion of women who do not fit into the orthodox role of wife, mother and caregiver” (qtd. in Chapman 108).

In contrast, post-war democracy stipulated that a person can act as a free agent, can get an education and can succeed as an independent entity in society. “The idea that the potential of the individual was limitless was a complete novelty in the face of traditionally accepted feudalistic notions of the family and was wholeheartedly embraced by second-generation *zainichi* Koreans” (Takeda *Zainichi* 37). Post-war democracy thus functioned as a new way to critique and escape the confines of the family, allowing Lee’s generation to openly question, challenge and rebel against the feudalistic expectations of elder family members and in particular the figure of the authoritarian father. Lee writes, “One thing was certain: it was dad’s old worldliness... I think I was wildly trying to run away from that... I actually could not be there without thinking how much I wanted to escape” (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 18). Lee asserted, “If you reexamine the family via the lens of democracy you will see what is old therein and become critical” (qtd. in Nakazato 265). Thus Lee, in his fiction, illustrates how democracy was an ideological tool with which to escape the feudalistic Korean household, which was controlled by a brutal tyrannical father (Sakuma *Takeda/Lee* 2 and Takeda *Zainichi* 35, 47-8).

Much of Lee’s early fiction explores conflict in the father-son relationship and the generational discord that afflicted so many *zainichi* Korean families. The father stands out as violent, old-fashioned and authoritarian, especially in *Matafutatabi No Michi* [*The Beaten Path*] (1969), *Warera Seishun no Tojo Nite* [*In Our Prime*] (1969), *Shisha*

No Nokoshita Mono [What the Dead Left Behind] (1970) and *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna* [The Cloth Fuller] (1971) (Watanabe 38). Lee's narratives succinctly illustrate that although the first-generation father pressures the son to "Be Korean. Be Korean" the son, without a positive role model, doesn't know how to be Korean, nor does he want to be like his 'Korean' father (Takeda *Zainichi* 20). In Lee's 1972 novel *Jinmen no Oiwa* [Stone Face], the main character muses about the distance between himself and his father, "Father wonders why we don't respect him and gets angry... It seemed as if he were put out because we would not listen to him" (qtd. in Takeda *Zainichi* 20). The son's priority is to become independent of his father and 'become somebody' in Japanese society" (Takeda *Zainichi* 20). When the Korean father sees his son personify Japanese values and abandon the Korean home, he further alienates the son with his increased anger and endless complaints.

The conflict between the feudalistic father and modern son features prominently in Japanese literature. The so-called 'father of modern Japanese literature,' Shiga Naoya, is the most celebrated writer to take up the father-son relationship as a literary theme. Other Japanese writers who have given attention to this theme include Kikuchi Kan and Dazai Osamu. But the father-son/child relationship stands out in *zainichi* Korean literature as one of its most important themes, taken up by almost every writer until the 1990s. In contrast to Japanese literary treatment of this theme, the question of ethnicity is always implicated in the interaction between the *zainichi* Korean father-son. While the Japanese characters created by the Japanese writers mentioned above struggle to break away from their father and home towards independence and autonomy, the struggle for the *zainichi* Korean characters is twice as challenging. For one thing, the Korean father's control of his home and family is virtually invincible. His authority is based almost wholly on physical strength and threats, whereas the authority of the Japanese fictional father is generally based on social standing and prestige. For another, *zainichi* Korean youths found it difficult to become independent or autonomous in Japanese society. Away from home there was often no place for them to turn for a sense of agency or power. The confusion, impotence and rage experienced by the *zainichi* Korean protagonists in the narratives of writers like Kim Ha Gyong, Yan Sō Gil and Lee Hoe Sung testify to the lack of options available to *zainichi* Korean youths in Japan between the 1950s and the 1970s.

Unlike their Japanese counterparts, *zainichi* Korean heroes in fiction rarely succeed in Japanese society. Over time Lee and his peers began to perceive the limitations of democracy in Japan and question its values. The gap between democratic social ideals and their usefulness in promoting equality became increasingly apparent as real life circumstances reminded Koreans that they were different and that because of their Korean ethnicity they were denied civil, social, educational, economic and political rights. In short, democracy only worked to give Japanese members of society authority and agency. Hayashi Kōji explains, “In spite of the fact that Lee spoke Japanese, because of his Korean blood, he was set apart from the Japanese and placed in the position of ‘Other’. This was the tragedy every *zainichi* Korean experienced” (*Kozarushū* 16). Takeda holds that, “The multi-layered rejection by Japanese society may not always appear in the same way but it always appears... Post-war democracy is rendered meaningless in the face of civil injustice” (*Zainichi* 53-54).

Lee’s novels illustrate the handicaps the *zainichi* Korean minority face in Japanese society and the visible and invisible barriers racism poses; for example, a lack of employment opportunities for well-educated protagonists and rejection in the marriage stakes and in society at large. In Lee’s tales of troubled young *zainichi* Koreans between the 1950s and 1970s one comprehends that there is no guarantee of success for the minority adolescent, even if he or she attains an education or is a model citizen.

The focus on the psychological journey through tribulation of the young hero in Lee’s novels has led critics like Takeda and Ikeda to describe Lee’s novel as humanist and to point to the influence of the Silver Birch Group on Lee’s writing (Takeda *Zainichi* 40, 44, 49). In the classic humanist novel, the hero keeps bumping into crises and transcends them. In some respects then, *Kayako no Tameni* is such a novel as it is essentially a modern story about an individual who must face a number of internal crises in order to self-actualize. However, ‘humanist’ novels by writers associated with the Silver Birch Group assure their readers that effort yields success; the hero succeeds and all his/her pains and struggles are considered to have been worth it. But such a positive outcome is not necessarily forthcoming for Lee’s *zainichi* Korean characters. Rather, Lee seems intent on demonstrating that the crises and obstacles the minority adolescent must face may be insurmountable in a decidedly *undemocratic* society. This

is clearly conveyed in *Kayako no Tameni*, a nuanced story that takes into account life's ambiguities, and illustrates the distance that the hero must journey in order achieve a positive sense of identity in a melancholic oppressive post-war Japan

Kayako no Tameni is the story of an ill-fated love affair between a second-generation *zainichi* Korean, Im San Juni, the hero, and a Japanese girl, Matsumoto Kayako. To understand the reasons behind the breakdown of their relationship Lee examines the tension between the hero's attempts to develop a Korean subjectivity and simultaneously achieve a successful relationship with Kayako. Set in Hokkaidō and Tokyo in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the narrative follows San Juni through his early university years and highlights the phenomenal Repatriation Movement of tens of thousands of *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea (1959-1984). Although it is narrated in the third-person, it is largely an autobiographical 'I' novel and the character Im San Juni is based on Lee Hoe Sung himself (Lee, H. S. 9 Sep. 2000).

The story begins in 1967, when San Juni briefly returns to R Village in Hokkaidō, whereupon he recalls his wrenching love affair with Kayako from eleven years earlier. The love affair forms the basis of the story. With this scene of remembrance Lee immediately sets the tone: it is a cold grey winter day and a mournful San Juni stands alone at the deserted seaside. The waves look black and forbidding and the crows signal death. With this melancholy backdrop the narrator starts to recount the summer of 1956.

San Juni has just entered university in Tokyo and visits his hometown, S city in Hokkaidō, for the holidays.¹⁷³ He also visits R village to visit his uncle Chong Sun Chu, who, like the Im family, had also come to Japan from Karafuto (Sakhalin). Chong, who now goes by the name of Matsumoto Akio, reintroduces San Juni to his Japanese wife and their adopted Japanese daughter, Kayako, a softly-spoken high-school student. Kayako reminds San Juni that they'd met a decade earlier, before their evacuation from Karafuto. He had then teased her with a snake skin attached to a tree branch making her fall – an omen arguably foreshadowing the breakdown of their relationship.

Lee outlines San Juni's family's adverse history, and in doing so conveys how

¹⁷³ Sapporo.

difficult life was for *zainichi* Koreans in the 1950s.

All through school and Japan's rapid economic growth they only had two meals a day... Life was particularly bad the first five years after they left Karafuto (Sakhalin). Once dad came home with two pigs on his bike and hanging them upside down and slapping their bellies he said, "We'll be rich!" He had it all worked out. In one year there would be ten piglets and then... riches! But his math was all addition. He'd forgotten how to subtract... Some were trampled on, some died of cholera... In the end he raised thirty pigs but our lives did not improve one bit... The pigs were big eaters and San Juni and his step mother had to collect food for them out of the rubbish of their Japanese neighbors... She subtracted out what the family could eat from the pig's food (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 57-58).

The father in *Kayako no Tameni* is depicted as old-fashioned, ineffectual and aggressive. He wants his sons to conform to anachronistic expectations but fails to offer any meaningful guidance or direction. In scrutinizing the father-son relationship Lee emphasizes how the first-generation father's incessant complaining drives his three sons, Ki Juni, Il Juni and San Juni away: San Juni 'escapes' as soon as he graduates from high school.

Lee builds up a tangible tension in Chapters Two and Three, highlighting the discrepancies in philosophical and social points of view between the father and the sons, to breaking point in Chapter Four, in which Il Juni has an explosive confrontation with father and threatens to kill him. The differing ideological positions espoused by the DPRK and the ROK are allegorized in the characters of the old-fashioned, authoritarian socialist father, who literally belongs to the pro-North 'organization' and the modern, self-interested capitalist son, who conspicuously rejects the pro-North 'organization'. The rift then may allegorize the divide on the Korean Peninsula. Neither side will back down despite a seeming desire to reconcile. Rather than actually fight and risk losing or demolishing the 'other,' equivalent to 'half of one's self,' they remain in a fixed stalemate.

San Juni escapes the parental home, moves in with a cousin in Tokyo and attends night school to prepare for university entrance exams while doing construction work on the side.¹⁷⁴ At University San Juni is befriended by *zainichi* Korean student activist Pak Chō who invites him to participate in *Zai Nippon Chōsen Ryugakusei Dōmei* (*Ryūgakudōmei*), a *Chongryun* affiliated student organization. This forces San

¹⁷⁴ Lee did just that prior to entering Waseda University and in this regard appears auto-biographical.

Juni to come to a decision regarding how he would introduce himself from now on, as Korean or not. It is through his membership in *Ryūgakudōmei* that a liberating transformation in his consciousness about his identity takes place. He takes the plunge to 'become Korean.'

At this point in the novel it seems that Lee is trying to show second-generation readers how to fashion a Korean subjectivity that incorporates affirmative ethnic markers, such as linguistic and cultural knowledge and that discards negative beliefs and/or traits, such as authoritarianism and the resorting to domestic violence, as exemplified by the first-generation Korean father. The hero's search for an independent identity then becomes increasingly characterized by a pragmatic commitment to positive transformation and a turn away from the corrosive resentment of the Japanese, which he associates with his father's generation. As Watanabe Sumiko puts it, Lee presents us with, "a landmark case of how not to be like his father" (33).

Though busy with his new Korean student-centered activities, San Juni is unable to forget Kayako and he pays the Matsumoto family another visit. He and Kayako gradually develop an unassuming romance during the spring of 1957. It surfaces that Kayako was abandoned by her mother and the latter's then boyfriend, who raped her when she was a mere six years old. Kayako was then adopted and evacuated from Karafuto with her new parents. Though Japanese it is no coincidence that her adopted Korean father (or the author) gives her a Korean name: Kayako is the name of a traditional Korean instrument. She tells San Juni, "'Everyone always called me Korean, which is funny because I am Japanese... In any case being Korean or being Japanese, it's all the same.' He looked at her and thought, 'She's got it together more than I have; I don't have any confidence about being Korean'" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 54).

After their first kiss, San Juni says, in a compelling turn of phrase, "Don't you think our kiss is a revenge on the war?" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 111-12). The tragic personal histories of San Juni and Kayako arguably bring the couple together and strengthen their attachment. Takeda writes, "Both young heroes believe their love will heal their spiritual wounds... Love is represented as an all-powerful panacea to life's problems" (*Zainichi* 60-61).

The love affair soon runs into obstacles though because of the couple's different cultures. Mrs. Matsumoto, Kayako's mother, tells Kayako again and again not

to marry a Korean. The Korean Mr. Matsumoto is on the verge of naturalizing and he too frowns on Kayako's relationship with San Juni. For one thing San Juni, despite being a university student, is virtually unemployable because he is Korean. For another, Mr. Matsumoto is unwilling to relinquish Kayako, arguing that she is too young. San Juni's father, for his part, also raises fierce objections to his son dating a '*choppari*' (a derogatory term for a Japanese), saying, "'Never marry a Japanese, if you do you'll break down in tears. It won't work. There are countless examples'" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 60). Lee intentionally exposes the reader to the objections of both sides in a bid to reveal how strong barriers to inter-ethnic marriages were in the early post-war period. However, he also depicts the two youngsters' determination to reject such racist beliefs.¹⁷⁵ Both Kayako and San Juni insist that their love will succeed. To the extent that the lovers ignore their parents' objections, Lee's novel can be seen as a powerful portrayal of the will of the second-generation *zainichi* Korean to overcome the older generation's hatred of Japanese society and vice versa. They hope to achieve a successful interracial love but to also retain their own ethnic affiliations.

Conversely San Juni is ultimately unable to commit both to Kayako and to his (perceived) duties as a Korean, Lee's novel thus reveals the impractical idealism of such a position. San Juni is torn between his patriotism and a stated desire to repatriate to the DPRK, and his desire to remain loyal to Kayako in Japan. His inner struggle finally erupts in arguments with Kayako. He pressures her to agree to leave Japan with him, but, as an only and adopted-child, she feels unable and unwilling to abandon her parents.

As San Juni's loyalty to the student organization *Ryūgakudō* and 'the Korean cause' intensifies he begins to identify himself as a 'foreigner in Japan,' and becomes increasingly swept up in the excitement about repatriation.

San Juni: "Do I fit into the category of foreign student?"

Pak: "Sure, it's odd I know, but we do have a country to go back to" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 92).

At *Ryūgakudō* San Juni meets Che Myong Hee, a first-generation Korean woman of his age. Lee portrays her as a heroic survivor of the April 3, 1948 Saishutō (Cheju) Massacre about which Kim Sok Pom writes so compellingly. Lee's inclusion of a description of the massacre is one of the few existing in *zainichi* Korean literature,

¹⁷⁵ See also Takeda *Zainichi* 61.

outside of the works of Kim Sok Pom. Lee, being an *Akutagawa Prize* winner, enjoyed a large Japanese readership, so his mention of the massacre is noteworthy for being the only one that many Japanese are likely to encounter:¹⁷⁶

Myong Hee: I was ten but I'll never forget. It was hell on earth. In Dante's *Inferno* they all had graves but people on Saishūtō didn't... Countless people were killed. Every family lost someone. Even if only one family member were sympathetic with the communists, the family would be tortured. My entire village was massacred... The longer the people revolted the worse the oppression became. Of 300,000 islanders, 80,000 were killed or went missing. This includes my own family. My mom saved my life by hiding me in the barn. A man found me, hesitated and left. Then I heard them shoot my family (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 141-42).

Che Myong Hee forms a deliberate, to the point of affected, contrast with that of Kayako. Portrayed by Lee in glowing terms, she is strong, bright and confident. In contrast, Kayako is portrayed as weak, depressed and introverted. In one scene San Juni maliciously calls Kayako 'gimpy' because she walks with a limp. More striking perhaps is the degree to which Myong Hee, in contrast to Kayako, is presented as chaste and unattainable, implicitly desirable, whereas Kayako is ultimately presented as immoral and 'easy,' implicitly undesirable.

Lee also identifies the differences between San Juni, the 'hybrid' *zainichi* Korean, and Myong Hee, the 'authentic' Korean. Myong Hee is a model of dedication to the 'Korean cause.' She not only dresses as a Korean, she plays Korean drums and is sure of her Korean identity. As such she becomes an important role model for San Juni, and arguably for Lee's readership. She has the single-minded goal of returning to the DPRK and participating in building the socialist state, "I want to go back to Korea on the first boat, even sooner" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 139). She is never confused or ambivalent, but is determined to achieve her ambition. San Juni, on the other hand, is ambivalent, undecided and ill at ease. San Juni is confused about his identity and though he feels committed to repatriation to his 'homeland,' he also feels committed to Kayako. By contrasting Myong Hee with San Juni, Lee draws attention to his hero's

¹⁷⁶ Few Japanese were reading Kim Sok Pom's literature in the 1970s. Kim achieved greater recognition, and accolades, in the late 1980s and 1990s. Though he is well known within the Japanese literary establishment, it can be claimed that he does not have a large Japanese readership. Kim's literature is considered 'difficult' because he uses old or complex Chinese characters, complex sentences, and writes creative fiction (as opposed to auto-biographical 'I' novel fiction. Lee on the other hand, reached a wide Japanese audience with his easy, and interesting, to read 'I' novel accounts of *zainichi* Korean life in Japan. Again, his account, of the Yon San Massacre in *Kayako no Tameni*, was praised for drawing attention to the little-known plight that led to the exodus of forty thousand Cheju Koreans to Japan.

‘*zainichi*-ness,’ which is, as a rule, portrayed as disadvantageous. My reading is that Lee intended the character of Myong Hee to inspire *zainichi* Korean readers towards a kind of Korean metamorphosis – toward becoming more ‘authentically’ Korean.¹⁷⁷

Though little known amongst Japanese, the Repatriation Movement, known in North Korea as “the Great Return to the Fatherland” and in Japanese as *kikoku undō*, it was and remains one of the most important developments in *zainichi* Korean history to date (Morris-Suzuki 101). The Repatriation Movement arguably defines the 1960s for *zainichi* Koreans, in stark contrast to the way Japan’s rapid economic growth defines the 1960s for Japanese.¹⁷⁸ *Zainichi* Koreans in the 1950s lived a segregated and hopeless existence. They faced severe discrimination and had every reason to worry about their children’s future (*Rakuen*; Morris-Suzuki 122). This is hardly an isolated view and highlights the circumstances that gave rise to the Repatriation Movement to North Korea, about which Lee writes so forcefully in *Kayako No Tameni*. He depicts the Repatriation Movement as an instance of closing the distance between *zainichi* Koreans and their homeland.

In August 1959, *Chongryun* and the Japanese Red Cross reached an agreement to repatriate *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea (*Rakuen*). *Chongryun* promised *zainichi* Koreans that they would finally be able to fulfill their dreams in the DPRK. The promise of a homeland was significant (*Rakuen*). *Zainichi* Koreans signed up, en masse, and or planned to return as soon as they tied up loose ends in Japan. Some *zainichi* Koreans – especially the wealthy – decided to stay in Japan but they were the exception rather than the rule. Mr. Chang Myong Su a former member of *Chongryun*, who helped many people repatriate explains, “Until *Chongryun* and the Red Cross reached that agreement there was no where for us to go. We had no homeland. Now we were offered a homeland. We were beside ourselves with joy” (*Rakuen*). Morris-Suzuki writes:

The North Korean leader Kim Il Sung issued a statement welcoming *Zainichi* Koreans to the Socialist Fatherland and offering them free transport, homes, jobs, education and welfare. Suddenly, mainstream and community newspapers and magazines in Japan were full of headlines proclaiming, “Return of Compatriots from Japan Welcomed: Livelihood to Be Completely Guaranteed.”

¹⁷⁷ Hayashi Kōji also observes how weak San Juni appears in contrast with Myong Hee (*Kozarushū* 27).

¹⁷⁸ The 帰国運動 *Kikoku Undō* [Repatriation Movement] is occasionally referred to as 北送 *Hokuri*.

For those who had few prospects in Japan, it was an attractive proposition (30).

The first ship left Niigata in December 1959 with 975 people on board. By December 1961, 70,000 *zainichi* Koreans had left Japan. By 1984, the number had reached 93,000 (*Rakuen*). Teen-agers attending Korean schools, the majority of which were sponsored by the DPRK and *Chongryun*, were encouraged by teachers and peers and were thus particularly eager to start a new life in their 'homeland' (Morris-Suzuki 219). "The miseries of life in Japan...were vividly contrasted with the hope of a new life in the DPRK, readers were assured that the state would provide all the basic necessities of life... free of charge" (Morris-Suzuki 160). Additionally, thousands of Japanese women, married to *zainichi* Koreans, accompanied their husbands to the north (Morris-Suzuki 12). Lee portrays the Repatriation Movement in positive terms and describes the lead up to it with compelling passion.

