The Unforgotten Wounds: The Cost of Being Korean in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **The Unforgotten Wounds: The Cost of Being Korean in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.,)** is carried out by me **SANDHIYA K** during the period from **JANUARY 2025 - MAY 2025** under the guidance of **Ms. R. JAYANTHI,** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education For Women (SF),Coimbatore, and,has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.

Signature of the Candidate

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **The Unforgotten Wounds: The Cost of Being Korean in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*** submitted to in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.,)** is carried out by **SANDHIYA K** during the period from **JANUARY 2025 - MAY- 2025** under the guidance of **Ms. R. JAYANTHI** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education For Women (SF), Coimbatore, and has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree , Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship, or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.

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ABSTRACT

"The Unforgotten Wounds: The Cost of Being Korean in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*" explores the enduring struggles, discrimination, and identity crises faced by Koreans living in Japan across four generations. Through a close reading of Lee's novel, this paper examines how historical trauma, social exclusion, and the constant negotiation of belonging leave deep psychological and cultural wounds that persist across time.

By analyzing characters' experiences with poverty, racism, and the pressure to assimilate, the study highlights the heavy personal and collective costs of survival in a society that devalues their heritage. Ultimately, the novel portrays resilience not as triumph over hardship, but as the enduring memory of pain and the quiet insistence on dignity in the face of systemic injustice.

Pachinko situates its story against the backdrop of Japan's colonization of Korea (1910–1945) and the subsequent marginalization of Koreans in Japan. Koreans were often treated as second-class citizens, stripped of rights, and forced into poor labor conditions. The novel shows how history is not something that simply "happens," but something that scars individuals and families across generations.

Pain and loss are passed down from generation to generation not just through stories, but through the behaviors, fears, and hopes of the characters. Even the younger characters, like Solomon, feel the invisible weight of their ancestors' struggles.

Korean women, such as Sunja and Kyunghee, face double oppression: both as Koreans and as women in a patriarchal society. Sunja's life illustrates the resilience of Korean women who become the backbone of survival for their families.

The act of remembering Korean history, traditions, and personal stories becomes an act of cultural survival. Min Jin Lee, through *Pachinko*, participates in preserving and honoring a history that mainstream narratives often neglect. *Pachinko* parlors, viewed as both disreputable and essential for survival, symbolize the precarious position of Koreans in Japan. The randomness and unfairness of *Pachinko* mirrors the randomness and brutality of life for marginalized people.

CHAPTER I deals with the Introduction which includes information about Literature, Korean Literature, Provides an introduction to Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

CHAPTER II discusses the theoretical framework of post-colonial approach as it applies to the novel.

CHAPTER III Offers a detailed focus on the character's developments, their struggles as Koreans, identity, about Pachinko business, Japan's annexation in Korea.

CHAPTER IV presents the Conclusion, summarizing the key findings of the study.

CHAPTER V provides the list of work cited.

CHAPTER - I

Introduction

In every home, there is a novel unfolding one Love, Pain, and Quiet Endurance.

- Kim Hoon

Literature is one of the important elements of culture refers to art with language as a means of expression of human's sentiment. Originally, literature was a generic term for the studies such as pure literature, philosophy, historical studies, sociology, and linguistics besides the studies such as natural science or politics, law, and economics.

Literature serves as a reflection of society, history, culture, and the human condition, allowing readers to explore different perspectives, ideas, and emotions. Vital part of human culture is literature. By transferring knowledge and wisdom, it maintains history, culture, and customs. It also acts as a platform for political and social criticism, encouraging change and challenging conventions.

Literature encompasses any written work, but it's often used to consider an art form, particularly novels, plays, and poems, which serve to record, preserve, and transmit knowledge and entertainment through literary works. Through the development of critical thinking, creativity, and empathy, literature enables people to view the world from a variety of perspectives.

Literature, in fact, does not have less meaning than language. It may mean literary writings such as fictions or literature in term of major of study.

Literature referring to literary writing could be defined as “The achievement of aesthetic and moral merit” such as those of canon or the great tradition. In the digital world glossary, it can be termed that literature is the message, language is the mobile phone. Those two relationships are closely bound and would not be separated in whatsoever ways.

Language and literature are two closely related subjects that need each other. This is because English language serves as a tool in studying English literature, without the study its impossible. There is no way to understand an English literary work when little is known about, for instance, how a sentence is constructed and how a sentence can have lexical and connotation meanings.

The study of English Literature is also meant to develop positive values embedded in a literary work to acquire critical thinking; the syllabus should be designed to support learners to discover knowledge. The materials that are going to be discussed should be arranged to suit the goal of study. English society from antiquity to the present have had an impact on English literature. It is therefore important to simultaneously understand English social and political history to appreciate the various periods of English literature.

Over five centuries have passed since the beginning of English literature. In practically every significant genre and writing style, it features works by a wide range of authors from various eras. The following periods frequently overlap and are not mutually exclusive in their timeframes. These stages are distinguished by certain literary movements and characters.

By influencing language, narrative, and the investigation of human experience, each literary epoch made a distinct contribution to the growth of English literature. Because of the rich history, which provides deep insights into society's constantly shifting ideals and concerns, writers and readers around the world are still influenced.

Korean literature is a distinct literature developed and transmitted from the ancient times by the people known as Koreans. Korean literature is the arts of works entirely written in Wenyan, or classical Chinese, is referred to as Korean literature. Korea has its own language for thousands of years; it has only had a writing system since the invention of Hangul in the middle of the 15th century.