The *zainichi* Korean Repatriation Movement had an impact on all six hundred thousand *zainichi* Koreans in Japan. No one wanted to live in Japan and the longer one lived there the more one wanted to go home...Young *zainichi* Koreans needed hope. This formed the backdrop to the ground swell of people applying to repatriate. Now in the *zainichi* Korean slums, the word was out, 'We're going home.' It was time to go back to Korea (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 135).

Though he paints the Repatriation Movement in glowing terms Lee also draws attention to the pressure experienced by San Juni and by extension, second-generation *zainichi* Koreans to go to the DPRK. San Juni is told, "If you don't sign up to repatriate you are not a true patriot; you are a traitor. Your commitment to your ethnicity is meaningless" (*Kayako* 146, 148). As David Chapman explains, "The sensitive nature of the issue of whether or not one was oriented towards the homeland... created friction and division within the *zainichi* community... *Chongryun* rejected any notion of generational change that promoted permanency (in Japan)" (40). Even delaying one's departure was read as a lack of patriotism, a form of ethnic nihilism and consequently San Juni becomes obsessed with justifying his own delay: "The issue is not whether to repatriate or not, but whether to do so straight away or not. In my case I can't leave now because I can't leave Kayako" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 149).¹⁷⁹

San Juni runs into difficulties when the disparity between his aspirations and ideals clash with the realities of his existence. San Juni is caught between two clear

¹⁷⁹ Also in Takeda *Zainichi* 62.

opposing life choices – ethnic nationalism or a romantic relationship. The impact of the Japanese social environment on Koreans and hence on the relationship that San Juni has with Kayako is a key factor in the hero's dilemma. San Juni expresses his discontent with Japan saying, "I keep thinking the darkness in my soul will be with me as long as I am in Japan... If things stay as they are, it will be the end of me. It would be better for me to just go to North Korea and start again over there" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 186). Rampant racism in Japan during the 1950s and 1960s thwarted *zainichi* Korean youth at almost every turn, not least in terms of employment opportunities and marriage; this is powerfully communicated in the novel. From an historical perspective it may accurately depict the despair *zainichi* Koreans experienced while living in Japan, making sense of their widespread determination to repatriate during that era (Bae; Kim, C. J.; Morris-Suzuki 160). The hugely important decision to repatriate to North Korea has the potential to fulfill San Juni's dream of finding a homeland and 'belonging' somewhere, or of further distancing him from his 'love' and his current 'home.' Would repatriation be a dream-come-true or a pipe-dream?

Somewhat unexpectedly the breakdown of the relationship between San Juni and Kayako is ultimately attributed to Kayako's sexual history. She admits to San Juni that she had sex with a much older man – a stranger in fact – and consequently deems herself unworthy of love. Presumably the rape she experienced at the age of six, at the hands of her mother's then boyfriend, led to promiscuity on her part. Her mother is also characterized as promiscuous and is held responsible for being contaminated and for having sullied Kayako's blood. This notion of the Japanese mother and daughter having contaminated blood is an interesting twist on the notion of Koreans having contaminated blood. This important aspect of the novel goes unmentioned in all of the literary reviews I have consulted and this is disappointing, though perhaps not surprising given that the majority are male and therefore perhaps unwilling to analyze female sexuality. The critics may also have been unwilling to criticize Lee, an up and coming *zainichi* Korean writer. Alternatively, the oversight may have been due to careless neglect – a not uncommon fate for heroines in literature.

From a contemporary perspective Lee's negative depiction of Kayako's

femininity and her sexual conduct is problematic for several reasons. From Chapters One to Fourteen Kayako is portrayed as an innocent *girl* (as opposed to a woman) and San Juni is depicted as having chosen a ‘good’ girl. The text endorses the notion that as long as a *girl* is a virgin she is a suitable potential wife. The subtext hints that had San Juni known Kayako was ‘sullied,’ he would not have considered her for marriage, but it fails to justify such a principle nor does it require this same standard of behaviour from San Juni himself. At no point in the narrative is San Juni’s own sexual history or virtue scrutinized, thus males appear exempt from such stigmatization in the novel. For example, the hero’s brother, Il Juni, a confirmed playboy who has no intentions of marrying the Japanese women he sleeps with, is never characterized as ‘sullied’ or inherently ‘unworthy of love,’ though, by the standards set up in the novel he should be. He plans to choose a ‘good (i.e. virgin) Korean girl.’ The implicit condoning of the difference in standards used to judge a person’s character or worth, depending on their gender, is arguably a conspicuous weakness in Lee’s novel.

Secondly, the novel endorses the erroneous notion that rape victims are wont to be promiscuous, or that a woman’s blood is contaminated if she engages in unsanctioned sexual activity. The idea that there is such a phenomenon as ‘contaminated blood’ and that it can be transmitted to one’s progeny is taken for granted; indeed it is the only explanation that Lee gives for Kayako’s behavior. While this may accurately reflect the patriarchal attitudes of the 1950s, it also suggests that Lee is hardly radical or progressive in his treatment or attitude towards women.

That Kayako condemns herself seems a convenient way to avoid having anyone else bear responsibility for her fate. Kayako is expected to carry the shame of the rape encounter and is not permitted to transcend it. It defines her, both as a victim and as polluted. It also means that the traditional patriarchal roles of men – as protectors or aggressors, and women – as perpetual victims in need of protection or contaminated playgirls, are kept safely in place. Even more disturbing is the fact that the rape of women by men appears in this novel, and in Lee’s novel *Seikyū no Yado* [*The Blue Hill Lodge*] (1971), almost as an unexceptional norm and is effectively excused. It is something that women, not men, have to deal with, and in keeping with this attitude it is hardly scrutinized let alone censured, except in the most perfunctory or debatably egotistical remarks by the male partner, “I’d like to kill the guy who did it.”

The text suggests that Kayako betrays San Juni, but I see it differently: by abandoning her and ultimately attributing her licentiousness to her 'bad blood' it is San Juni who, in fact, betrays Kayako. By attributing her lifestyle to her bad blood or innate dissoluteness, as opposed to attributing it to either her free will, or even a reaction to trauma inflicted on her, San Juni is able to avoid feeling rejected or having to create constructive solutions. We can say then that rather than having Kayako define her own sexuality, Lee has Kayako's sexuality define her.

Though most critics identify some of the complexities of the relationship, they fail to interrogate the couples' inability to communicate, namely Kayako's complaints and her decision to betray San Juni by sleeping with other men while ostensibly awaiting his return. For example, Kayako is concerned that she and San Juni are too similar and she feels patronized by San Juni. She tells him, "It wouldn't work with you San Juni. We are too alike, we are like brother and sister and we don't match. If I stay with you, I will always feel like you are my brother and I won't be able to stand it" (Lee, H. S. *Kayako* 215).

Not only do her complaints in effect go unnoticed, she herself goes largely unnoticed. The author and critics alike appear only interested in San Juni, his ethnicity, and his related identity crisis to the exclusion of any interest in Kayako's identity crisis. Unfortunately San Juni fails Kayako. Lee, perhaps unknowingly, portrays the agency of the Japanese female as more limited than that of the minority male in this story. Yet he himself arguably fails to notice this even as he deconstructs the minoritization of the Korean male in a Japanese context. Sadly it seems a given that women are always the underclass.

In view of the constant focus on San Juni's inner turmoil Lee conveys the idea that ethnic differences are what drives the couple apart. In short, the writer narrowly depicts the relationship as doomed from the start because of ethnic-based conflicts of interest. In *Kayako no Tameni* ethnic differences are portrayed as responsible not only for the demise of San Juni's and Kayako's relationship, but also for the unhappiness in the Matsumoto marriage and that of *zainichi* Korean character, Pak and his Japanese wife, Michiko, who conspicuously consider separation at the end of the novel. Thus despite having San Juni and Kayako initially declare their determination not to 'be like their parents' or let their ethnic differences sabotage their relationship, it seems that it is

Lee's ultimate intention to demonstrate that indeed ethnic differences cannot be surmounted and that the socio-political distance between *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese did not diminish over the post-war period.

Lee ultimately depicts the goals of ethnic self-determination and successful interracial marriage as mutually exclusive and most Japanese critics have tended to validate this view (Sakuma *Kayako* 2). Hayashi Kōji writes, "This was a love that was doomed from the start" (*Kozarushū* 16-17). The novel suggests that neither character can transcend the scars of the war, of history, and of racism to form a successful union. To the extent that Lee's depiction can be seen as an allegory for the Korea-Japan relationship, and in particular the *zainichi* Korean-Japanese relationship, it is very pessimistic about the possibility of cultural reconciliation.

Ironically, there are elements in the text that arguably defy the notion that ethnicity is the couple's foremost obstacle. After all they can and do defy their parents and live together, and San Juni can and does defer repatriating, and Kayako does agree to go to North Korea. One could even argue that their problems are merely compounded by dilemmas that are labeled ethnic in nature when they could as likely be labeled familial and social pressures. It is because of this level of ambiguity that I believe the breakdown of the relationship demands a more nuanced analysis, one which takes into account Kayako's experience of the relationship.

This all suggests the limitations of reading *zainichi* Korean literature through the lens/framework of ethnicity and the role of ethnicity only. To the extent that Japanese critics have failed to sufficiently consider the other factors that contributed to the breakdown of the relationship their analyses must be seen as deficient. To place the onus of success in a relationship on the question of ethnicity is not only misleading, it is detrimental to the notion that people can construct successful inter-cultural or inter-ethnic relationships. It works to sustain or justify exclusivity and it encourages people to neglect to examine all contributory factors in a breakdown of inter-ethnic relationships.

The novel's last scene takes place in 1967, eleven years after the events of the first scene. San Juni is now married with children and upon hearing his 'uncle' Matsumoto has died he revisits R Village to pay his respects, a necessary formality. Momentously he sees a child playing in the street. The little girl reminds him of Kayako.

Her name, she tells him, is Miwako, which was Kayako's original Japanese name. San Juni immediately understands that this is Kayako's little girl. It is a poignant scene, which highlights the passage of time as well as Kayako's Japanese roots. It turns out that San Juni's 'aunt,' not his uncle, had passed away and though the atmosphere is chilled, he is greeted by his uncle, who warns him Kayako will soon arrive to look in on him. San Juni leaves before seeing her. Waiting for the ferry he stands alone at the deserted seaside and mourns the past. The final scene, in which it becomes obvious that neither of San Juni's youthful ambitions – repatriation or marriage to Kayako – are achieved, may be read as the symbolic fate of the *zainichi* Korean. Takeda astutely notes, “*Kayako No Tameni* precisely depicts the rift between the reality of life and the heroes’ ideas and dreams of what life ought to be or have been” (*Zainichi* 83).

As a novel designed to demonstrate the intersections between the past and the present, the contradictions inherent in achieving ethnic self-determination and success in a relationship, and as a novel designed to portray the gloom of the era and the significance of the Repatriation Movement, *Kayako no Tameni* is a triumph. On the other hand, as a novel designed to demonstrate the potential of inter-ethnic love or to draw out the nuances of success and failure in a heterosexual relationship, and as a novel designed to accurately render the complex personalities of its two main characters, *Kayako no Tameni* is arguably a failure.

Although living purposefully as a Korean and the dream of reunification powerfully inform Lee's early fiction, it would be incorrect to leave the impression that Lee Hoe Sung is principally or exclusively an ethnic nationalist. In his later writings, essays, and public forums Lee has stressed a less ethno-centric approach to the issue of cultural identity. From the mid 1970s until 1998 Lee began to define himself as simply a Korean national, implying that he was neither associated with the North or the South. Moreover, Lee has shown a distinct proclivity to highlight the distance between the concept of a unified state (*kokka*) and that of a unified ethnic group of people (*minzoku*). The two things are in fact portrayed in his work as incompatible. Lee implies that achieving unity through political structures such as the state may be too difficult – that culture and language are more malleable in this regard. In keeping with this belief he is quite

prudent with his choice of expression:

If you look at it from a nationalistic point of view the division will continue indefinitely. Isn't it preferable to put the nationalistic view aside and focus on the sensibility of belonging to a single ethnic group? This has been my guiding principle (Lee and Chikushi 54).

Kawashima Itaru notes that Lee's novels offer the reader a new way to understand nationalism and he extols Lee's ability to portray ethnic nationalism in a positive light:

Japanese tend to associate nationalism with a dark, dirty past and it is seen in a very negative light. Most Japanese do not consider themselves nationalist nor do they reflect on their ethnicity. Ethnicity is not an issue in Japan, so reading Lee's literature is really eye-opening. He offers a brand new way to understand ethnic pride so it takes on new and more positive hues (526).

Commenting on the novel's reception in Japan, Sō Kyong Shik observes that, "Japanese automatically assume *zainichi* Korean literature will take up ethnic strife and racism so they avoid reading it. They presuppose it will be too grim" (2000). Lee himself laments, "The Japanese literary establishment considers any focus on ethnicity outdated" (Lee and Fan 238; Sō K. S.). Poet Chong Jang adds to this, pointing out:

For Japanese ethnicity is always associated negatively with politics. Japanese are rarely forced to consider their ethnicity and they certainly do not deem ethnicity to be a compelling literary motif. Sociologists write about ethnicity but Japanese novelists never do. That is one reason *zainichi* Korean literature is negated in Japan (18 Dec. 2001).¹⁸⁰

Takeda attributes the negative reaction to Korean ethnic-nationalism to the pronounced post-war negation of Japanese nationalism.¹⁸¹ "Japanese philosophical post-war discourse usually manifests as a rejection of nationalism or is anti-establishment and functions as a call to *internationalization*. Lee's nationalist discourse inevitably appears completely different to that of Japanese anti-nationalist discourse" (Takeda *Zainichi* 79). In post-war Japan, nationalism is generally associated with the pre-war militaristic Japanese state and portrayed as malevolent.¹⁸² Democracy in the post-war Japanese education system encompassed an abhorrence of nationalism. For *zainichi* Koreans, however, democracy went hand in hand with Korean nationalism. The more *zainichi*

¹⁸⁰ See also Watanabe 27.

¹⁸¹ Though the nationalistic right-wing in Japan is highly vocal, and they and a number of nationalistic public figures, such as Ishihara Shintaro (Governor of Tokyo 1999-present) and Kobayashi Yoshinari (revisionist historian) feature in the public eye, it would be a mistake to characterize the Japanese as nationalistic.

¹⁸² Additionally the influence of the civil rights movement in the United States and antipathy for the Vietnam War intensified anti-establishment attitudes amongst the Japanese.

Koreans, especially younger *zainichi* Koreans, became disheartened by the exclusivity of Japanese democracy, and the failure of American style democracy in the ROK, the more socialism, as it was practiced in the DPRK, seemed inherently more democratic. This translated into increased *zainichi* Korean popular support of the DPRK. For younger *zainichi* Koreans it also translated into increased popular support for the reform-minded masses in the ROK. In sum, *zainichi* Koreans adhering to democratic principles became highly partisan.

In 1998 Lee unexpectedly adopted South Korean nationality, a decision that embroiled him in an ugly public controversy with writer Kim Sok Pom. The conflict between the two writers began in the 1980s when Kim first learned of a clandestine visit Lee had made to the ROK in 1970 when military dictator Pak Chung Hee was in power. *Zainichi* Korean intellectual leaders were incensed because Lee made the visits at a time when he himself had denounced the Pak regime (Koh I. S. 2000; Tazaki 2000). Upon adopting South Korean nationality Lee was further vilified for failing to remain loyal to the idea of the unified state. He was also accused of misrepresenting the facts of a 1996 exchange that took place between Kim Sok Pom and a consular official, in the Embassy of the ROK. For his part, Lee acknowledged his failure to inform his colleagues of his 1970 trip and apologized. However, he proffers a number of legitimate reasons for adopting ROK nationality and denies any further wrongdoing, accusing Kim Sok Pom of misrepresenting the facts vis-à-vis the embassy exchange.

Only recently he stated a preference for being called a '*diasporic* writer' as opposed to a '*zainichi* Korean writer' (Lee, H. S. 2003). The category of *diaspora* calls attention to the commonly shared oppressions of the different ethnic groups living not just in Japan, but also in other parts of the world. Ultimately then, Lee supports the interests of oppressed people the world over, regardless of their ethnicity, and advocates universal tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

Lee Hoe Sung has written over twenty novels and essays. He has also written a screen play, a translation of Kim Ji Ha's poetry, and produced and edited ten editions of the literary journal *Minto*. In addition, two lengthy volumes of interviews with Lee have been published and he is a much sought-after public speaker.¹⁸³ Throughout his career

¹⁸³ Refer to Kitada 285.

Lee has never stopped writing about the *zainichi* Korean family. In this chapter I have tried to delineate how Lee Hoe Sung's *Kayako no Tameni* serves to tell the story of the so-called average *zainichi* Korean male adolescent between the 1950s and the 1960s influenced by post-war democracy and ethnic nationalism. As such it can be regarded as a barometer by which to gauge the historical and social milieu of the era about which Lee writes. Lee illustrates the problem facing the individual when society over-determines their lives and values. Although one may be given a 'road map' Lee suggests that one must try to navigate it by resorting to pragmatism. In spite of his emphasis on the determining power of the social structure in the formation of the individual there is a complementary and equally important theme in Lee's novels – the importance of personal experience or the little narrative. Lee links the larger, collective macro issues to the smaller, personal micro issues with allegorical vignettes. He thus discloses and reduces the distance between the meta and little narrative and between collective and personal memories.

Chapter Seven

金鶴泳 Kim Ha Gyong

「凍える口」 *Kogoeru Kuchi* [*Frozen Mouth*] (1966)

During the New Year's holiday of January 1985 *zainichi* Korean writer Kim Ha Gyong, at the age of forty-seven, committed suicide by inhaling gas at his father's home.¹⁸⁴ Anyone who knows this fact cannot read Kim's novels or essays without contemplating the writer's tragic life and death. His writings take the form of memoirs and are manifestly semi-autobiographical.¹⁸⁵ Three facts form the meta-narrative of his writing, with its concern about how one should face a harsh, unjust, and sorrowful life.¹⁸⁶ Kim suffered from a severe stutter, he had a violent father, and he grew up as a member of the Korean minority in Japan.

It is my argument that family violence and the ensuing disability which this produced had an effect on the ethos of Kim's writing as much as the fact of his minority, hybrid status. In fact, the tragic and compelling circumstances of Kim's life arguably contributed to a unique perspective on identity formation, one that highlights his difference from Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, both of whom adopt a view of identity as a shared and social experience. As we have seen, Kim Sok Pom takes a deconstructionist approach to the problem of identity fragmentation, examining the hidden orders, traces and connections that emerge when an individual is forced to adapt to invasive socio-political structures. By contrast, the pragmatic and small-scale approach to identity formation taken by Lee Hoe Sung provides a view of cultural identity not as the emergence of a large scale, political and collective enterprise but as a form of cohesive intersubjectivity – like patterns in a family quilt handed down through generations. Both of these perspectives emphasize the shared nature of group realities, even if it is of minority groups. For Kim Ha Gong however, identity, as explored in the novels I have chosen to analyse, is individual, specific and psychological rather than

¹⁸⁴ Kim Ha Gyong is Kim's pen name. I have also seen it transcribed in romanization as Kim Hak Yong (Cho P.). It is rendered as Kin Kakuei in Japanese.

¹⁸⁵ Kim attests, "Until writing *Kyoshu wa Owari, Soshite Warera Wa* [*The End of Nostalgia and its Aftermath*] (1983) all my characters represented parts of myself" (Kim, H. G. "Jiko" 50).

¹⁸⁶ Refer to Takeda *Kurushimi* 449.

social and shared. Moreover, it is my view that Kim's literature is politically charged despite frequently expressed opinions to the contrary, but, it is about a politics of individual difference rather than minority difference. We might say it is about embodying these differences and the political ramifications of being a marginal individual who does not form part of any cohesive group, even an outsider group.

Unlike his peers Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, Kim portrays the notion of embodiment as an integral aspect of self and identity. Embodiment here refers to the social, cultural and physiological processes of living and being a body. We need look no further for clues to the relation between thought, language and bodily existence in Kim Ha Gyong's work than to consider the body metaphors – the frozen mouth and starving heart – that he uses to express the quality of existence of his characters. The expression of bodily feelings and thoughts are conveyed through the description of nature.¹⁸⁷ The repetition of the image of the frozen landscape and frozen mouth functions as a metaphor of isolation.¹⁸⁸ We are forewarned about the inability of Kim's characters to adjust to adversity from the titles of the two novels *Frozen Mouth* and *Delusions* which I analyse here. Both are existentialist novels about ostracized, self-doubting and lonesome individuals who exist on the margins of society, the first being a stutterer, the second a *zainichi* Korean.¹⁸⁹ Both novels are also concerned with domestic violence, reconciliation with trauma, Korean politics and the relationship between identity, ethnicity and the body. As a corollary, I also call attention to Kim's relatively neutral stance on ethnicity and exclusivity, a position which further distinguishes him from Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and other *zainichi* Korean writers of his era, who placed enormous emphasis on the importance of Korean ethnicity in the quest for personal fulfillment. As already stated, Kim placed more attention on the discrete variables that he felt informed a given individual identity.

Kim's grandparents, father, and uncle came to Japan from Korea in 1923 leaving a life of poverty behind them (Oketani et al. 2).¹⁹⁰ In Japan, Kim's father, Kim Yong Ho,

¹⁸⁷ Refer also to Maiping 32.

¹⁸⁸ Refer to Wedell-Wedellsborg 85.

¹⁹⁰ Though Kim's grandfather may have considered Kim a third-generation Korean, since Kim's father

worked for the black market; he also worked for the construction industry and for a Japanese pachinko parlor (Japanese pin ball) from an early age (Inokawa 71). Only two years after the family arrived in Japan, Kim's grandmother took her own life at age thirty-three. Kim's grandmother was said to be "a person robbed of love", and after having been in an abusive marriage, she committed suicide by jumping in front of an oncoming train in 1925 in Gunma Prefecture, Japan (Oketani et al.15). Though Kim never knew his grandmother, her suicide would psychologically preoccupy him until his own death.

Kim was born in 1938 in Gunma, the eldest of eight children. His given name was Kim Gwang Jong, but he used the Japanese name of Yamada until he entered university in 1958 (Inokawa 64; Pak, C. J. 470). As a young boy, Kim suffered permanent hearing damage after being punched in the ear by his father, an event which helped initiate his stutter. Though Kim underwent two ear operations he remained hard of hearing his entire life. Hagiwara Yōko has noted how Kim sometimes held his hand to his ear and looked in pain (260-61). Kim also attributed his stutter to the domestic violence he witnessed at home: "My home life was very grim and my parents fought to the point where I was terrified. That is why I became a stutterer" ("Jiko" 53).

Kim studied in the faculty of science at the prestigious University of Tokyo.¹⁹¹ Suffering from anxiety, he took a year off in 1960, during which time he studied Russian at night school. In 1963 he graduated and advanced to graduate school at the same university, where he completed a Ph.D. in chemistry in 1966. That same year Kim attained work as a researcher at an engineering university in Kokubunji, Tokyo, and he married Pak Chong Ja, with whom he had one son and two daughters. He also wrote his first novel, *Kogoeru Kuchi*, for which he won the *Bungei Prize for Literature*.

For his fiction Kim used the pen name Kakuei, which he borrowed from the celebrated writer Saikaku Ihara (1642-1693), a historical revisionist who, according to Chong Jang, "wrote whatever he pleased – something, which Kim admired" (2000). An irreverent approach to writing was something Kim also admired about Dazai Osamu (1909-1948), another distinguished Japanese writer. Kim cautiously applied this idea to

was born on the Korean Peninsula, Kim is considered a second-generation Korean.

¹⁹¹ The University of Tokyo is the most prestigious university in Japan and only a very small percentage of applicants are awarded entry.

his own fiction as an expression of his cynicism about life. He wrote hundreds of essays and nineteen works of fiction, three of which were nominated for the *Akutagawa Prize for Belles Lettres*: *Ishi no Michi* [*The Stony Path*] (1973), *Natsu no Kiretsu* [*Summer Rifts*] (1974) and *Fuyu no Hikari* [*Winter Lights*] (1977).

In a 1975 essay entitled *Deai* [*Encounter*], Kim wrote that he had not intended to become a writer; he was a chemist and rarely engaged in any reading that did not pertain to science (244-45). However, in 1959 he happened to hear *An'ya Kōrō* [*A Dark Night's Passing*], a 1937 epic novel by the eminent Japanese writer Shiga Naoya (1883-1971), narrated on the radio and he became entranced.

I was not interested in literature and... hadn't read much but during the fall of 1959, my second year at university, I heard Shiga Naoya's *Anya Kōrō* read over the radio, after which I read it myself. *Anya Kōrō* was the first novel that held my interest and for the first time I understood that novels could be entirely captivating so I jumped into the world of literature. You could say I'd had a taste of the forbidden fruit and once I knew what it tasted like I would never give it up ("Deai" 244-5).

Kim also attributed his decision to start writing to his stutter, which left him virtually powerless to express himself using the spoken word.

One reason I became a writer is... because I stutter. There was enormous pressure on me to speak normally. This was a major reason I turned to writing. A stutterer has very painful relationships and may turn to the world of literature. Ironically, people want to speak with you after you become a writer. I am sure I would have limited myself to the field of chemistry had I not been a stutterer ("Jiko" 53).

Kim began to immerse himself in Japanese literature as well as the highly influential works of Jean-Paul Sartre and Feodor Dostoevsky which he read in translation. Prominent Japanese writers who Kim claimed to have influenced him include Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) and Nōma Hiroshi (1915-1991), who wrote introspective inquiries into the human condition and were known as the so-called *naikō no sedai* (introspective generation). This group of writers was criticized for avoiding social and political concerns and for opting instead to write stories of a highly introverted everyday life (Tillack). Indeed, Kim is sometimes classified as a *naikō* writer as he too emphasised his internal thoughts and feelings in his narratives (Tazaki 2001).¹⁹²

¹⁹² The *naikō* writers include Furui Yoshikichi, Abe Akira, Sakagami Hiroshi, Shiga Naoya, Kuroi Senji, Kashiwabara Hyōzo, Ogawa Kunio and Gōto Meisei.

While his predecessors and peers, including Kim Tal Su, Lee Hoe Sung, Kō Shi Mei and Kim Tae Sen, analyzed and debated colonialism, ethnicity, Korean political affairs and racism in Japan, in their pursuit of self-determination as Koreans. However, these issues were of tangential concern to Kim, who held a more detached, at times skeptical, view of the significance of ethnicity in determining self-realization or self-fulfillment. Consequently, his literature rarely centered on such socio-political matters. Kim wrote, “My inner problems are at my core and the external world does not really become a motif for me to write about” (“Jiko” 54). Indeed, due to his experiences of physical violence and disability Kim was understandably concerned with his bodily experience and internal thoughts. He was specifically interested in how the body can express felt states of being and instigate consciousness. His work draws on the notion of essence to express the primacy of being. Kim seems to hold to the view that a subject finds its being in the world – its simultaneous and irreducible corporeal and conceptual existence – through the filter of lived experience. This is not to say that social and political paradigms are incidental or unimportant to Kim, for he was all too aware of the implications of living within a given social and political paradigm. Indeed, it was his view that they shape identity as much as other variables, such as DNA or gender. Merleau-Ponty, the celebrated phenomenologist of the body and perception, was also interested in the fundamentals of subjectivity, refusing to see subjectivity as solely subject or object, mind or body, immanent or transcendent; he prefers to see it as an amalgamation. “For Merleau-Ponty, the subject is a point of orientation for a meaningful, historical and social world” (Grosz 8). In his introspective literature, Kim also seems to propose that it is our very being – our existence itself – that gives significance to the world.

Kogoeru Kuchi first appeared in September 1966 in the literary journal *Bungei* and was awarded the journal’s prestigious annual literary prize. Kim had already published the novel *Tōjō* [*Making an Appearance*] earlier that year, in the journal *Shinshichō*. However, due to the superior literary quality of *Kogoeru Kuchi* and the positive reception it received by the Japanese literary establishment the later novel was hailed as Kim’s ‘debut composition’ that drew attention to his lifelong thematic concerns: his stutter, domestic violence and being a Korean in Japan (Sakuma *Kim Ha Gyong: Kogoeru* 1; Takeda *Zainichi* 448).

In a 1972 essay, *Ippiki no Hitsuji* [*The Lone Lamb*], Kim wrote, “*Kogoeru Kuchi* tells the story of my own terrible experience of living with a stutter... For thirty years I could not escape my stutter and it gave rise to countless terrible psychological symptoms including unbearable stress and anxiety. In *Kogoeru Kuchi* I described those symptoms as accurately as possible” (435). Based on anecdotal evidence, *Kogoeru Kuchi* would seem to describe the pain of stuttering more accurately than other Japanese novels that have stutterers as their protagonists (Abe).¹⁹³

It is well known amongst his readership that after writing *Kogoeru Kuchi* Kim was liberated from the more severe psychological symptoms of his stuttering (Inokawa 69, and Takeda *Zainichi* 148). Kim himself wrote, “All my symptoms disappeared with the writing of *Kogoeru Kuchi*. This symbolically shows the power of literature. The experience helped me understand the importance of writing and gave me a tremendous feeling of gratitude” (“Ippiki” 435, 439). Describing the stutter, in fact, had the effect of exorcising it (Oketani et al. 12). By making the pain of stuttering the central theme of his novel rather than making it a peripheral element or sub-plot, Kim was able to articulate his own experience and was thus transformed. His transformation came as a result of embarking on a creative expression in prose; thus Kim arguably developed an understanding of how transformation might take place as a result of self-expression.¹⁹⁴

Kogoeru Kuchi is an eight-chapter novel that tells the story, in the first person, of one day in the life of Sai Keishoku (Che Gyū Shiku), a young man with a severe stutter, whose troubles are complicated by his being a Korean in Japan.¹⁹⁵ It is a double-layered novel in which the story of Isogai Shinji, Sai’s Japanese friend who represents his ‘dark side’ or alter ego, lies below the surface. *Kogoeru Kuchi* is both the story of Sai’s survival through his psychological battle with his stutter and the story of Isogai’s death

¹⁹³ The protagonist of Yukio Mishima’s *Kinkakuji* [*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*] (1956) was also a stutterer.

¹⁹⁴ See also Gilroy “*Diaspora*” 320, 340-41; “*Roots*” 28. In Kim’s next two novels *Kanshō Yōeki* [*Shock Absorbent*] (1967) and *Yurisō* [*Layers of Freedom*] (1968) he did not write about stuttering though he continued to write about being a *zainichi* Korean (Takeda *Zainichi* 148-49).

¹⁹⁵ Sai is the Japanese pronunciation of the Korean name 崔 Che. In the late 1960s, around which time this novel is set, virtually all *zainichi* Koreans used the Japanese pronunciation of their Korean names. “It was still taboo to use your Korean name” (Chong, J. 2000). In some cases the Japanese pronunciation concealed the origins of the name, suggesting the person in question was Japanese. In other cases, the Japanese pronunciation revealed the Korean origin of the name. Sai is one such name (Fukuoka 27-33).

as he loses his psychological battle with his experience of paternal abuse. The story sheds light on the pain of being marginalized and the motives for and meaning of suicide; it also celebrates the power of love to sustain the will to live.

Chapter One begins with a lengthy passage describing the hero Sai walking along a dry river bed until he reaches his destination – a place where he no longer stutters.

‘This is it! The place I have been looking for, for so long,’ I suddenly relaxed. I had finally arrived and I wept with glee... ‘This is it, I’m here.’ It was a dazzling heavenly sanctuary and I rushed towards the light with tears streaming down my face... That’s when I opened my eyes... My room was dark (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 10).

It transpires that this is a dream which in turn foreshadows the novel’s ultimate propositions about life – the inevitability of suffering and the possibility of liberation through death. The passage underlines the disparity between Sai’s heavenly vision and the somber reality of his dark awakening. The dream motif is a literary device often used by Kim and can be found in *Sakumei* [*Delusions*] (1971), *Ishi no michi* [*The Stony Path*] (1973) and *Nomi* [*The Chisel*] (1978). Inviting the reader to believe the episode, Kim establishes the flawed nature of human perception. He also suggests that reality may not be auspicious or pleasant. The physical environment throughout most of the novel is cold, gloomy and dark, with icy winds, rain and snow; the oft-used word *kogoeru*, ‘freezing,’ conveys how cold and inhospitable the hero’s world is. Thus reality forms a clear contrast with the paradise-like vista, characterized by light, warmth and comfort, that his hero pursues. The hero’s destination is, in fact, another world wholly dissimilar to the one he currently inhabits. It is presented as a final destination or gateway to a comfortable resting place and may point to the end of life itself. It thus foretells of the solace that suicide may offer to the hero’s alter ego, Isogai, who readily chooses suicide to escape his reality.

Upon awakening, Sai remembers that he is due to give an oral presentation that very day at Tokyo University, where he is writing a doctoral dissertation on chemistry. He has been agonizing over the oral presentation for months, scared that he will be unable to deliver it due to his stutter. The first half of the novel is a detailed account of Sai’s anxious state of mind leading up to this presentation. As such it is a rich foray into the mental state of someone struggling to overcome their affliction:

These presentations are nothing to the other guys but for me they are terrifying. It's so hard to prepare ...I have to choose words I won't stammer over... If I think certain words are difficult to say, for sure I'll stutter, or maybe it's because I think they are difficult that I do stutter. In order for my presentation to make sense I have to find synonyms and give lots of examples but since it concerns chemistry this is next to impossible. In any case, using simpler expressions or synonyms makes me sound lazy or asinine. Moreover I have to prepare myself psychologically. It is so demanding and takes so long and in the end I will stutter anyway (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeu* 18-9).

Kim's aim, in the first four chapters, is to render comprehensible not only the physical constraints the hero experiences but also his psychological constraints. Fear and obsessive thinking have plagued Sai his entire life and are projected onto any situation in which he is required to speak. Since the very act of speaking triggers anxiety, the hero is disposed to angst on a daily basis.

For me to stutter is not just to stutter... The problem is psychological. What I find insufferable is the emotional stress and the humiliation that accompanies the stutter (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeu* 19).

Kirmayer notes that the simple motor acts of the body such as occur in stuttering give rise to highly-charged emotional responses, such as embarrassment, because culturally governed interactions disallow them (337). The notion that one is losing control, has a frozen mouth or a starving heart, stems not only from the body but from social assessment. Meaning resides in the relationship that concepts have to the body and its skills and practices – i.e. the notion of 'losing control' or 'delusions'. Kim points to the consequences of the rejection Sai experiences by virtue, not *just* of *being* different, but, of *feeling* different. When Sai does not speak or respond to people in a normal fashion, some of his counterparts withdraw or react with disdain or anger. Sai is thus rejected by people who are unaware of his disability.

At the ticket window I could not say the name of my destination. The stationmaster looked at me incredulously and got pissed off. I got more flustered but I finally managed to tell him Ikebukuro. He flung the ticket at me and I felt despicable (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeu* 84).

By demonstrating how ordinary misunderstandings are compounded by the perception of cultural difference, Kim illustrates how oppressive simply existing on the margins is for Sai even in the absence of overt hostility. Kim's portrait of the stutterer's alienation draws attention to the parallel experience of *zainichi* Koreans, for example, when Japanese, unaware that a *zainichi* Korean is in their midst or amongst their party, discuss Korea or Koreans in a disparaging manner. While Sai is primarily concerned with his

stutter he also realizes that his feelings of isolation and difference are attributable partly to an entrenched Japanese bias against Koreans, for *zainichi* Koreans who are differently abled, discrimination and stigmatization is highly complex (Chapman 82-83). Being doubly handicapped, as well as being unable to ascertain which was driving people's responses to him, is unnerving for Sai. The story of Sai's marginalization as a stutterer can be read as symbolic of the marginalization of the *zainichi* Korean as well as of the differently-abled body in Japanese society. *Kogoeru Kuchi* thus offer a deeper understanding of how the mechanisms of exclusion and disadvantage work.

The climactic oral presentation takes place in Chapter Four. To begin with, Sai manages to speak without stuttering, surprising even himself. True to form, however, he begins to stutter midway through his talk. Interestingly, it is the anticipation of his failure that makes the climax, when it finally comes, so effective.

Just as I feared, I froze during the presentation and was overwhelmed with humiliation and shame... On page eight, I hit the word tetro-hydroporous. There is no synonym for it. All throughout the presentation this word had been a concern to me. In fact, this word was my biggest worry. If you have one worry it just multiplies... Sure enough when I reached this word, I began to stutter... As the audience listened to my shattered speech I felt their dismay. I imagined how they must have been thinking, "Oh what a terrible stutter." As I felt their pity I flushed even more and knew my stutter would get worse (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 44).

At this point in the narrative, the story moves back in time to Sai's recollections of his friend Isogai, also a stutterer, who committed suicide seven years earlier, the same year they met at Tokyo University. The university was teeming with energetic, ambitious and overconfident students and Isogai seemed out of place there. He is a solitary, introverted young man, unkempt, and detached – seemingly indifferent to rank, status and even people and events. When he realizes that Isogai suffers from a stutter even more severe than his own, Sai tries to befriend Isogai. The two gradually develop a close alliance and begin spending much of their time together, although they rarely speak.

Unexpectedly Sai is contacted by Isogai's mother after the New Year's holiday. She informs him that Isogai had died. Sai travels to Isogai's hometown for the funeral and learns that Isogai had committed suicide leaving a suicide note addressed to him. The reader's interest is piqued; indeed, the text suggests that Isogai harbored some tragic secret concerning his past, for the narrator says:

I remember the pain etched in his face but there was more to his pain than his stutter; there was a root cause, which I learned after he died (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 47)

The incident of Isogai's death and the letter recalls the plot of Natsume Sōseki's classic *Kokoro* (1914) in which the protagonist, Sensei, is preoccupied with sorrowful recollections of the past, which he refuses to disclose until he does so in the form of a lengthy suicide letter.¹⁹⁶ Isogai's letter, in fact, turns out to be a notebook in which he gave vent to his feelings of rage and frustration and his feelings of inadequacy:

I withdrew the paper bag from my satchel to find a university notebook entitled 'Notes,' in which Isogai had written all sorts of random fragmentary thoughts. It was a frenzied mess filled with words of self-contempt, self-hatred and negativity, words and phrases such as 'asshole,' 'go to hell,' and 'suicide plans' had been vehemently engraved on page after page. Finally about half way through the notebook there was a headline addressed to me, in which I was christened 'Brother Che Kei Shiki,' and the fragmentary thoughts discontinued and lengthy sentences appeared. It was written in thick dark pencil, in a slipshod manner befitting his style (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 68-69).

The letter also describes a life of horrific domestic violence, his father's abusive treatment of his mother and his own inability to intervene:

My father was constantly attacking my mother about the most trivial things. He'd find any reason to abuse her. There are endless examples of him punching or kicking her... His spine-chilling rage and malicious insults were unbearable. We faced this time and again and prayed and prayed for it to stop. I have an endless variety of stories; each one damaged me and each one is haunting. I'll never be able to forget those fights no matter how hard I try. They are etched in my memory, my heart and in my very being (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 68-69).

Significantly Isogai writes of his own mother's suicide – a premature death he characterizes as a murder perpetrated by his father, "My mother died when I was in junior high school... She was thirty-three when she died. She committed suicide on the railway tracks... As far as I'm concerned it was murder... My father killed her" (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 66-67). Kim insinuates that paternal violence was the cause of the suicides of both mother and child. Moreover the boy's obsession with his mother's suicide foretells his own suicide.

I decided to die. This is not a spur-of-the-moment decision. It is something I've thought about for a very long time. For me it is a natural conclusion to my life. Death always held a huge appeal for me. Suicide, even the word itself, is attractive to me... No one who really knows me would be surprised (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 64).

¹⁹⁶ *Kokoro* was translated into English in 1968 with the same title: *Kokoro*. Takeda also notes the similarity (*Zainichi* 143).

An additional compelling reason for Isogai's suicide is his self loathing. The degree of self-hatred that Isogai reveals in his letter provides a central insight into the mind of a victim of abuse and the degree to which the experience of social bias against *zainichi* Koreans is internalized. Isogai writes in his journal, "I hate myself. I despise myself. I'm not likeable" (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 74). Research confirms that "Negative or conflicted identities are internalized from a prejudiced society and are thus a source of psychological compromise" (Harris 3). In a 1982 essay Kim explains, "In the face of prejudice and discrimination a weak person negates his self... I've seen this with my own eyes" ("Atarashii" 15). The reservoir of self-hatred expressed by Isogai may be understood as an indictment of the Japanese side of the *zainichi* Korean personality. The Japanese Isogai seemingly represents the alter ego, or the dark side, of Sai, who admits, "I suppose I saw myself in him... It felt like a part of me died" (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 11). In killing off a part of one's self, be it the Japanese part associated with the violent father, the *zainichi* Korean is potentially able to kill off, eradicate, negate or forget all memories of violence, trauma, and heartbreak at the hands of the perpetrator.

Kim enhances the allegory by showing that the two heroes, despite their obvious affinity, did not actually know much about each other – the result of not communicating with each other meaningfully. In fact Isogai dies without ever knowing that Sai also has a stutter, or that he is Sai's only friend. The distance separating the two triggers discomfort for both and parallels the Japan-Korea or Japanese-*zainichi* Korean relationship. It also exemplifies Kim's meta-narrative of the modernist theme of the inevitable loneliness of existence.

In this part of the story Kim successfully conveys the idea that "difference" is often met with evasion, which typifies race relations in Japan; specifically the degree to which *zainichi* Koreans are either invisible in Japan or conceal their ethnicity. Sai, for his part, is dissatisfied that Isogai does not know that he stutters and feels his own identity to be tortured. Additionally, he is at a loss as to how to inform Isogai of his stutter. Isogai, on the other hand, conveys disappointment in his suicide letter that Sai never referred to Isogai's stutter. To Isogai it seemed as if Sai was trying to dismiss the fact that Isogai had a stutter, which in effect denied a key element of his identity:

You never mentioned my stutter. Not only you. No one mentions it. It is like saying to somebody without an arm, "Hey you have no arm." But for me to deny

it is like never taking the first step. People never try to know me and I have to face that you were one of these people. You knew I had a terrible stutter but because you never mentioned I felt you pitied me and this made me feel so alone and hurt my feelings. I guess I wanted to meet somebody who could point it out and laugh about it with me... I could never make anyone understand me. This is how it's always been for me. This is one reason I decided to commit suicide (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeu* 65-66).

This mirrors the widespread phenomenon in Japan whereby people avoid discussion of an 'other's' identity marker – be it race, gender, disability, or distinctive physical features – for fear of appearing rude. Conversely, members of a minority group may avoid drawing attention to one's own identity marker, for fear of causing discomfort or of being rejected. Ethnicity, in particular, is a taboo subject in Japan and Kim shows the ramifications of this. He suggests that by purposefully avoiding the topic of ethnicity the cultural mainstream can appear patronizing and insensitive. At the same time, minority members who purposefully avoid the topic of ethnicity may appear as though they wish to avoid the subject or appear Japanese. This situation is one that particularly affects *zainichi* Koreans. The fact that they are Korean often remains unknown to Japanese friends, classmates, workmates and lovers (and even to other *zainichi* Koreans) because there are often no visible markers of difference. This means the burden of disclosure falls on the shoulders of the *zainichi* Korean. Kim shows the thought processes that accompany the decision to divulge one's ethnicity and the challenges to the social norms that sustain this protocol. However, Kim does not altogether disparage the decision to remain silent, as this choice too can function as a form of resistance. By telling the story of the reserved friendship between the two men Kim illustrates the complexities surrounding even simple communication due to the nuances attached to the mention of difference.

The final chapter takes up the theme of love and recounts Sai's romantic relationship with Michiko, Isogai's sister. The relationship between Sai and Michiko is characterized as one which naturally evolved after Isogai's death, is long standing and will lead to marriage. In the story Sai recalls its inception; when Michiko entered Tokyo University they gradually become friendly and over the course of time begin to sleep together. They quietly pursue their own interests while spending time together. Their relationship is described as intimate and passionate. In the final two pages of the text, Kim graphically describes the erotic, even if subdued, lovemaking the lovers enjoy, with

the intention, I believe, of emphasizing the healing power – albeit ephemeral – of the sexual union between two lovers.

Within the framework of the novel the relationship functions as a form of compensation for the tragic deaths of Isogai and his mother, but the relationship may also serve as an allegory of the reconciliation of Japanese and Koreans. The following passages convey just how much damage is inherent in the conditions that give rise to the relationship as well as the necessity for and possibilities of reconciliation amongst the survivors in the aftermath of tragedy, “There was something special between us – Isogai’s death – it operated as a way for us to meet and maybe, because of that, our encounter was more meaningful and special” (Kim, H. G. *Kogoru* 90). The relationship between Sai and Michiko has the power to remedy, but also to elicit, the experience of loneliness. Additionally, it represents a model of an unprejudiced, satisfying love affair, in which ethnicity is of no importance whatsoever. One distinctive passage portraying the relationship shows the lack of attention that Kim pays to *ethnicity*. Japanese-Korean interaction is instead expressed in terms of an ideal *human* interaction, “That I was Korean or stuttered were never issues for Michiko... She was so refined. She viewed me as an individual. Nationality was just a superficial label; it was insignificant” (Kim, H. G. *Kogoru* 90-91).

Though no critic to date has characterized *Kogoru Kuchi* as such, I would argue that it may be read as a love story. Ultimately Kim suggests that such a union can provide solace in the face of enduring loneliness. The protagonist intimates that without some measure of love, there is no point in living:

I wondered what Isogai learned from his books... Books don’t help at all. What could have helped him? Was it the woman who passed by his home every morning? He needed to meet her. He wasn’t able to get help from a woman. Even if he’d got just a little consolation he might not have died. Maybe if he had met a woman he’d have been able to overcome his hopelessness and emptiness. With a woman, he might have figured out the meaning of his existence. He was so tragic and unlucky (Kim, H. G. *Kogoru* 93).

This is not to suggest that Kim Ha Gyong harbored a particularly romantic vision of love. He was skeptical of its potential and maintained that one could never really know another person, an existentialist tenet which supported his more central premise that existence was ultimately lonely. In fact, he believed relationships only served to confirm this conviction. It is through experiencing love and sexual intercourse that the

protagonist reaches a richer understanding of loneliness as the overriding fact of existence.

Just as our bodies are covered with skin, our hearts are covered, as if with an invisible membrane. The connection of two hearts or the sexual encounter of two lovers inevitably ends without them achieving anything unique. For two people to understand each other, nothing more is necessary than for them to acknowledge how lonely they are (Kim, H. G. *Kogae* 96-97).

Kim's contention seems to be that the only thing fate cannot fail to deliver is isolation, and this awareness allows his protagonist to accept and experience his own isolation, without expecting anything of love except that it confirm that very experience. Love reassures him that he was not deluded about the nature of loneliness and its pervasiveness. The novel ends with the 'frozen' hero walking away, contemplating yet again his enduring loneliness.

What Kim offers that is new to the *zainichi* Korean literary experience is the idea of the bodily basis of identity. Identity is tied not only to Kim's, as well as his hero's, status as a *zainichi* Korean, but also to his status as a physically impaired individual with a unique bodily history. It is a feature of disabled bodies that they challenge notions of physical competence and violate appearance norms (Susman 13-22). Disabled bodies are also stigmatised because of the presumed lack of individual autonomy (Hahn 33-47) and conditions of helplessness, passivity and dependency (Gerschick and Miller 34-55). Everyday skills and competencies of individuals with physical disabilities are also questioned routinely (Higgins 139-56). Internalisation of these assumptions by the able bodied questions the legitimacy of the stigmatised (Elliott et al.).

In as much as we lay claim to the history of a nation for laying down the foundations of cultural identity, as does Kim Sok Pom, the 'history of bodies' is an idea that should also be taken seriously because, "by drawing attention to the context in which bodies move and re-create themselves, we also draw attention to the complex dialectic between bodies and their environment" (Gatens 228).

Social scientific thought in the last decade or so has also considered the implications of corporeality in empirical and theoretical research. One fairly recent school of thought is that based on older theories of symbolic interactionism. It is exemplified in the work of Michael Kelly who employs the bodily basis of identity as

the focal point of his empirical and theoretical work in the field of sociology. Kelly's work is modeled on the legacies of Gregory Stone and Erving Goffman who have been significant in alerting social theorists to the role of the body in the construction of a social person. Kelly's perspective is part of a more general development in social theory that has re-evaluated the importance of the body to identity. Goffman's work on the body forms an implicit foundation to his theories of stigma, embarrassment and the social self. Stone further cites the body as the basis of core identities such as age, gender and ethnicity.

Identity is arguably as much about the personal politics of embodied difference as it is about cultural and political difference. Kim offers us clues to his views on the relation between identity and embodiment through his body-expressive metaphors of the *frozen mouth* in *Kogoeru Kuchi* and the *starving heart* in *Sakumei*. Kirmayer notes how a semantics of metaphor can offer a way into understanding how the inchoate is rendered meaningful (323-46). The frozen mouth or the starving heart, for example, makes sense of the protagonist's embodied experience. Meaning emerges with the capacity to see bodily experience as a way of thinking metaphorically. Metaphor can transform conventional relationships and be a way of fashioning something new. "Metaphor confers the properties of one concept onto another and all our cognitive, affective and somatic ways of knowing may be brought to bear on elaborate metaphoric correspondence" (Kirmayer 332). Similarly, Lakoff and Johnson note how metaphor is grounded in bodily and social experience (128, 562).

This role that the body plays in the formulation of identity has been explored in feminist literature for some decades now. It was in recognition of this process that the *Boston Women's Health Collective* chose *Our Bodies Our Selves* (1976/1984) as the appellation for their call for a woman centered health system. Women were to be included in decision-making processes as specifically female-embodied consumers rather than lesser objects of techno-medical male practice. This demand included a call for an emphasis on bodies as three dimensional, experiential entities – real bodies – rather than the two-dimensional disembodied abstractions associated with phallocratic medicine. The notion of *real* bodies became a catch cry for a certain kind of feminist methodology, one that made use of a 'persistent (de)constructive critique of theory' (Spivak *Outside* 3).

The above commentary suggests that feminist theory offers a promising engagement with Kim's work because of its emphasis on lived embodied difference. In *Justice and the Politics of Difference* feminist philosopher Iris Young asserts that there is great diversity amongst people of modern and modernizing nations based on elements of privilege, oppression, race, gender and ethnicity, and that each has the potential to create divisions amongst people. The ways we have tended to address these divisions and divided interests is through ideas about minorities and rights. Collective forms of oppression moreover have been most extreme when they are based on an idea of difference as otherness and exclusion (157). Indeed, for Judith Butler this exclusionary division of *us* and *other* is the very basis of identity formation (*Gender* 185). In this view identity becomes something like an essence. To challenge this ontological view of difference, Young proposes a 'logic of relation' which is a conception of difference that begins with the fact of heterogeneity and the interrelationship of all groups. Conceived in this way, different groups can no longer be defined in terms of clear structures or categories like genus or species or even race, for this leaves the contingent groups with no designation at all. Rather, Young argues that groups have to be seen as overlapping, constituted in relation to each other, yet as formed out of the experience of specific and diverse ways of life and association, even within the same group (161, 165). Young thus recognizes the relational nature of all categories of identity.

While *Kogoeru Kuchi* succeeds as a narrative for understanding the pain of the stutterer and embodied difference, it also plays a crucial role in demonstrating Kim's ideas about ethnicity and politics, as does his novel *Sakumei* introduced in the next chapter. Specifically, Kim problematizes mainstream views on ethnicity and instead privileges a notion of subjectivity detached from ethnicity and politics. His hero, Sai, aspires to realize his interior self as distinct from his stutter, his ethnicity and popular political ideologies. He contends, in fact, that these issues impede and obscure his interior self. By pointing to his 'real self' Kim, in fact, points to a subjectivity not bound by the distinctions of Self and Other.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Please see Catherine Ryu's discussion of the figure of the Other in writer Yi Yang Ji's 1988 novel *Yuhi*.

Locating Kim's views on politics and ethnicity as they are depicted in *Kogoeru Kuchi*, *Sakumei* and in some of his essays will demonstrate that, despite views to the contrary, Kim was not pro-ROK, apolitical or unmindful of an ethnic consciousness (Isoda 270; Oketani et al. 3). He neither advocated neutrality nor the evasion of political affairs; rather, he questioned the importance of Korean mainland politics to the personal fulfillment of the *zainichi* Korean individual and the community at large.¹⁹⁸ With his invitation to readers to suspend partisan affiliations or at least to question the accepted doctrine of North-Korean style socialism, he was inviting them to consider a stance of detachment. Kim's aim was not just to promote objectivity, but also to draw attention to the biases that inform people's beliefs – be they about politics, ethnicity or disability.

Kim's political leanings, at least judged from an analysis of his fiction, can hardly be called pro-ROK in so far as the term was used to signify a lack of commitment to Korean unification and support for an American military presence in the Korean Peninsula, the South Korean military dictatorships and *Mindan*.¹⁹⁹ More accurately, Kim refused to endorse either state system – North or South – arguing that, despite the ideological rhetoric, they hardly differed in real terms: "To my mind," he wrote, "politics on north and south of the peninsula are the same" ("Jiko" 53). For Kim, political inquiry was never subject to loyalty to a given side of the Korean divide. He understood that both systems were equally plagued by tyranny, repression and militarism, whereas most of his contemporaries limited their condemnation to the ROK. He thus offered his readership the opportunity to stand outside of a rigidly fixed political paradigm and observe dispassionately the divisive nature of totalitarianism wherever it might exist. "The pro-South Korea bloc, in fact, saw Kim as ambivalent towards their organizations, despite wanting to exploit him since he was the only literary figure who voiced anti-North concerns" (Chong, J. 2000). Kim was especially critical of the factional rivalry that typified relations between *Chongryun* and *Mindan*.

¹⁹⁸ Contemporary third-or fourth-generation *zainichi* Korean writers such as Yū Miri, Kaneshiro Kazuki, Gen Getsu or Sagisawa Megumi, tend to display or even flaunt a 'disinterest' in politics or ethnicity, which in fact characterizes the entire generation of writers appearing on the Japanese literary scene from the late 1980s to the present (Tazaki 2000). This is partially due to the effects of the Japanese bubble economy; additionally relative peace in Asia has relieved the exigencies to adhere to strong ideological philosophies.

¹⁹⁹ Civil rule did not take place until Kim Dae Jung was elected president in 1998, but Kim Young Sam was democratically minded and offered a glimpse of the demise of the military dictatorships.

Sakagami Hiroshi observes that “Kim’s characters are perverted by the warped relationship that exists between North and South Korea, as exemplified by their Japan-based factions, and he condemns the negative impact their power struggles have on *zainichi* Koreans” (260).²⁰⁰

In his fiction, Kim develops a clear pattern of response to political issues. He introduces an issue, outlines the dominant party-line view, and then conveys how pointless the issue is, particularly if the said issue is xenophobic. He tries to communicate how political propaganda is analogous to coercion and colonization. He hates censorship and the tactic of divide and conquer so commonly used by political lobby groups in his day, and he bemoans the false consciousness he sees engendered in *zainichi* Korean masses recruited into nationalist-subject positions. His hero, Sai, believes a politicized identity conceals one’s true identity much in the same way he believes his stutter does. Moreover, Sai’s failure to become a communist invites criticism and ostracism in the same way that his stutter does. Sai’s dilemma, then, in the face of limited political options, is akin to his dilemma in the face of his stutter – how to transcend existing constraints and limitations. Sai tries to distance himself from the limited choices that restrict the self-expression of *zainichi* Koreans.

While Kim was concerned with the existing states of affairs, both in Japan and in the Koreas, and obviously hoped for change, a point evidenced in his fiction and in his essays, he was more committed to examining his own state of mind and feelings. This was because he was determined to control his own destiny even though this stance left him open to attack.²⁰¹ Thus for Kim, and his protagonist, the exigencies of

²⁰⁰ According to Norma Field, third-generation writer Kyō Nobuko (Kan Shin Ja) “manages to convey most compellingly the artificial and alienating quality of the demands from militant fellow students that she adopt the rhetoric of folk (ethnicity) and homeland” in her 1986 novel *Goku Futsu no Zainichi Kankokujin* (An Utterly Ordinary Resident South Korean). Of course Kim Ha Gyong had done this much earlier in the 1960s and 1970s.

²⁰¹ After Japan and the ROK normalized relations, tens of thousands of *zainichi* Koreans adopted South Korean nationality and began to visit their former homeland. To obtain a passport one had to join *Mindan* and pay annual dues. Therefore over time the *Mindan* membership became deceptively large, a fact manipulated by both South Korean and Japanese governments to suggest that most *zainichi* Koreans were pro-South. In fact, until Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung came to power in the ROK in 1993 and 1998 respectively, the vast majority of *zainichi* Koreans were anything but pro-South. Like Kim however, many acquired ROK citizenship primarily for travel purposes. In the meantime the DPRK had been increasingly criticized by the *zainichi* Korean community, which simply could not ignore the reports of tyranny, torture and poverty there related by escapees to China and repatriates. Still, socialism remained the ideology to which *zainichi* Korean intellectuals aspired, though they were increasingly perplexed as to where to find a viable model worth emulating.

existence and lived realities – being a stutterer or being a Korean in Japan – are always prior to idealist notions that are external to the self.

Something terrible was happening but it was not happening across the ocean...There was this expectation that I HAD to believe that something bad was taking place in the ROK. I simply had no choice. It was expected of me and I was obliged to be concerned about it. It was a duty. Yes something bad had happened in the ROK but why was everyone so caught up with problems outside themselves and why were they experiencing those problems as inner problems? It didn't make sense to me (Kim, H. G. "Ippiki" 438).

In the same way that Kim's fiction offers a critique of Korean politics, it also criticizes the privileging of ethnicity in the pursuit of justice or personal fulfillment. While Kim resolutely shows up the groundless nature of racism in *Kogoeru Kuchi* he also interrogates the logic of fighting it with a turn towards embracing 'Koreanness.' Kim felt that adopting traits purportedly associated with Korean ethnicity endorsed a predictable stereotype, which in turn worked to undermine individuality by masking an already obscure interior self. He did not believe one could simply construct a Korean identity out of an ideological impulse or even just a desire to do so. Moreover, he saw the process of 'recovery of Korean-ness' as a form of ethnocentrism. The biases inherent in ethnocentrism, according to Kim's analysis, were irrational and ultimately lead to segregation, "Ethnic pride just materializes in slogans and is no different from Japanese notions of imperialism. Ethnocentrism is intolerant, narrow-minded and stinks of egotism" (*Kogoeru* 35). Kim deliberately depicts his *zainichi* Korean hero as being so preoccupied with his internal struggles – such as how to cope with an abusive father, a debilitating stutter, loneliness and depression – that nothing else matters, "For me the issue is not society, ethnicity or politics. My only task is confronting this stammer that obstructs me from every purpose in life. This is all there is for me" (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 23).

Specifically, Kim juxtaposes the problems associated with being a stutterer with those of being a *zainichi* Korean to emphasize the greater obstacle and anguish the physical debility imposes. As Takeda explains:

To be a *zainichi* Korean is a minus in Japan, but a resilient person can turn it into a plus. It is possible to have pride in one's ethnicity. To be a stutterer, however, is simply and always a minus. It cannot be turned into a plus. One may not have pride in one's stutter. Moreover, society will not validate it as a serious problem. In the eyes of the world no one can control their ethnicity but they ought to be able to control their stutter. Kim lines the two problems up side by side and

demonstrates their differences (*Kurushimi* 450; *Zainichi* 137-38).

According to Sakuma Shōichi, “A Korean organization was just another place Kim was unwelcome. It was anything but a refuge; it was merely another place where he would be ostracized, dismissed, and treated as an outsider” (*Takeda* 1-4). Furthermore Kim was not a primordialist or essentialist; he disputed the then prevalent notion that being a *zainichi* Korean meant inherently feeling ‘Korean.’ He seemed to have regarded primordial sentiment as just one form of identity among others such as the personal, the sacred and the civic. He did suggest, however, that there is a core identity that is logically and emotionally prior to any other forms of identity.²⁰² Additionally, Kim distrusted the notion that recovering a Korean identity, even if possible, could remedy the problems existence generated, even those purportedly motivated by or attributed to ethnicity, such as racism.

Although I am Korean... I am estranged from Korea and have little sense of having a Korean ethnicity. As I write I forget that I am actually Korean, but when I study in the train I recover some sense of it or at least I try to... but “recovery” is the wrong word. Recovery means getting back something you once had. As for me I never had any sense of being Korean... No matter how Japanese I look and feel, I try to apprehend that I’m not actually Japanese (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 28-29).

In *zainichi* Korean discourse and literature the symbol of hope is usually the homeland (Chapman 14, 19-20, 47, 50, 88). *Zainichi* Koreans of Kim’s generation held on to visions of their homeland, which facilitated an image of a place where they belonged and could be themselves – they could be authentically ‘Korean’ – without fear of harassment or alienation. Australian writer, academic and disability rights activist, Kath Duncan, writes of having her legs amputated in *Dream Lover* and tells of her desire to belong to or to participate in a kind of ‘disability culture – her ‘people’ who might recognise her as equal” (127-44). Her colleague, an academic, writes about Kath:

What is at stake for Kath is the dream of belonging, of entering into, or constructing a culture, a space in which she no longer felt so far from home, so homeless... The lack of fit with the cultural imaginary, the failure to shape up against the measure of bodily norms marks her exile. To project an alternative cultural imaginary is a response to this: an opening for alterity, a space where other types of identity, and even other mechanisms of identification, may be predictable (qtd. In Duncan 144).

Kim Ha Gyong’s hero was not looking towards a Korean homeland; he finds

²⁰² For a discussion of this issue see Cohen 4.

the quest 'to belong' tragically insurmountable precisely because of an inability to meaningfully relate to others. Indeed Sai's disability prohibits communion with others and thus self-expression. Kim, with his marginalized status compounded by his disability, is in fact always 'other' and he intensely appreciated that trying to belong – even to his Korean community – was futile. His hero muses, "What was I looking for? What is it I am longing for? It is the me who does not stutter. The me behind the stutter. It is a world where I don't stutter. Oh if only I didn't stutter" (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeu* 20). The notion of a true self is the only imaginary that Kim can manufacture. Sai searches for his true identity, a core self that was untouched by his stutter, one that precedes or supersedes culture-laden layers of identity, such as ethnicity or stuttering. The fragmented self created by socio-political and familial constraints obscures his integrated identity. It is in fact the 'stutterer self' that gives birth to the notion of a 'real' self behind the stutter (Takeda *Zainichi* 141-42). This idea corresponds to that of *zainichi* Korean political activist and writer, Sō Sun, who argues that, "Ethnic consciousness is regulated from the outside; in other words, ethnic consciousness would not develop without acts of discrimination which force one to realize one is ethnically different" (qtd. in Lee S. A. *Nisei* 67).

When faced with racism, Kim's heroes tend to sneer at the inanity of it, oppose its irrationality with simple logic, or carry on in spite of it. They also attempt to deal with the experience privately rather than seek refuge in political affiliations. But this does not mean resignation or tolerance; in fact Kim advocates logical persuasion as a means to combat it rather than resorting to nationalistic defiance. Although Kim did not endorse naturalization, he was in favor of reconciling oneself to one's circumstances or resorting to inner strength. By contrast, the majority of *zainichi* Koreans either assimilated and naturalized or chose to recover a Korean subjectivity by joining nationalistic coalitions, which naturally had the effects of either making them invisible in Japanese society or further alienating them from it.

Lee Sun Ae, a second-generation *zainichi* Korean critic, argues that *zainichi* Koreans enrich their lives by recovering their lost ethnicity. She also claims that Kim Ha Gyong is not qualified to speak to this issue because he himself has not experienced

an ethnic awakening and characterizes ethnicity as an abstraction (*Kim* 172, 174).²⁰³ Against this I argue that Kim analyzes ethnicity at length in his fiction and that, being doubly marginalized, he is highly cognizant of the implications of ethnic as well as physical differentiation. Arguably Lee overlooks the fact that Kim does not explicitly criticize the process of ethnic awakening that she advocates; rather he maintains that his own attempts at such a process did not result in an ethnic awakening. For Kim adopting Korean-ness seemed to be a reaction to rejection and necessarily entailed the adoption of certain – namely socialist – political views or exhibiting Korean behavioral norms, which had little to do with the realization of one’s undamaged interior self.

Sadly, however, Kim cannot articulate how to realize this ideal. Indeed Sai’s imaginary non-stuttering self – a self that could relate to and interact in mainstream society – is unfeasible and so a disappointment. An individual identity cannot be reconstructed through an imaginary self. In short, he negated himself; the experience of losing one’s self amounts to a kind of “non- identity.” Hence I contend that Kim cannot close the distance between the real self and the idealized notion of the self. We are left with the description of protagonists in both *Kogoeru Kuchi* and *Sakumei* who, lacking relations in the outside world, consciously cultivate an interior life, but this cannot protect them from loneliness.

Ultimately Kim and his heroes end up living a rather solitary existence and some, like Kim, even commit suicide. The despair and pessimism so apparent in Kim’s writings is testimony to a sense of a void in life, which Kim, like other existentialist writers, suggests is a problem for humankind at large. Kim’s central concern was with existential suffering and loneliness. The predicament of spiritual barrenness and the ensuing quest for resolution is, of course, a familiar theme in twentieth century literature and commonly features in the narratives of diasporic writers (Wedell-Wedellsborg 78). In Kim’s fiction, no one, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, class or age, escapes the misfortunes of life, which he depicts as various and random, similar to other Japanese existentialist writers like Abe Kōbo, for instance. Matsumoto Ken’ichi observes, “Kim portrays suffering as an instance of hopelessness; such a destiny could befall anybody...

²⁰³ 観念的 *kannenteki*

This shows the lengths to which Kim went to turn his understanding of suffering into a universal vision” (qtd. in Oketani et al. 16).²⁰⁴ Takeda concurs, writing, “Kim’s literature questions much more than the pain of the *zainichi* Korean, he has transcended that... He depicts human suffering as a problem of huge proportions” (*Zainichi* 172; *Kurushimi* 468, 458).

Loneliness, in particular, appears to be the defining condition of existence in Kim’s fiction. At the beginning and end of both *Kogoeru Kuchi* and *Sakumei*, the heroes are ultimately alone, marked by a sense of alienation and futility. In Chapter One of *Kogoeru Kuchi*, Sai awakens alone in the dark; in Chapter Eight, that same day, he returns home alone in the dark cold night.

As night advanced I finally left... The ground was frozen. For some reason I felt terribly alone. My heart felt cold and I thought of returning to Michiko’s... but even if I returned I would feel the same way. I felt a crushing sense of loneliness and an oppressive pain in my chest as I walked toward the station (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 97).

Kim understood loneliness as the principal manifestation of one’s personal problems and correlated it to an inability to fully engage with and understand others. Isogai laments, “You are my only friend. You are the only friend I’ve ever had and yet, you know nothing about me. This makes me feel so alone. It means I could not express myself to another human being” (Kim H. G. *Kogoeru* 65).

Kim’s protagonists attempt to escape their suffering by taking up political activism, ethnic consciousness-raising, sex, work or drink, all of which Kim regards as imperfect or temporary measures. Ultimately Kim advocates facing reality as it is. However, he also endorses seeking out a loving relationship with another person despite the limitations inherent in relationships. In keeping with this, Matsumoto Ken’ichi underscores Kim’s understanding of love, or more precisely, the quest for love as the central force behind one’s destiny:

Kim experienced a loss of country and ethnicity, his grandmother’s suicide, the violence of his grandfather and father and their loveless marriages, and he saw people and himself go mad. Kim attributed it all to a deficiency of love and bad luck (qtd. in Oketani et. al. 15).

Of himself, Kim wrote, “I was always waiting... what was I waiting for? Love. The love my grandmother craved and never got” (qtd. in Takeda *Kurushimi* 467).

²⁰⁴ Matsumoto uses the word 普遍的 *fuhenteki*

Ultimately Kim and his characters, despite their physical and emotional limitations, tend to hold on to visions of love – if only for a lack of anything else to hold on to. Certainly Sai’s existential pain and loneliness is relieved when in the presence of his lover. But his pain revisits him as soon as he is alone again, like a shadow. Nevertheless, since his mind can conceptualize the possibility of love, he believes it must exist. Sai never stops dreaming, literally or figuratively, of such a fulfillment. His visions of hope, manifest themselves in his dreams, and feature some distant place characterized by light, warmth and comfort, albeit faint, muted, and ephemeral. This vision appears to be the only thing that sustains or drives the protagonist. He constantly looks for a place where he won’t feel pain. The sense that there might be, somewhere, someday something worth living for is his key to survival.

The depiction of Isogai’s mother’s suicide in *Kogoeru Kuchi* appears to be based upon the suicide of the author’s grandmother. In 1982 Kim remarked: “When I wrote that Isogai’s mother committed suicide due to marital unhappiness in *Kogoeru Kuchi*, I felt the pain of my own parents’ failed marriage and that of my grandmother’s suicide, and I cried as I wrote” (*Kogoeru Kuchi no Koto* 196). Emile Durkheim notes that suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the group to which the individual belongs...when individuals are left without strong social ties and support systems the likelihood of suicide is increased; an increase in suicide is due, in part, to weakened social relations, i.e., the loosening or weakening of communal or family ties (qtd. in Davis 229). According to Kim’s brother, Kim Mu Jong, ‘My grandmother’s suicide had an enormous effect on my brother, who started to believe that suicide could be an answer. Over time the idea that he himself would take his own life became fixed’ (qtd. in Inokawa 66-67).

In Kim’s writings of his grandmother’s suicide in *Fuyu no Hikari* [*Winter Lights*] and *Tochi no Kanashimi* [*The Sadness of the Earth*] or that of Isogai’s mother in *Kogoeru Kuchi*, the suicides are rendered as a tragic last resort, or an escape, made under harrowing circumstances. “Mom had escaped dad at last” (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 72). The suicides of Isogai’s mother and Isogai in *Kogoeru Kuchi* are desperate acts and neither can be viewed as ‘positive’ given the nature of the horrors that propelled them to

their deaths. However, because death does eventually provide relief to the tormented souls, I make the case that a positive interpretation of suicide can be deduced. “Dying voluntarily implies that you have recognized the uselessness of suffering” (Noon 384). In my reading of *Kogoeru Kuchi*, *Sakumei* and various essays, I believe that for some of Kim’s protagonists, suicide is portrayed as a valid means to alleviate suffering. Kim often characterizes suicide in spiritual terms; he aims to invoke some sort of cataclysmic return to who he (the protagonist) essentially and unconsciously is or was. There is also a corresponding sense of momentum that Kim embeds in his portrayal of suicide; it transports the individual into an expanse or realm of light, glory, safety and bliss, where pain is completely absent. For Kim, it would appear that suicide offers new opportunities, an idea that is rendered in his prose in terms of the image of “the sapphire island” or “a dazzlingly heavenly sanctuary.” Suicide is depicted as an adequate response to pain; “For me suicide is a natural death” (Kim, H. G. *Kogoeru* 65). It could have a radical symbolic meaning for it affirms the ultimate value of individual freedom and dignity. “The individual committing suicide advocates self-determination, freedom and the right to choose between life and death – upholding the primacy of the self over society or family” (Marra and Orru 286).

There is continued speculation on Kim’s personal suicide. Lee Hoe Sung, when referring surreptitiously to Kim in his *Shisha to Seija no Ichi* [*The Market of the Living and the Dead*] (1996) uses the suicide of the character that represents Kim to portray the psychological ramifications of oppression: “If the feeling of being beaten gets too strong it implodes and can turn into self violence or suicide” (143). Oketani Hideaki analyzes Kim’s suicide similarly arguing that Kim’s anguish imploded rather than exploded, and so, rather than become a violent man like his father or grandfather, he killed himself (3). In fact, a sibling of Kim’s disclosed that Kim had an alcohol problem, claiming that he “couldn’t survive without drinking and everyday was an internal battle, one he finally lost.” Perhaps most telling is a statement Kim’s daughter made to her aunt at the funeral when asked what kind of father Kim had been. She replied that he was “void of a sense of existence, a sense of self” (Inokawa 70).²⁰⁵ A basic tenet of existential philosophy is that “Man’s being is always in dialectical relation to non-being,

²⁰⁵ まるきり 存在感のない人

or death, and he can choose non being” (Diggory 307). Existential philosophers, while not advocating suicide, see it as an inherent individual right and the ultimate expression of liberty (Diggory 307). It is not surprising that, silent and numb, Kim could find the thought of death appealing. Suicide is merely the final manifestation of the ‘heavy burden’; it is a last, numbing summary of the lifelong pain exerted on him by the ostracism he ultimately could not escape. The suicide and the starving heart about which we read convey only a sense of overwhelming resignation.

Kim Ha Gyong attempted to distinguish a private individual subjectivity from conventional notions of a *zainichi* Korean subjectivity associated with Korean ethnicity and Korean politics in his novels. His stutter, because it mediated how he related to the world, influenced his views on ethnicity and politics. For Kim, both his ethnicity and his stutter imposed a barrier between his in-the-world self and his in-the-body self, or his exterior self and his interior self; he believed his real identity lay under their surface. Kim or his protagonist keeps losing sight of his ‘self’ through the vestments of ethnicity and stutter: he can only imagine his real ‘self’ in a dissociative state. Kim questioned what life would be like without such impositions. His stutter furnished him with a privileged position to view how notions of ethnicity are arbitrarily constructed to ascertain and establish distance between people rather than ascertain and establish proximity. This is what Kim problematized in his fiction, hence the inclination to label him a universalist. Indeed, Kim was more interested in the commonalities people shared – the desire to have a meaningful existence and to be understood, as well as the apprehension of being alone in the world – than he was in their differences. Kim’s emphasis on a common humanity is one of his contributions to the *zainichi* Korean debates on ethnicity of his day.

However, Kim failed to grapple with a major problem associated with universalism – that of overgeneralization. While he understood that there is no particular property or properties which all *zainichi* Koreans possess, he nevertheless minimizes socio-cultural continuities that do distinguish *zainichi* Koreans from other ethnic groups, the Japanese in particular, including distinctive cultural aspirations, needs, hopes and

view-points as well as the aspiration for solidarity and sociopolitical rights.²⁰⁶ While his oblique approach to ethnicity and politics should be acknowledged as an important constituent of his fiction, it can be argued that he failed to adequately affirm how political activism and solidarity did succeed in enhancing the sociopolitical standing of his contemporaries.

Kim offered his readership a philosophical and highly pacifist solution to racism in Japan. His heroes resisted racism by refusing to react to it or engage in any behavior resembling it. He advocated still contemplation, sober observation and forbearance in order that racism would be neither validated nor proliferated. While Kim's philosophy offered respite for disaffected Koreans for whom ethnocentric activities proved meaningless, he could not offer much by way of active or concrete measures for improving the quality of life for *zainichi* Koreans in material or sociopolitical terms.

On the other hand, Kim Ha Gyong is to be celebrated as the only writer of his era who depicted a successful love story between a *zainichi* Korean and a Japanese, not least in such a passionate manner. In virtually all other *zainichi* Korean novels published in the 1960s, 1970s and even until the late 1980s, unions between *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese were considered not only taboo but as aberrant and destined to fail. For many, the idea that a Korean and a Japanese person could have a carefree, satisfying, and tender relationship was unthinkable. Kim's premise is that love need not be constrained by ethnicity. By portraying a model of a non-political and gratifying intercultural relationship to his readership Kim, then seen as naïve, offers a sophisticated vision of love – divorced from prejudice and bias. One could argue that Kim's love story provides embodiment to the current and somewhat abstract term, the 'third way'.²⁰⁷ However, while Kim believes that love is perhaps the ultimate solution to alienation, it remains elusive for one who suffers isolation and depression.

²⁰⁶ Refer to Novak 32; Peterson 2, 25.

²⁰⁷ I borrow here from Norma Field's discussion of how the abstract term 'third way' might manifest in prose (652).

Chapter Eight

金鶴永 Kim Ha Gyong 「錯迷」 *Sakumei* [*Delusions*] (1971)

Kim Ha Gyong's novel *Sakumei* shares some features with *Kogoeru Kuchi* as it too is primarily a story about the pain of existence and about survival.²⁰⁸ *Sakumei*, like *Kogoeru Kuchi*, recounts a day in the life of its second-generation *zainichi* Korean hero, Shin, a character based on Kim. As he did in *Kogoeru Kuchi*, Kim presents his reader with an alter ego – a Korean, Tei, from the mainland, whose life journey differs vastly from that of the hero. Both, however, experience what Kim calls a 'starvation of the heart'. The story is a present-tense dialogue between the two characters as well as a past-tense internal monologue of the main hero who is reminiscing. The South Korean national, with an integrated identity, can appease his own starved heart through positive identification with nationalism and activism. However, Shin, the *zainichi* Korean with a fragmented identity, can find no points of reference there. Indeed, for Shin, popular measures such as political activism or ethnicity-consciousness appear delusional because they are unrelated to the interior self, wherein lies the possibility of a *salvation* of the heart.

In this chapter I develop an existentialist interpretation of Kim's *Sakumei* focusing on the singular, private, experiential and alienated nature of his central protagonist, Shin. Shin's story is compelling because it exposes the abyss that separates politics from the internal world of lived experience. Kim's *Sakumei*, like *Kogoeru Kuchi*, suggests a radical distance between a public life that encompasses activism and a private one that seems so narrow as to consist merely of interiority.

My reading of *Sakumei* posits that Chapters One to Five metaphorically mirror five major stages of life – birth, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and maturity – specifically of a second-generation Korean living in Japan between the 1950s and 1970s. Indeed Kim depicts Shin's life stages in ways that make them seem to correspond with

²⁰⁸ Kim published *Sakumei* in 1971 in the journal *Bungei*. Other lesser-known works were also published in *Bungei*: *Kiri no Naka* [*In the Mist*] 1967, *Kanshō Yōeki* [*Shock Absorbant*] 1967, *Usunoro* [*The Simpleton*] 1967, *Yurisō* [*Layers of Freedom*] 1968, *Dansei Genkai* [*Limits of Flexibility*] 1969 and *Manazashi no Kabe* [*Invisible Barriers*] 1969. The translations of the titles are mine.

historical events taking place in the broader community. The Repatriation Movement, for example, is depicted by Kim as a personal escape – not as the achievement of a homeland. It is also associated with adolescent idealism. An idealized notion of a homeland was just that; his view was that the reality would be nothing like the ideal, and that the grand narratives of political history were less relevant to the individual than the personal history of the battered individual.

When the novel begins, the hero and first-person narrator, Shin Junichi (Shin Sun Il) is a rational but depressed physicist working in a lab at Sendai University conducting experiments on complex enzymes.²⁰⁹ Shin is troubled by the discontinuity between his ethnicity and identity; he feels caught between being Korean and being Japanese. Additionally, a dark past, an aching heart and feelings of extreme discomfort whilst in the company of people preoccupy him. Almost immediately Kim introduces the secondary hero, a South Korean national, Tei Yōshin (Chong Yong Shin), a former Tokyo University classmate of Shin, who being in many ways the opposite of Shin may be understood as his alter ego. A post-colonial interpretation would further allow the reader to interpret the characters as signifiers respectively for Japan and Korea. For example, born and raised in South Korea Tei is a strong, confident man and a passionate political activist. He also epitomizes the notion of an ‘authentic’ Korean, and as such he represents an ideal that *zainichi* Koreans cannot actualize. These qualities place him in direct contrast to the skeptical hero, a quiet insecure and isolated scientist. Yet, by setting the personalities of two Korean men in contraposition, Kim demonstrates a commitment to considering individuals rather than to generalizing systematically about race.²¹⁰

A broader perspective allows the reader to understand the characters as

²⁰⁹ Sendai is a city in northeast Honshu, the main Japanese island. In post-war Japan, up to and including today, a disproportionate number of *zainichi* Koreans have entered graduate school or found postgraduate positions in university research institutes. This is indicative of existing discrimination in employment practices of Japanese corporations that still generally choose to hire a well qualified Japanese applicant over an equally well-qualified or even more Korean applicant. Consequently many *zainichi* Koreans pursue research positions or become independent entrepreneurs. *Zainichi* Koreans who pursue graduate studies may do so to achieve employment as much as to pursue a dream or calling. The Japan-based reader may interpret the character Shin’s academic position as an indication of job discrimination in Japan.

²¹⁰ Refer to Marcos 95.

representing two contrasting positions. On the one hand, a man capable of coming to terms with his reality, and on the other, a man who experiences only disappointment. I explore the difference between the two characters by borrowing loosely from the writings of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. My contention is that the Korean national, Tei, can be explained using Husserl's concept of intentional perception, a view that emphasises the intersubjective constitution of reality (219). Tei is an active vibrant member of a community that thrives on dialogical engagement. He is engaged in productive political relations and thus has something in common with his peers, whose actions, politically speaking, are aimed at a certain kind of public improvement. By contrast, the *zainichi* Korean, Shin, can best be understood by drawing on Merleau-Ponty's concept of embodied or isolated perception, which emphasises the singular subject's connection with the world mediated by the lived body. Shin's life suggests a certain kind of alienation from his community. His is a personal abode, a lonely space of reflection. Shin thus emerges as a more ambiguous and fragile construct than Tei. Thomas Fuchs argues that individuals whose lived unique experiences diverge radically from normative practices and perceptions experience reality as highly idiosyncratic. He argues further that this type of experience can lead to delusional thoughts and perceptions. Such an argument corresponds neatly to Kim's narrative of delusions (133-39).

While waiting for Tei to arrive for a visit, after an eight year interval, Shin reminisces. He recalls how, by virtue of his being a *zainichi* Korean, he had felt estranged from both his Japanese classmates at university and from Tei, the 'authentic' Korean. For example, Shin had been unable to answer Tei's enquiry about his Korean roots, "Tei asked me, 'Where is your *honseki*?'"²¹¹ I couldn't answer; I didn't even know how to pronounce the word (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 175). Shin recalls an essay Tei had written at university, entitled 'Delusion and Emotion,' which was essentially about his own "starvation of the heart", a concept borrowed from Mori Ogai (1862-1922), the well-known Meiji-era writer and intellectual. At the time, Shin was skeptical about the depth of Tei's feelings, given that he attributed them to political strife in the ROK. Shin connected his own starved heart, on the other hand, to his personal experience of

²¹¹ The term *honseki* refers to one's ancestral origins; often used for marriage selection and naturalization purposes.

domestic violence. The abuse and neglect he experienced as a child and teenager was so profound that he cannot comprehend Tei's coupling the concept with political turmoil. 'Starvation of the heart' and the potential for a lasting solution are in fact Shin's only concerns; they are the central themes of the novel. Shin broods, "I feel that starvation in the heart... what is it I have to do (to relieve it)? I have no idea. I never feel at peace, I never feel settled... Is it just me?" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 179). Chapter One thus poses the same existential questions that birth arguably poses: Who am I? What is life meant to be? What am I searching for? How am I to live?²¹² Specifically, Shin ponders, "Am I living out my life the way I should? To its potential? To its fullest?" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 178). Shin conceives of love, albeit indefinable and elusive, as a potential means by which one can salvage the soul and thus achieve a glimpse of happiness.²¹³ Kim's hero voices an on-going commitment to the pursuit of happiness but this is not because he believes happiness is actually achievable; on the contrary, he is skeptical. Nevertheless he remains committed to the idea that achieving happiness is possible, simply because his mind has the power to conceptualize such a possibility. Indeed this possibility is only ever realized in his imagination, in his visions of another 'place' or 'world, "As long as I don't give up the search for the sapphire island. It won't disappear" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 179).

In Chapter Two Kim addresses the prevalence of domestic violence in Japan-based Korean communities and its deleterious effect on the victims. The chapter graphically depicts the violence that Shin experienced and witnessed as a child:

They were scenes out of hell... I saw the hairdresser attack his wife. I saw the brick layer's red face as he screamed in rage. I heard the fruit seller's wife cry out in pain. These fights were nothing compared to the ones at home... The neighbors' fights didn't terrorize me but my parents' vicious fights did. They were incessant and so hateful and malicious. My father beat my mother all the time. He beat her hundreds, no, thousands, of times (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 183-84).

Shin had been forced to do *kendō* with his father, who beat him mercilessly during the training on a daily basis.²¹⁴ Over time the boy learned to still his tears, to conceal his pain and to become expressionless while his heart 'hardened'. "I became a child who

²¹² These are the same themes Kim takes up in his novel *Jokyoku* [*Overture*], which was serialized in the newspaper, *Toitsu Nippo*, from January 1985.

²¹³ Likewise, the central theme in Oe Kenzaburo's *A Personal Matter* is that forbearance and endurance can lead to happiness despite the pain of existence.

²¹⁴ *Kendō* is a traditional Japanese martial art where fighting is conducted with bamboo sticks.

never shed a tear. I finally learned that crying was useless. The more my father hit me the more stoic I became” (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 184). In this way the protagonist illustrates how the violence he and his mother experienced ‘distorted’ them, and he writes that the “beatings did nothing more than distort my soul and warp the person my mother was” (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 185). The impotence of the mother and child mean they come to resemble colonized peoples: they feel quite powerless. The father, with his explosive temper, then objectifies and dominates them, constantly reproducing this relation of colonization.²¹⁵

The tormented Shin thinks he is going insane when he begins to hear noises in his head; his fears are finally realized when he finds himself embarking on a crazed cricket-killing spree. The way the father relates to the child distorts how the child then relates to his own physical self and the world around him.

As a result of being raised in such a miserable home I was screwed up and stayed that way. I never had a kind friend or a friend to be kind to... I was much too damaged. The door to the outside world was...impossible to open. I was deeply troubled and never revealed myself to another person and no one tried to... befriend me (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 177).

Shin’s childhood, which should have been a time of innocence and happiness, was marred by fear and horror – in essence his childhood was marked by violence and capitulation. It replicates what happened to Korea during the colonial era. Before long, the boy can find no valid reason for living.

Success, as symbolized by the family photo showing the well-presented smiling children, is a façade. The father’s high standing as the head of the local *Chongryun* branch and his booming business are surface-level successes and thus nothing more than a *delusion*. Their urban dwelling, indistinguishable from the others on the block, is internally destroyed by violence and repressive discipline and represents a barren shell. The title of both the novel and Tei’s essay, *Delusions*, thus draws attention to the deceptive and distorted beliefs people develop about themselves or others, which may manifest in destructive behavior. Chapter Two culminates in a horrific scene, whereby Shin, when revisiting his home as a young adult, attempts to defend his mother but is punched repeatedly in the face by his father. He laments, “I don’t know how many times he punched me but his blows didn’t hurt my face as much as they did my heart” (Kim, H.

²¹⁵ Cornyetz 225; Giunta 55.

G. Sakumei 191). Shin, even though ostensibly independent of his violent father, is still dominated by him. He is unable to liberate himself of his father's control and their relationship seems to be an unmistakable symbol of the neo-colonial relationship between Japan and Korea. To bridge the distance between himself and his father was an impossibility for the sensitive young man.

In Chapter Three, in which adolescence is depicted, Kim describes the *zainichi* Korean civil rights movement of the 1960s and the push for unification of the Korean Peninsula. At this time, Korean political lobby groups, the pro-North *Chongryun* and pro-South *Mindan*, as well as splinter student associations, were very popular amongst *zainichi* Korean university students. They presented opportunities for *zainichi* Korean students to interact as well as to meet new-comer ('authentic') Koreans. They encouraged *zainichi* Korean students to recover their 'Korean identity' by learning the Korean language and history. This was a time of 'coming out' for *zainichi* Korean adolescents, who had hitherto denied their Korean ethnicity and passed as Japanese. This process was influenced by the ethnic pride and Black Power movements taking place in the United States at the same time (Carby 185; Lugo 56). The local student associations also encouraged *zainichi* Korean youths to become political activists and work for Korean causes – first and foremost, unification of the Korean Peninsula. Tei, who has survived the repressive dictatorships in the ROK, makes his life meaningful by becoming an activist.

Kim, however, dismisses the emphasis on ethnicity or political activism as a means to alleviate his hero's existential trauma. Shin's "starvation of the heart" is psychologically bound to his experience of abuse and neglect at home, and its resolution is therefore unrelated to political activism. Shin is actually skeptical about Tei's commitment to political activism and the promotion of unification and he intuitively feels that the community-wide expectation that he recover an ethnic sensibility is illogical. He bemoans, "They believed if I adopted their ideology... a pride in being Korean would flare up. I was dubious" (Kim, H. G. Sakumei 199). Shin is especially skeptical because his father protested Japanese hostility towards Koreans and in his capacity as a *Chongryun* branch official, went to rallies to advocate for peace on the Korean Peninsula while at the same time refusing to manufacture it at home. The hypocrisy of both his father and the movement stuns him: "My father remained oblivious of the fact

that Japan's assault on *zainichi* Koreans, of which he was so critical, was no different to his assault on his own family" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 200). Chapman also mentions the hypocrisy of "...first-generation Korean-born men who, upon returning home from demonstrations, continued to commit acts of violence and oppression on members of their own family" (109). Shin's father, being so unconscious of the contradictions in what he does and says, seems to signify the qualities of adolescence in that he is significantly lacking in self-awareness and maturity.

Chapter Three also illustrates the naiveté and idealism of *zainichi* Korean adolescent youth to such an extent that the entire chapter is instilled with the intensity and idealism that characterize adolescence. Kim uses Tei's words and Shin's unspoken thoughts to deliver a succinct and powerful history of the Cold War as it affected Koreans on the peninsula and in Japan. Kim describes and then condemns the military preparedness for war of the DPRK and the ROK, and denounces the expenditure of both states on weapons. Kim also censures the political corruption and propaganda that emanated from *Chongryun* and *Mindan*, pointing out how the organizations galvanized *zainichi* Korean youth more for political purposes than for altruistic reasons. Chapter Three also depicts the ability of political lobby groups to exploit the idealism and ignorance of *zainichi* Korean youth. Not surprisingly, they galvanized *zainichi* Korean youth for their own political agendas, be they pro-North or pro-South. Deep divisions amongst *zainichi* Koreans ensued, corresponding to those on the peninsula and intense fighting erupted between rival factions in Tokyo and Osaka. Finally, Chapter Three functions as an exposé and assault on political excess and corruption and their impact on the masses who, in their yearning for peace, get caught up in futile political bickering and thus resemble adolescents.

The naiveté of adolescence in Chapter Three transforms into the cynicism of adulthood in Chapter Four, which sees the maturing hero lose interest in university life. Shin understands that his minority status in Japan means that he will have little chance of obtaining decent employment. Yet he aspires to become financially independent, especially from his father. Concurrently, as he matures, he becomes increasingly cynical and pessimistic about politics as well as racism in Japan.

Kim drives home the point with a then-unprecedented cynical depiction of the Repatriation Movement to North Korea in Chapter Four. Indeed, in the literature, film, songs and print media of the era, the Repatriation Movement was valorized. Tessa Morris-Suzuki writes, “The topic quickly became a sensation in the Japanese media... Since the summer of 1958, an almost hysterical wave of excitement about the prospect of life in North Korea had been sweeping through through the minority community and the Japanese media” (188) “By October the Japanese press was reporting mass attendances at *Chongryun* rallies” (Morris-Suzuki 160). People accepted as true *Chongryun*’s slogan, ‘North Korea: A Paradise on Earth’. Repatriation was considered the height of loyalty to the socialist homeland and gave *zainichi* Koreans a tremendous sense of pride (*Rakuen*; Ha 2000; Morris-Suzuki 95). This is clearly depicted in Lee Hoe Sung’s *Kayako no Tameni*. Kim, however, characterizes the Repatriation Movement, in *Sakumei*, not as a *commendation* of the DPRK but as a *condemnation* of Japan, a virtual act of bravery given that he was doing so in a public forum, albeit in prose.²¹⁶ For while many *zainichi* Korean returnees seemingly accepted as true the popular discourse about North Korea as a socialist haven of homogeneous camaraderie and fraternity, Kim mistrusted these ideas.²¹⁷ Accordingly, his protagonist, Shin, has grave misgivings about his sister Akiko’s border crossing, knowing that while the future may not be as bad as the present, it may not necessarily be better either.²¹⁸ In contrast to his peers, who deem repatriation a patriotic act of self-determination, Kim’s hero Shin describes it as a collective escape for the repatriates from Japan, and a personal escape for his sisters Akiko and Noriko, from their father’s violence:

When Akiko told us she was leaving for the North, all the Koreans around us thought she was so brave... A seventeen-year old girl going alone to North Korea... Everyone praised her for her loyalty to the socialist state and her determination to rebuild and develop her country. It sounded as if it were patriotic zeal that was inspiring her; after all there could be no other possible

²¹⁶ From interviews with *zainichi* Koreans it seems clear that hardship in Japan was a major motivation for repatriation. Many *zainichi* Koreans decided to stay in Japan, however, for fear that life in the DPRK might be more difficult than life in Japan, though these opinions were not publicized. At the time, though, *zainichi* Koreans attributed, or were expected to attribute the Repatriation Movement solely to patriotism. Kim’s unflattering portrait of the Repatriation Movement, was seen as a form of sacrilege by *zainichi* Koreans, especially by those with communist leanings, despite his condemnation of Japan

²¹⁷ Refer to Lugo 54.

²¹⁸ Refer to Saenz 88.

explanation. But Akiko wasn't going back to build a country. This was just a pretext. She was going to North Korea because she couldn't bear to stay in our miserable house a minute longer. It wouldn't have mattered what possible problems faced her in the DPRK, they were nothing compared to the problems she had here (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 204).

Kim understood as well as any political lobby group, as Kathryn Woodward suggests, that, "A subject-position, such as that of a patriotic citizen, is not a matter simply of conscious personal choice but of having been recruited into that position" (43). In her book, *North Koreans in Japan: Language, Ideology, and Identity* (1997), Sonia Ryang gives an account of how *Chongryun* was able to convince its *diasporic* Korean membership that they were North Korean, though most had never lived in the DPRK. North Korean schools, the majority of which were sponsored by the DPRK and *Chongryun*, actively encouraged teenagers to repatriate to their 'homeland' (Preface *North*). Morris-Suzuki explains that many *zainichi* Korean children were sent to *Chongryun* schools in preparation for their return home (219). *Chongryun* fostered a pseudo-dichotomy between the good socialist state of the DPRK and the evil puppet regime of the ROK as well as relying on anti-Japanese sentiment to maintain a sense of solidarity among its members (Bae).²¹⁹ *Chongryun* conspicuously cultivated a sense of distance between the North and the South, as well as between Koreans and Japanese. The party line was that repatriation would enable *zainichi* Koreans to distance themselves from, "...the unbearable national humiliation of living a disgraceful life in Japan – an alien land" ("Kikoku"). Promises of a better life were plentiful; Koreans were assured that they would be given homes, jobs, education and welfare (Morris-Suzuki 9, 30, 160).

Chongryun's promise to *zainichi* Koreans was, "In the DPRK you will finally be able to fulfill your dreams", and *zainichi* Koreans believed it. Even those skeptical had to concede, 'It cannot be worse than Japan, even if we can't fulfill our dreams there. In any case, it is better to live in Korea since it is *our* homeland' (*Rakuen*).

According to Morris-Suzuki, even Japanese overtly promoted repatriation:

A group of prominent Japanese politicians ...formed the *Zainichi Koreans Repatriation Cooperation Society*, and, among other things, published pamphlets and newsletters, collected funds and signatures and sent groups of prominent intellectuals and cultural figures on tours around the country to promote repatriation (161).

²¹⁹ *Mindan* similarly vilified *Chongryun* and the DPRK. Refer also to Erspamer 172.

In 1962 and 1964, three of Kim Ha Gyong's sisters repatriated to the DPRK (Inokawa 64; Pak, C. J. 471). Kim's father, Yong Ho, claimed, "My daughters wanted to be Korean. It is better to be Korean in Korea. I accepted that" (Inokawa 71). Until the mid to late 1970s dissenters to this view could hardly be found, or they knew better than to voice their opposition.²²⁰ Those who 'postponed the trip' were branded traitors or capitalists. Kim, however, suspected the move to North Korea, for his sisters at any rate, was an irreversible mistake, a point which makes his cynical portrayal of the movement particularly poignant. Kim, apparently never recovered from the 'loss' of his sisters (Inokawa 64).

Margaret Spencer articulates that, "A discriminatory environment requires minority members to develop coping strategies and adaptive responses" (32). It is also true that in such an environment people easily fall back on ethnic chauvinism (Oha 144). The Repatriation Movement represents just such an ethno-centric adaptive response to the highly segregated and racist environment of early post-war Japan. From the perspectives of those who don't 'fit in' anywhere, such a border crossing may be a valid form of resistance. If someone's home is a living hell, escape may be a necessity. According to Canadian writer, Sky Lee, "The ability to run away may represent the chief means for someone to avoid passivity and regain the initiative" (qtd. in E. Chang 189-90).²²¹

Kim, however, did not view escapism – in this case repatriation – as a positive form of resistance. In Kim's depiction just as Akiko's act of repatriation sidesteps the direct issue of male dominance and paternal abuse, so does the Repatriation Movement sidestep the issue of Japanese racism. Additionally, Kim scoffed at the notion that people were leaving due to patriotic motives; indeed, he generally scoffed at patriotism as a rule. He saw *zainichi* Koreans leaving Japan for pragmatic reasons – Japan offered them nothing and repatriation was an escape from Japan – all the while justifying their behavior with an expedient ideology.²²²

A heaven on earth... I had heard such things. Was it true? It smelled fishy to me.

²²⁰ As time passed negative reports of life in the communist state became more common and worrisome, causing more and more *zainichi* Koreans to gradually have reservations.

²²¹ Elaine Chang contends that, "Writing is another way of regaining the initiative, available to the migrant, the nomad, and guerrilla" (189-90).

²²² See also Takeda *Kurushimi* 455.

I was dubious. I had no way of knowing Even if it were not a heaven on earth, what would be? There is no place on earth that can be described that way and in any case, any place compared to home would be better (*Sakumei* 205).

The repatriation movement, in Kim's narrative, thus appears to be driven by anti-Japanese sentiment and nationalism. For Kim, the returnees built a politics and an ensuing identity centered on loss.²²³ In *Sakumei* everything sours when Akiko – the returnee – crosses over the territorial border and is on board the North Korean ship. She suddenly grasps the magnitude of her decision to leave her home and family and is stricken with grief:

A bell rang and the boat began its slow departure from the pier...At that moment Akiko's face abruptly changed! She started to shake and turned pale. She suddenly comprehended that she was leaving her only mother and siblings and that she would be alone; it was as if it had only just dawned on her. Her face was full of dread and terror. Until now she had cheerfully called out "*Omoni*" (mother) but she suddenly screamed "*Oka'asan*" (mother) in Japanese (209-10).

Having Akiko, at the moment of separation, revert to speaking Japanese demonstrates Kim's belief that the acquisition of a second-language or cultural 'code switching' cannot immediately change a person's linguistic or cultural identity, nor can it superimpose an alternative ethnic identity. Kim seems opposed to both to the notion that a person's sense of self can be so readily influenced and the coerced nature of the political program designed by *Chongryun*-affiliated Korean schools.

'North' Koreans in Japan were taught slogans and other formulaic expressions intended to discourage independent thought and encourage identification with the government, ideology, and people of North Korea. The Korean they learned was unnatural; it was designed for talking about politics and national identity rather than about matters of everyday life (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 114-15).

On the other hand, there is something to be said for the argument that the longer a person is immersed in another culture and the longer he or she uses the target language of that culture, they naturally adopt or assume identity traits that correspond to the target culture. As Japan scholar Gavan McCormack points out, "Most members of the Korean community in Japan, especially third-generation Koreans, have become quite adroit in 'code switching' linguistic practices ... depending on their social context, enabling them to respond with remarkable ease to their two contradictory pulls" (qtd. in Ryang Foreward *North*).

David Johnson identifies the switching of codes with the language of the

²²³ Refer to Libretti 131 and Saenz 86.

Borderlands (153). Border theory addresses those spaces, “where cultural identity and even physicality shifts, called ‘borderlands,’ are filled with contestation, fragmentation, irresolution and ambiguity” (Rosaldo 207-08). Though the *zainichi* Korean returnees imagined themselves to be North Korean citizens in Japan, they were not considered such on North Korean soil. Once the returnees arrived in the DPRK, they were isolated and interrogated by ‘border guards’.²²⁴ The ‘North Korean proletariat’ in Japan was newly identified as the ‘Japanese capitalist’ or worse, the ‘Japanese or South Korean spy,’ in North Korea.²²⁵ The switch of identities is not related to the geographic border between Japan and North Korea; rather it is a mental and emotional process of transformation – that can be validated or invalidated in very arbitrary ways.

Sadly, Kim’s presentiments of strife and trouble turned out to be true. As time passed negative reports of life in the communist state became increasingly common. Repatriates wrote letters in codes warning others not to repatriate because life, in fact, was much harder in the DPRK than in Japan (Morris-Suzuki 225, 235). Morris-Suzuki writes:

A handful of letterscould not conceal the desperate mixture of suffering, anxiety, and hope in those messages to friends and family – messages that had

²²⁴ For a discussion of ‘border guards’ see Kaplan 114-15.

²²⁵ Unfortunately, it would seem that for many of the 93,000 *zainichi* Korean repatriates pain and suffering was the norm. According to letters relatives in Japan received, the repatriates were enslaved, deceived, cheated, financially defeated and broken (Rakuen). A Mr. O Gi Wan says, “North Korean authorities saw the movement as a burden but thought they could use it as part of a pro-North Korea campaign. They thought they would look good by ‘helping the poor unfortunate brothers from Japan’ but they were shocked when the repatriates arrived. They looked rich and wore good clothing. The repatriates looked equally shocked when they saw the North Koreans. North Korean customs officials asked them all sorts of questions including “What was your job in Japan?” and “How did you get so rich?” The repatriates said they had worked in pachinko parlors. The North Koreans didn’t know what a pachinko parlor was and were stunned when the returnees explained that it was a pinball game. The North Koreans became worried that the repatriates were capitalists and thought it would be dangerous to have them mix with the majority population so they were quickly labeled reactionaries or dangerous elements and were made the objects of discrimination and harassment. They were isolated, segregated, spied on and denied jobs and educational opportunities. Additionally the North Koreans were worried about the fact the repatriates were in contact with their relatives in Japan. Moreover the repatriates soon realized they would have to depend on money and goods sent to them from Japan (Rakuen). According to the documentary, from 1967, repatriates began to disappear. Their whereabouts could no longer be confirmed. News came that they were being accused of espionage. Kan Chol Fan, who managed to escape to South Korea, explained in the documentary that one morning his grandfather was taken away by the police; he was accused of crimes against the state but was not told which crimes. The family had all their assets confiscated and were forcibly sent to a labor camp. It was a very crowded camp where Kan claims people regularly froze or starved to death. Most inmates died within the first year. He claims they had to eat rats, snakes and frogs to survive (Rakuen). Another escaped repatriate said that *Chongryun* sent 100,000 repatriates to hell. A *Chongryun* representative would only answer their questions by telephone, commenting that nothing untoward or unfortunate happened to the repatriates (Rakuen).

been dispatched from North Korea to Japan via China and Hong Kong...as the dream of a socialist Korea finally crumbled into bitter dust (33).

Many repatriates were deceived, cheated, financially defeated and broken. Others were thrown into prison or sent to labor camps as political prisoners (Morris-Suzuki 12; *Rakuen*).²²⁶ “Prison in North Korea...was terrifying. The cells were freezing cold and the inadequate blankets full of lice. Guards would shout and swear at the prisoners, and force them to sit in silence in their cells for long periods of ‘self-criticism’” (Morris-Suzuki 243). The continuing problem of the mistaking of identities at the border haunts the accounts of returnees. The reality was that their survival in their new ‘homeland’ was proportionate to the material or symbolic profit they could bring to the DPRK, thus while skilled workers such as engineers or doctors found employment most were not so lucky.²²⁷ The returnee population effectively constituted a colonized nation within the DPRK. Kim highlights the grief that accompanies the separation of families. Many *zainichi* Koreans who remained in Japan never heard from family members again.²²⁸ As Morris-Suzuki explains, “It was not only the lives of the 93,340 “returnees” that were transformed by the repatriation, but also the lives of the hundreds of thousands of relatives and friends whom they left behind” (11). This constitutes a tragedy that continues to haunt those *zainichi* Koreans both in the story and in reality. The lost sisters therefore function as a trope for the lost dream of the chance to return ‘home,’ and the impossibility of independence and freedom, not to mention unification.

Kim’s chapter on repatriation evokes the theme of adulthood, in my reading of the text, because repatriation – the act of leaving one’s home to set up a new life in another – replicates the act of leaving the parental home upon reaching adulthood. But by pointing to the disappointment that repatriates to the DPRK would face, Kim is able to suggest that upon reaching adulthood and leaving home, *zainichi* Koreans, attempting to achieve independence, were bound to be disappointed. As a rule the achievement of independence is generally a celebrated stage of life for the young adult but research

²²⁶ See also <http://www.asahi.com> (03/10/04)

²²⁷ See also <http://www.asahi.com> (03/10/04)

²²⁸ The oft-used concept of ‘ten million families’ refers to the number of surviving first-generation divided-family members on the Korean Peninsula.²²⁸ It does not refer to the number of divided-family members of Koreans who repatriated from Japan. For an excellent account of the Repatriation Movement see Tessa Morris Suzuki’s *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan’s Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield 2007).

shows that for the minority member of society it is quite the opposite. According to Spencer, by the time they are adults, “minority members are well aware of the chauvinistic values and standards of performance and achievement of the majority culture, and are... aware of structural constraints” (32). In a society like Japan of the 1960s, where minority members were beleaguered by racism, segregation and limited opportunities, *zainichi* Koreans were largely doomed to remain disenfranchised at the lower end of the economic scale so that the achievement of independence then was thwarted (Hanami 144). Indeed, in *Sakumei* the repatriation movement is nothing more than a horrid monument to human delusions.

Chapter Four charts the progression towards adulthood in other ways as well. The development of the father’s professional life, for example, retells the story of many *zainichi* Koreans, who barely survived financially from the 1940s to the 1960s but who found economic success during and after Japan’s economic boom, which began in the late 1960s. Kim’s account possibly parodies Japanese economic growth, critiquing Japan’s failure, despite its newfound economic might, to improve the lives of its citizens.

Dad’s restaurant *Horumon Yaki* was originally a shabby barracks but it had changed so much and for the better.²²⁹ It was a success. What had not changed was dad’s character... Even now when he was financially sound his cruelty to mom had not changed at all (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 212).

Chapter Five returns to the central theme of the novel, “starvation of the heart.” After their eight years interval Shin sees no sign of the agony that he himself has endured on Tei’s face. Shin sadly ponders his own lasting starvation of the heart, “It looked as if nothing of a starved heart remained in Tei but for me it grew worse and worse over the years... Why, compared to Tei, was I so broken?” (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 220).

Tei departs and Shin stands alone on a wind-blown snowy street but the thought of returning to his cold solitary apartment frightens him. He decides to distract himself with alcohol: “I thought of the pub in Kokubunji – narrow, dark and noisy with just the ordinary crowd. I could situate myself there and be invisible... I too am nothing but an ordinary man... In any case it would be better than being in my apartment...(Kim,

²²⁹ ホルモン焼き *Horumon* refers to the intestines of the pig or cow, a specialty at Korean barbecue restaurants.

H. G. *Sakumei* 224). Prompted by the crowds of people walking by Shin lifts his collar and walks away in the direction of the pub. Thus *Sakumei* ends with Shin reflecting on his isolation, dejected and alienated, and Kim seems to suggest that “starvation of the heart” is a universal condition. His hero, because of his angst, knows that he is, ‘nothing but an ordinary man’. For him, the condition of ‘starvation of the heart’ is an inevitable existential state of being.

The inspiration for my existentialist argument is found in Albert Camus’ *The Stranger* (1988). The protagonist, Meursault, shows no interest in political relations or civil liberties. Shin, a remote, solitary hermit, is this kind of individual. His refusal to join ethnic organizations and political protest are striking instances of political inaction. Shin simply refuses to comply and to get entangled in such matters. However, he abstains not just from political entanglements, but also from social exchanges. He cares little for what occupied most people: wealth, status and familial relations. The only obligation and attachment we discern in Shin is to the authenticity of his self. His identity is located in a private realm of interiority. His actions (or rather inactions) suggest that engaging in politics in the manner expected of a *zainichi* Korean are a hindrance to cultivating his interior identity. Indeed, Shin’s efforts to preserve his interiority consist precisely in avoiding political and social entanglements. As in the case of Meursault, there is an unbridgeable chasm separating Shin’s lived experience from others. Private life, the locus of Shin’s identity, is a restricted sphere. His true self may be within, but ultimately his subjectivity cannot exist in isolation. For Shin, living with himself means living in a constant state of alienation from others. Shin’s is an identity that is fundamentally removed from not only political affairs but also social affairs. Ultimately Shin’s identity is sustained through a peculiar anti-social engagement that, though it frees him from imposing social delusions, still leaves him isolated in an alien setting. Shin’s starved heart (and Isogai’s suicide in *Kogoeru Kuchi*) may be interpreted as the tragic culmination of this predicament. Kim sketches a portrait of an existential hero whose truth is experiential and wholly personal. His starving heart emerges out of the experience of domestic violence, a point to which I now turn.

Violence and its consequences permeate all of Kim's fiction, especially violence perpetrated on the family by the first-generation Korean father and the consequences on the individual and the family.²³⁰ Kim's portrayal of paternal violence is considered especially graphic when compared to that of other *zainichi* Korean writers, such as Lee Hoe Sung, Kō Shi Mei, Lee Yang Ji and Yū Miri. Where it is a sub-text in the novels of Lee Hoe Sung, for example, it is a central issue in Kim's oeuvre, drawing attention to the unflagging play of violence in *zainichi* Korean life.²³¹ Kim's urban *zainichi* Korean slum of the 1950s and 1960s is a territory prone to the worst forms of violence, and one which he brings into grim relief.

Yan Sō Gil is another second-generation *zainichi* Korean writer known for his vivid and shocking depictions of an extremely violent father figure, based on his own father, in his *Chi to Hone* [*Blood and Bones*] (1998). Yan Sō Gil's father figure is a caricature of a man, a creator and destroyer of blood and bones or progeny and prey. Yan uses grotesque imagery and magical realism to create his vision of an indomitable ogre, an inhuman brute, taller than the tallest rival, able to fight fifty men at a time. In short, Yan's father figure is a fantastic spectacle, a sensationalized despot who demands deference and obsequiousness from anyone he comes into contact with. Kim Ha Gyong's father figure, by contrast, is an ordinary man; he is financially solid, holds a leadership role in the local community organization for Koreans, sends his children to university and seems unremarkable. Behind closed doors, however, he is dangerous and destructive. He has achieved respect and recognition in the public sphere, but in private causes no end of misery to those in his personal sphere. Kim's depictions are salient because they are so matter-of-fact and quotidian. The resigned stances of the victims work to emphasize the lack of resources available to them. The state will rarely prevent or punish violent domestic behaviour and there are few cultural supports for victims trapped in such situations (Ferraro and Johnson 327). In Japan, police consider domestic violence a private or personal matter – not a public matter, which reinforces domestic violence as a gender norm (Westlund 1049-50, McCurry 15; Radford and Tsutsumi

²³⁰ The violent father figure appears in the following works by Kim Ha Gyong: *Kogoeru Kuchi* [*Frozen Mouth*] 1966, *Dansei Genkai* [*The Limits of Flexibility*] 1969, *Sakumei* [*Delusions*] 1971, *Arukōru Ranpu* [*The Bunsen Burner*] 1972, *Kentō no Nai Ie* [*The House Without Light*] 1973, *Ishi no Michi* [*The Stony Path*] 1973, *Abura Zemi* [*Iridescent Crickets*] 1974, *Fuyu no Hikari* [*Winter Lights*] 1976, *Nomi* [*The Chisel*] 1978 and *Tochi no Kanashimi* [*The Sadness of the Land*] 1985 (Pak, C. J.: 470-75).

²³¹ Cf: Robert Lee's discussion of African American writer Chester Himes 13.

1-12; Restuccia 51). The mother and children are clearly doubly victimized in the story. The victims lose their personalities as they lose the capacity to escape the violence around them. Silenced and disempowered, they become automatons that function without expressing feeling or emotion. In effect, having lost their agency they must either escape or lose their will to live.

Kim's focus on domestic violence is politically relevant because it is a shared personal experience of so many in his generation (Pak, Y. H. 1999, Koh, I. S. 1999, Kaku 2000). Kim makes his pain and thus the pain of any victim of domestic violence socially visible (Fantuzzo and Mohr 21, 22; Carter et al. 4). His stories bring together his own experiences and those of his siblings, his mother and his friends, into a single text. He may have helped break down the isolation of other sufferers, enabling them to enter a shared subject position with others. To evoke the experience of domestic violence, as Kim has done, is to facilitate the comprehension of the subjectivity of any other person who has been a victim of violence.²³² Thus the ordeal of domestic violence is not an isolated and isolating bodily experience, but may have been a point of identification and union between those *zainichi* Koreans who made up his readership. Chong Jang affirms this viewpoint saying,

Many *zainichi* Koreans struggled with a violent father or husband everyday. Kim explained the turmoil and made sense of it. That's why we loved Kim so much. Nowadays domestic violence is in the spotlight but not when Kim was writing about it thirty years ago! Kim's influence was much greater than anyone gives him credit for (2000).²³³

Kim demonstrates how violence, not just a stutter, can mute a person; the mother figure in both texts exemplifies the voiceless, subaltern, victim.²³⁴ Indeed, often victims of violence are bullied into silence. Kim's life-long condemnation of family violence and commitment to writing about it should be understood in the context of his own personal experience. Kim's sister, in an interview after her brother's death, corroborated saying:

The violence my father perpetrated on my mother was unbelievable... Only people who saw it or experienced it could actually believe it. My brother's stutter was a result of it... If we had seen a murder take place, well then it would

²³² Refer to Howlett 8.

²³³ Traditionally domestic violence in Japan referred to children's physical and emotional violence against their parents. However, in recent years, the general public's awareness of and actions toward other types of domestic violence, especially violence against women and children, has increased (Kozu 50-54).

²³⁴ According to Edvige Giunta, Gianna Patriarca, an Italian/Canadian writer, powerfully depicts the heritage of maternal silence in poems such as "Italian Women," "My Birth," and "Daughter" (55).

have been one incident to overcome, but this was worse. This could be compared to viewing a murder over and over again and reliving it. Seeing my father's acts of violence again and again damaged Kim psychologically and...he never recovered from the shock (qtd. in Inokawa 68).

The rejection and violence that Kim experienced at home engendered such a profound sense of insecurity in him that it left him permanently incapable of comfortably interacting with anyone. According to his *Asahi* Newspaper obituary, "Kim always felt that he was unacceptable, a fact which features in his fiction over and over" (Ishikawa 5). In a 1972 essay, *Ippiki no Hitsuji* [*The Lone Lamb*], the title of which refers to the biblical story found in the book of Luke, Kim used the figure of the lost lamb to allegorize his own life story yet it fails to generate the spiritual reliance on a savior, father or Shepherd, writing, "I felt completely isolated and had a terrible sense of anxiety, which never left me" (436-37).

Kim illustrates his boyhood relationship with his father with the following anecdote, which tells not only of the troubled relationship between father-son, but also of that between North and South Korea. The scene he describes helps explain why Kim cared less about political intrigue than about personal heartache. It also draws attention to the fact that *zainichi* Koreans were characterized as confrontational in the midst of the political wrangling that characterized the 1950s and 1960s. Finally, it links public hostility to experiences of personal hostility.

In 1950 when the Korean War began I was in sixth grade... Every morning and night I had to read the paper aloud for my father, who was illiterate... Since I already stuttered quite badly, these occasions were terrifying for me. I stuttered and stuttered as I read. My father had no patience with my stutter whatsoever. He would become irate and...shout at me. Moreover when his side, North Korea, wasn't winning he'd blow up. A few times, in order to protect myself from his fury, I'd lie and tell him the enemy ship had been sunk rather than the truth. I could not have cared less what the truth was. I just wanted his side to win as quickly as possible and I wanted the war to end so I wouldn't have to read to him anymore (Kim, H. G. "Ippiki" 436).

Kim uses the metaphor of the prison to describe the *zainichi* Korean home, an insular site from which there was no escape, the father its rigidly authoritarian ruler. The first-generation Korean father tended to make unrealistic demands on his son – that he become Korean, learn Korean, fight for unification and either overtly or covertly resent the Japanese (Takeda *Kurushimi* 461-62). Such demands were untenable for a *zainichi* Korean adolescent hoping to realize independent ambitions in Japanese society. Any autonomy on the part of the son was perceived as a form of disobedience or a

denunciation of the father and/or the Korean lifestyle. In *Sakumei* the hero laments, “I have tried to escape from my father... but no matter how hard I try I cannot escape. I am just standing still” (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 222).

When it came time for the son to leave home he faced two distinct problems; on the one hand he faced a discriminatory society and on the other he faced feelings of guilt for abandoning his mother and siblings (Takeda *Kurushimi* 461-62). Few opportunities existed for second-generation *zainichi* Koreans in Japan, especially between 1950 and 1970; poverty was rampant and the road ahead was bleak. Takeda writes, “To the *zainichi* Korean youth of the 1960s and 1970s, only the Japanese looked fulfilled, as if they could live out their dreams. For us, it was unthinkable” (*Zainichi* 461-62).

The issue of guilt over abandoning family members and the mother in particular, emerges in Kim’s literature. Kim’s central protagonists prove to be un-heroic young men who narrate their stories from the position of impotence vis-à-vis the father. The son is distraught as much at his powerlessness as at his father’s violence. In *Sakumei*, Kim’s hero muses:

If I tried to help mother, for example, if I stood in front of her, father would just throw me out of the way and hit her more ferociously (187).

What is so striking about these characterizations of the father as a violent brute, the home as a prison, and the son – even the adult son – as powerless is how they appear to allegorize Japan vis-à-vis the *zainichi* Korean. One discerns that the refusal of the father figure to reflect on his misdeeds allegorically mimics that of the nation-state, Japan, to do likewise with regard to historical and contemporary offenses. The well-documented testimonies of countless second-generation *zainichi* Koreans of domestic abuse have prompted many to understand it as a particular post-colonial phenomenon.²³⁵ Lee Hoe Sung writes:

Strife at home or within the family became important themes for us. The conflict between the father-son, in particular, was hugely important. You could say our generation had no choice but to learn how to sidestep our father’s violence. It was such a universal experience for us we began to question its origins (*Shisha* 140).

Not unlike former colonial subjects elsewhere who experienced domestic violence,

²³⁵ This is primarily true of a specific group of second-generation *zainichi* Koreans, especially those born between 1935 and 1955.

zainichi Koreans routinely assert that the origins of it can be located in the severe conditions of colonial and post-colonial oppression.²³⁶ According to most, the fact that first-generation Korean men were virtually impotent in Japanese society and unable to vent their rage on the Japanese explains their violent tendencies (Takeda *Kurushimi* 458).²³⁷ In Japanese homes the father typically has some form of cultural capital that lends him prestige, be it money or status. However, in Korean homes, the father has only his body and, "...could only control his family with his fist" (Takeda *Zainichi* 190, 194-95). Lacking power in the outside world the father attempts to assert it at home. In "The Imperialism of Patriarchy," feminist bell hooks argues that colonized males adopt the stance of the colonizers as a way of recuperating their masculinity. In a process akin to mimicry, colonized men oppress women to shed their emasculated and infantilized self-image and to prove their masculinity to a degree that may include violence towards women. Thus colonized men and the colonizers unite against colonized women thereby making women 'doubly colonized' (87-117; Suleri 756-69). Against this, feminist Pak Hwa-mi argues that domestic violence in *zainichi* households is not merely a natural consequence of living under the Japanese colonial gaze; rather it is "a legacy of aspects of Korean culture that have not yet been adequately critiqued" (qtd in Chapman 112).

Takeda argues that reconciliation with the father tends to go hand in hand with what he calls "an ethnic awakening"; he points to writer Lee Hoe Sung, who "retrospectively modified his views (on his father) after (experiencing) an ethnic awakening" (*Zainichi* 133). For example, in Lee's novel *Jinmen no Oiwa* [*Stone Face*] (1972) the hero muses:

Only of late have I tried to understand my father from a Korean perspective, as a Korean, from one Korean to another... Maybe I thoughtlessly underestimated my father... who was merely a Korean who lacked a good role model of his own and was a victim of circumstance (qtd. in *Zainichi* 15).

²³⁶ For a similar discussion see Trainor 20-21.

²³⁷ Mr. Shoda, a Japanese neighbor of poet Chong Jang, asked Chong about his father's violent behavior, (note how Mr. Shoda uses Chong's Japanese name despite knowing that Chong prefers to be called Chong) "Akira, why does your father do that? Why is he like that?" Chong answered, "It is because he is a *zainichi* Korean. As a *zainichi* Korean he was never accepted as a member of Japanese society, he was never allowed to establish himself as *shakaijin*, which translates as "society man" meaning established professional. Even those *zainichi* Koreans who could establish themselves are certainly not viewed as equals. He was never treated as an equal nor was he able to build any relationships with any 'society men' and he was uncultured and rough. He was treated with no respect and that is how he treated us" (Chong, J. 2000).

Hayashi Kōji also contends that Lee Hoe Sung's ability to reconcile with his father, or at least the memory of his father, was a direct result of the writer's ethnic awakening. According to Hayashi, "The violent father encountered in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*, reappears as a more benevolent figure, or at least one worthy of sympathy and love in later novels" (*Kozarushū* 15).

Against this critics have noted that Kim Ha Gyong failed to reconcile with his father. This is no doubt one of the reasons why Takeda, for instance, draws a distinction between Lee and Kim. Of Lee, Takeda writes, "Lee does not have the limited outlook of Kim Ha Gyong; he is clearly more malleable and flexible (than Kim)" (*Zainichi* 14). He makes the additional point that, "When Lee Hoe Sung, Kō Sa Myong and Yan Sō Gil, as grown men, write about their fathers, they write with an understanding of why their fathers were violent. They write from a position of maturity and understanding... Their hearts are already mended" (*Kurushimi* 460-61).

Takeda attributes the lack of reconciliation between Kim and his father to an inability on Kim's part to fully comprehend the reasons for his father's abuse asserting, "For Kim there is an element of a total lack of comprehension concerning the father" (*Kurushimi* 460). However, I argue that while Kim Ha Gyong was cognizant of and sympathetic to the accepted 'historical reasons' argument but that he ultimately rejected it as a justification for violence. That he considered this argument and found it compelling, at least theoretically, is indicated by several literary passages.²³⁸ In *Sakumei*, for example, the son, after reaching adulthood, confronts his father one day. The father unexpectedly recoils in fear and the son remembering this, remarks:

I shoved him. In the old days it would have been impossible but this time he just simply toppled over. His arm was thin and weak and he was like a child. I could sense his helplessness and noticed that he seemed like a child... Perhaps he had been a victim himself... Standing there holding his arm I could feel the weight of his history. It was heavy. I was actually holding on to his history (217).

Takeda's contention regarding 'Kim's lack of comprehension concerning the father' refers to Kim's tendency to write from the point of view of the child who cannot understand his father's cruel behavior. For example, in *Kogoeru Kuchi*, Isogai writes in his suicide letter, "Being so young, I couldn't understand why father virtually killed my

²³⁸ Kim also points to history as being instrumental in shaping the tragic figure of the father in his novel *Nomi* [*The Chisel*] (1978).

mother and even now I still don't understand" (69). In *Sakumei*, Shin muses, "Why do they have to fight? If they must fight why do they stay together? As a little boy I could never understand" (183). I argue that Kim Ha Gyong purposefully depicts paternal abuse as incomprehensible because that is how a child or victim experiences it. Kim's depictions of paternal violence act as a protest against it, not an explanation for it. His accounts emphasize that domestic violence is unjustifiable and inexcusable. He shuns the idea of using 'historical reasons,' of which victims either have no knowledge or responsibility, to rationalize acts of violence. Kim, in short, advocates taking a position of responsibility and not repeating the cycle of violence; the victims he suggests are in the best position to do this.

Takeda overlooks the possibility that Kim's aim was to suggest that the father's abuse cannot be justified. In the same way that identifying the cause of his stutter did not alleviate it, identifying the cause of his father's violence did not alleviate that. This may partly explain his cynicism regarding the idea of reconciliation. Another way to put this is to say that Kim, unlike many of his literary peers, was less concerned with emphasising the historical origins of racism and violence than with pointing out racism's continuing adverse psychological ramifications.

Takeda criticizes Kim for focusing on his relationship with his father to the exclusion of a concern for race relations (*Kurushimi* 459). I contend, however, that Kim's depiction of paternal violence may be understood as an allegorical indictment of Japanese colonialism and the post-colonial oppression of minorities, especially if we read the father figure in Kim's fiction as a metaphor for the nation-state of Japan. The father, in this scenario, may be said to stand for the Japanese oppressor, while his mistreatment of the mother or child can be interpreted as an indictment of Japan's mistreatment of *zainichi* Koreans. For example, the following quotation about "father" from *Sakumei*, if read allegorically, suggests that Japan, as a symbol of paternal authority, turns a blind eye to the plight of *zainichi* Koreans, "Father will ruin me. He'll destroy the nerves of everyone in the family under him. This man warps everyone around him and he never ever sees it. This is the fate of everyone born under his roof" (202).

Additionally the following citation may allude to the Japanese tendency to regard Japan as 'the victim' in the aftermath of the Pacific War, largely due to the

devastation wrought on Japan by the US-led bombing campaign at the war's end, and more significantly, the devastation caused by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Shin recalls his childhood interactions with his father, "I listened to every detail... Namely that *he* was struggling so hard... I listened and felt enraged... There was no way to get through to him" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 214). If we read the text like this then the following citation may allude to the reticence of the Japanese state to admit responsibility for wrongs executed by Japanese against former colonial territories and subjects: "The only thing that would help would be for dad to reflect on his conduct...but that would be like looking for a fish on a tree trunk" (Kim, H. G. *Sakumei* 190). Rather than explicitly attributing first-generation Korean domestic violence to Japanese persecution of *zainichi* Koreans and thereby vindicating it, Kim instead equates the two forms of oppression and denounces both. The purpose behind portraying the political events in terms of the theme of domestic violence is that it allows Kim to draw attention to the consequences of the abuse of power. As the father chokes the mother yet again in *Sakumei*, for example, the glass case housing the family's Korean dolls and heirlooms falls and crashes to the ground, leaving them broken and in ruins. The passage is a powerful symbol of the effects of Japanese colonialism on Koreans. Kim thus draws a parallel between violence perpetrated by the state on its people and violence perpetrated by the father on his family.

Such a reading of the text allows for a reinterpretation of Kim's alleged inability to reconcile with his father. The lack of reconciliation between Kim and his father does not necessarily reflect any weakness on the part of Kim, but rather on the part of the unrepentant father. Kim may have consciously stood by the precept that there can be no reconciliation without accountability and positive transformation. Kim is perhaps deserving of praise for realistically depicting paternal violence and continuing to denounce it.

With a window into Shin's life the reader is exposed to the lasting effects of domestic violence on the child. Alas Kim demonstrates that the child's broken heart can never be mended, despite the passage of time and despite achieving maturity. Reconciliation with the past can only come when there is acknowledgement of wrongdoing; however even this can never undo the damage.

In *Sakumei* Kim scrutinizes his hero's inability to alleviate his starved and

broken heart. For some, reconciliation and forbearance could be achieved through a positive appropriation of a Korean identity. Shin's inability to achieve a positive sense of Korean ethnicity is bound up with the fact that he identifies it with the assaultive, repressive and coercive behaviours of his father. Shin's starved heart cannot be alleviated in conventional ways, such as working towards political change or a 'recovery of Korean-ness' because it is the result of a tragic personal history.

Underpinning Kim's relentless indictment of family violence and racial repression lies a pressing regard for his fellow *zainichi* Koreans. Kim's portrait of domestic violence signals to his reader not only the continuity between historical violence and current violence but its impact on identity.²³⁹ He maps out both the physical violence on lived bodies, but also the interior landscape of the battered psyche to demonstrate how anger and despair can turn self destructively inwards. The consequence is a consciousness characterized mainly by its liminality and a sense of exile.

Kim looks for solutions to an alienating sense of difference in *Kogoeru Kuchi* and *Sakumei*, which take a number of directions. He explores the existential "alone-ness" of all human beings and attempts to achieve control over the trajectory of his life using the concept of will power alone. He creates alter egos that represent an ideal – all that his heroes could be and would like to be but all that they are not. In this sense Kim's heroes do not manage to reconcile the dream of an ideal existence with their actual existence, between intersubjectively mediated reality and that of the existential suffering body. Love is suggested as perhaps the prime solution to alienation, as is the search for a true self. This is an essence he intimates exists beneath the surface overlays of cultural and political paradigms and ideologies, which constrain the soul. These days contemporary thinkers argue that the idea of a core unified self is an illusion; but Kim, suffused in pain, seemed to need to believe in such an idea; indeed, he hoped that one day it would enable him to finally overcome the constraints of his personal history and the ideological belief systems of his day that he felt suffocated and silenced him. It is perhaps somewhat ironic that a writer who abhors the fixed nature of ideological belief systems would also

²³⁹ For a similar discussion see Carter-Sanborn 584

believe in his own elemental unchanging essence.

I have argued that all these methods of transcending existing constraints and limitations fail as a solution for the author as a man. Firstly, because no man is an island, a prerequisite of identity constitution is the presence of the other as a relational form, a presence that Kim either wants to deny or cannot integrate into his life. Kim's preoccupation with his unique personal history limits his capacity to identify with others. It is for this reason that he cannot unite with other individuals, even those with disabilities, to experience a group voice and communion with people who well understood the socially constructed nature of difference. Tom Shakespeare notes the need to emphasize how impairment is rendered through aspects of normality, conformity and difference (283). Difference, when isolated in a discrete individual, gives no bargaining power. Secondly, I have argued that Kim fails to unify the different parts of the self represented here as dialectically opposed characters in his novels – the distance between these selves is too great. Though the protagonists can imagine another reality they cannot realize it. The result is that Kim's central heroes end up being *unheroic* young men who live as though in exile – lost in their own thoughts and estranged from their families as well as their national history. Finally, to sum up, these novels, in true existentialist fashion, tell the stories of ordinary men living under harsh conditions in a cold unwelcome landscape, who consider loneliness and depression as unalterable facts of life despite their idealistic imaginings of transcendence and love. Kim's heroes cannot reduce the distance between lived realities and idealist notions. Their suicides – real and fictional – are not committed to make a stand or preserve a moral identity; rather they appear a last resort and thus fail to satisfactorily address the issue of existential pain. The dream of an uncompromised body, an undamaged interiority or communion with another is always out of reach. For Kim, as for Sartre, existence precedes essence.

Chapter Nine

Closing the Distance

Identity gives us a location in the world and provides a way of understanding the interplay between our subjective experiences of the world and the cultural and historical settings in which subjectivity is formed. Second-generation Koreans living in Japan during the Cold War, and the way they are depicted in the creative fiction of Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung and Kim Ha Gyong, have been the primary concern of this thesis. The self-conception of Koreans born during the colonial era, like that of each of the three writers introduced here, was rooted in the historical contingencies of the colonial situation. The three writers studied show the identities of *zainichi* Koreans to be fractured by experiences of dislocation, inferiorization, violence and discrimination, the result mainly of severe marginalization or 'difference' in a hostile Japan. These writers articulate the ideas of cultural identity and hybridity in abstract and complex ways because their cultural experiences are neither exclusively Japanese nor Korean. Their differing views about identity represent different options and different ways of resolving the contradictions that emerge as a result of living between and with such contrasting cultures.

The desire to close the distance between divergent images of the self, to overcome a fragmented identity, and manage one's 'inbetween-ness' are what Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung, and Kim Ha Gyong and their narratives have in common. Each writer has been shown to have his own separate logic, which this thesis has attempted to explicate. Explaining that logic has brought into relief the issue of cultural identity but it also involved identifying the disparate identity strategies emerging in the narratives and the ways these are articulated through culturally distinctive language, idioms, images and metaphors. All three writers, as we have seen, pose highly philosophical questions about the nature of existence. They also give counsel on the subject of self-determination through the strategic use of plot, characterization, allegory, metaphor and a rich distinctive use of the Japanese language. They all attempt to recuperate the term '*zainichi* Korean' from its negative and politicized connotations, as well as achieve a positive identity in the face of dislocation, racism, economic exploitation and political factionalism. Finally, their narratives, it has been demonstrated, bring into relief how the personal and political

interconnect to elicit vastly different stories of the every-day lives of *zainichi* Koreans. In this way they facilitate an understanding of the cultural politics of identities in transition in Japan.

Yet, as I have attempted to show in the thesis, there are important differences between the authors. For example, Kim Sok Pom examines the experience of the individual caught ‘in-between’ competing identity positions and he attempts to close the distance between these positions by subtly demonstrating how one can capitalize on both the past and the present to facilitate transformation and adaptation. In addition he makes imperceptible connections between the past and the present to draw together the threads of his own and other *zainichi* Korean’s history. He advocates remembering the past, but not letting it dictate the direction one’s life might take. Like Jacques Derrida’s metaphor of the wind in one’s sails, Kim views history as foundational; the past must be taken into account because it informs the present, but our future agency is pivotal. *Deconstruction*, I have argued, is a concept that can be used to understand Kim Sok Pom’s approach because he unravels the hidden orders, traces and connections that surreptitiously bolster the hegemonic and racialized discourses of history to privilege a counter-hegemonic current and to effect agency. Kim is primarily interested in the indeterminacy and the agency of the individual, and by drawing attention to difference via the mirror, the shadow, the ghost or the double he is able to reveal the hidden interior. This allegorically allows him to ask the question of how one can live when one’s ideological convictions, which stem from an essentialized notion of the cultural past, differ from current hegemonic majority convictions in which ethics play little or no role. Kim’s characters must find effective ways to mediate traditional and modern values and conflicting ideologies.

Specifically Kim Sok Pom shows how historical events brought about by imperialism, such as the Cheju massacre, forced *zainichi* Korean exiles to reinvent themselves. While adversity and the breakdown of the old order caused identity fragmentation, Kim shows it also offered the individual the possibility of new beginnings. One must create one’s own route to effect a better future, be it through sheer resolve and flexibility, as demonstrated by the spy Ki Jun in *Karasu no Shi* or moral agency, as demonstrated by the temple boy Mandogi in *Mandogi no Yūrei Kitan*. The evolution into a comfortable hybrid mode of being that the spy and the ghost enact points to the transformative potential in each of us as well as to the power of the human spirit. Thus it is that Kim emphasizes the potential of hybridity to facilitate

adaptation to even the most destructive forms of oppression. Being forced to undergo transformation, Kim shows, only deepens one's self-understanding.

Finally, I have drawn attention to how Kim's unconventional use of literary motifs, such as the use of magic realist conventions, may be regarded as an indication not only of his proficiency as a creative writer, but also as a form of rebellion against the models of literary practices imposed by metropolitan writers and embodied in Japanese literary stylistic techniques associated with the I-novel and realist writing. Kim echoes any number of world-renowned writers in his frequent use of tight plots, life-like characterizations and impressive use of stylistic devices, such as magical realism, satire and irony. Though Kim focuses on the 1949 massacre on Cheju Island, his aim is to present us with observations about human nature and problems of existence that beset all people afflicted by colonialism, war, massacre and displacement, irrespective of time and place. Kim Sok Pom's fiction thus illustrates the power of the creative imagination to fashion stories that have universal appeal with their visions of hope, survival and even immortality in the face of tragedy.

Lee Hoe Sung, by contrast, views the emergence of identity as part of a collective enterprise – as a familial event or a form of intersubjective cohesion. One can attach the label of postmodernist to Lee because he refuses master narratives and offers instead a series of mini-narratives that may be woven together like the patterns in a quilt. For Lee, finding identity would seem to be about adaptation; it is about travelling with the prevailing winds. His characters readily adapt to socio-structural conditions and constraints in order to maximise their potential to live in the present; they are thus shown as reconciling contradictory ideologies such as fascism, nationalism and democracy as a rational intellectual exercise. Moreover, they make it their goal to conform to the times, join forces with the strongest faction and adopt identities that foster solidarity, and in this sense they can be understood as pragmatic or opportunistic survivors. Once he turns to this viewpoint, Lee, I have tried to show, moves away from his early acerbic exhortations to 'be Korean, to repatriate, and to work exclusively for Korean reunification'. His final position is instead one of emphasising the power of hybridity because it provides an escape from the negative archetypal traits associated with first-generation Korean men, such as violence and authoritarianism.

Lee and his characters acknowledge ideology as a significant force in their lives but they don't allow it to define who they are and what really matters. Thus Lee

separates socio-political superstructures from real lived life. Lee and his heroes have or achieve the insight to see that what shapes one's interior life is one's own personal experience – one's family – the little narrative. Lee survives, not as an ideological thinker, but as part and parcel of the folk history his grandmother hands down to him. Indeed, he closes the distance between his different selves by assuming the role of story teller, much like the grandmother in *Kinuta wo Utsu Onna*. Her *sinse t'aryong* and the memories of his mother connect the child to his personal history and have more power over him than political forces. In *Kayako no Tameni*, it is the loss of love and family that ultimately matters most to San Juni. Unlike Kim Ha Gyong though, Lee recognizes that the political process is important for the expression of racial and ethnic identity, and that political affiliations are a vital extension of an individual's sense of self in society; but he also knows that this by itself is not enough. Individual identity is best constructed through the closing of the distances between people that matter – grandmother, grandfather, mother, father and child. Lee, the story teller, thus plays the role of the cultural transmitter of an aesthetics of kinship.

Kim Ha Gyong's approach, we have seen, is different again. He argues that the quest to come to terms with a harsh reality and history is manifestly arduous; it demands self-control, foresight, and adaptability, but it also hopefully leads to communion with others. In the novels by Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, examined in this thesis, the characters may emerge from their quests worn and weary but they are nevertheless transformed and renewed. Significantly, they are not isolated, being firmly rooted in their sense of belonging. Kim Ha Gyong, by contrast, is unwilling and unable to engage politically and socially in the manner characteristic of his peers. Doubly marginalized by his Korean ethnicity and his stutter, Kim faced real barriers to social participation including entry into *zainichi* Korean circles. For Kim, ethnicity is not the key defining feature of identity, his stutter is. Indeed, disability as illustrated in his novels – physical disability [*Kogoeru Kuchi*] or emotional disability [*Sakumei*] – prohibits communion with others. Thus Sai's stutter prevents him from ably communicating with other people and thus expressing himself, while Shin's history of abuse prevents him from trusting other people. In Kim's day there was no way for the disabled in Japan to lobby for recognition, so Kim could never fully close the distance from the margins to the centre. There were indeed few strategies he could deploy to communicate his mental and emotional state outside of writing. Unlike Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung then, for Kim Ha Gyong the notion of embodiment is an integral

aspect of subjectivity and identity.

To speak of the existential Kim is to stress the intimately personal nature of Kim's sense of identity. That is to say, with Kim identity only comes from one's own lived experience, rather than from a transmittable set of principles or models of political behaviour. In short, Kim does not stand as a model of political engagement. However what is striking about his protagonists' consistent lack of political engagement is the extent to which it is underpinned by a presciently liberal tolerance. This is a tolerance that derives from placing a healthy distance between one's self and one's political beliefs, rather than a fundamental hostility toward politics as such. I argue that Kim was deeply committed to a certain democratic ethos that advocated individual rationality and an egalitarian respect for informed opinions. For Kim, an isolationist stance is preferable to partaking in the political and social delusions of the masses, though he obviously cared greatly for his fellow *zainichi* Koreans. The truth Kim arrives at is profoundly personal, for it cannot be abstracted from his lived experience and generalized to that of others.

For Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, place, language, history, and politics on the Korean mainland are fundamental elements of a Korean ethnic identity, along with self-representation and resistance to hegemony. These issues, however, were of peripheral importance to Kim Ha Gyong. In Kim's view ethnicity was an arbitrary human quality that became little more than an alibi for racial narcissism and a licence for ethnic absolutism. He doubted that political revolution or ethnocentrism could alleviate the human condition of loneliness. Kim endorsed, for instance, a non-essentialized notion of race and ethnicity, and while this provided a more universalist approach to identity, he nevertheless remained alienated in an exclusivist society and in a position of impotence.

For Kim's heroes, race-related problems pale into insignificance when compared to their private struggles, such as how to cope with an abusive father, a debilitating stutter, loneliness and depression. For Kim then, as with Lee, the grand narratives of political history were less relevant to the individual than the little narratives of personal history. Here we see an affinity with postmodernist thought that touts the end of ideology and emphasises personal experience. However, where Lee is immersed in his milieu, a brother of the masses, Kim is isolated, a solitary, disabled and battered individual. The identities he and his protagonists reject – ethnic-nationalist, political activist, 'Korean' or 'Japanese' or even 'son' – are all

intersubjective or relational; they are all built around associations with ‘others’. Indeed, it would seem that Kim places so much emphasis on his own individual negative, embodied history that he cannot identify with others. Unlike Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, Kim cannot find – or voice – points of connection between himself and others or even his own history and that of others. For example, while both Kim Sok Pom and Kim Ha Gyong communicate a very violent history, for the former it is a nationalist public history while for the latter it is a secluded personal history.

Correspondingly, while all three writers maintain that one can create and develop one’s identity, Kim Ha Gyong understands it only as an intellectual exercise – he does not physically or emotionally experience any metamorphosis. Furthermore, unlike Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, Kim does not seem to profit from the past. He does not have a propensity for ‘becoming’ that characterizes the experiences of the heroes in the novels by Kim Sok Pom and Lee Hoe Sung, who embark on emotional journeys that result in affirmative resignification. Kim Ha Gyong longs for such a ‘becoming’ but it is outside of his sphere of possibilities, for he is always ‘other’.

Ultimately the novels analysed in this thesis make visible the fluidity of *zainichi* Korean identity in post-war Japan and suggest that what it means to be Korean in Japan varies radically from individual to individual. The narratives offered by Kim Sok Pom, Lee Hoe Sung, and Kim Ha Gyong do not offer polarized notions of homogeneity; rather they highlight the role played by ambiguity and heterogeneity in the recovery and shaping of the self. The theme of closing the distance that emerges out of these narratives also calls attention to and celebrates the emergence of new positions and new identities. In this sense these writers and their narratives can be said to offer commentary about the kinds of cultural distances that need to be overcome, and thus they contribute to an enterprise of mutual understanding – of closing the distance and reconciling uniformity with diversity.

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