Hangul is the Korean alphabet and as Chosongal in North Korea and China. This alphabet used to write the Korean language since the 15th century. It was created during the Josean Dynasty in 1443, and now official in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous prefecture of China. In South Korea, Hangul is occasionally augmented by Chinese characters called Hanja.

Korean literature germinated between the first prehistoric settlements by the people of the Korean Peninsula and the emergence of lord and flourishing of these ancient Korean states. Early Korean literature was heavily influenced by Shamanism, Confucianism, Buddhism. The early Korean literature began as an Oral tradition with theme of Love of nature and man.

There are five major traditional poetic forms in Korean literature, they are *Native songs, Special songs, long poems, Current melodies, Verses*. Hyangga written in using modified Hanja in a system that is called Idu literally *Clerk's writings.* The variety of Idu used to write Hyangga was sometimes called *Hyan' chal*. Idu was a system using Hanja characters to express Korean.

The earliest Korean literature focuses on poetry and music played an important part in their life. Ancient Korean songs were performed in rituals. The key system was to use some Hanja characters for their intended purpose, their meaning and others for their pronunciation, ignoring their pictographic meaning. Hyangga was the first uniquely Korean form of poetry.

Sijo and Gasa are closely linked to the development of Hangul was created, Akjang was developed to note musical scores using the Korean script. King Sejong himself credited with a compilation of Buddhist songs; Sijo was common in the Josean period. Sijo is characterized by a structure of three stanzas of four feet each. Sijo is thought to have been popular with common people.

Gasa is a form of Verse, although its content can include more than the expression of individual sentiment, such as moral admonitions. Gasa is a simple form of verse with twinned feet of three or four syllables each. Some regard Gasa a form of essay, common themes are nature, the virtues of gentlemen, or love between man and woman.

Korean prose literature can be divided into narratives, fiction, and literary miscellany *Samguk Sagi* and *Samguk Yusa* the most important myths are those concerning the Sun and the Moon. Korean fiction can be classified in various ways, first there is Korean fiction written in Chinese and then written in Korean.

There is a group of fictional works in which the viewpoints of the Yangban and the commoner are combined. Most of this fiction was based on narrative, the author adding incidents and characters to the original story.

Oral literature all texts that were orally transmitted from generation to generation until the invention of Hangul ballads, Legends mask plays, Puppet show texts and Story singing texts. Legends include all those folk stories handed down orally and not recorded in any of the written records. *Songs of the Dragons flying to heaven* it was compiled during the reign of Sejong the great as an official recognition of the Josean dynasty and its ancestral heritage as the forerunners of Josean, the Golden Age of Korea.

Korean medieval begins from the era of the Three Kingdoms, they are Silla dynasty, Koryo dynasty, Baekje dynasty which ruled the Korean Peninsula from 57 BCE to 668 CE, Utilized Chinese as their official literary language, the three kingdoms occupied the entire peninsula and roughly half of Manchuria. All three Kingdoms shared a similar culture and language, Baekje and Koryeo shared founding myths which likely originated in Buyeo.

Buddhism which arrived in Korea in the 3rd century AD from India, Tibet and China, became the state religion of all constituents of the three kingdoms, starting with Koryo in 372 AD. Koryo kingdom which was located on the Northern and central part of the Korean peninsula, and the southern and central parts of modern-day Northern China.

Koryo encompassed most of the Korean peninsula and large parts of Manchuria, along with parts of Eastern Mangolia, inner Mangolia and modern-day Russia. Koryo was an active participant in the power struggle for control of the Korean peninsula and was also associated with the foreign affairs of neighboring politics in China and Japan.

Kim Pu-Sik was a 12th century Historian and author of the work *History of the three Kingdoms* since he was a descendant of the Silla royal family, it is likely that he distorted history to show the superiority of his ancestors. Since Kim Pu-Sik rote the history of the Three Kingdoms at least five centuries after the events of the three kingdoms and was not an eyewitness to the events of that era.

Koryo was one of the great powers in East Asia, until its defeat by a Silla-Tang alliance in 668. Koryo originated in north of Ancient China, then gradually moved East to the side of Taedong River. The records of the three kingdoms in the section titled *Accounts of the Eastern Barbarians* implied that Buryeo and the Yemaek people were ethnically related and spoke a similar language.

Chinese people were also in Koryo, in the book *Samguk Sagi* stated that many people of China fled to East of the sea due to the chaos of war by Qin and Han. Both Koryo and Baekje shared founding myths and originated from Buyeo.

Baekje was a Korean kingdom located in South-Western Korea from 18 to BCE 660 CE, it was one of the three kingdoms of Korea. Baekje had the highest population which was much larger than Silla and Koryo. Baekje was founded by Onjo the third son of Koryo's founder Jumong and Soseono.

Baekje alternately battled and allied with Koryo and Silla as the three kingdoms expanded control over the peninsula. Baekje controlled most of the Western Korean peninsula, as far north as Pyongyang, and many have even held territories in China and Japan. In 660, Baekje was defeated by the Tang dynasty and Silla and ultimately submitted to unified Silla.

Silla dynasty was a Korean kingdom that existed between 57 BCE – 935 CE and was located on the Southern and central parts of the Korean peninsula. Silla had the lowest population of the three, Silla was founded by Bak Hyeokgeose of Silla in 57 BCE, around present-day Gyeongju. There are also some Korean researchers that point out the grave goods of Silla and of the Eastern Xiongnu are alike, and some researchers insist that the Silla king is descended from Xiongnu.

In its early days, Silla started off a city- state by the name of 'Saro' initially founded by Yemaek refugees from Gojoseon. By the 2nd century Silla existed as its own distinct political entity in the Southeastern area of the Korean peninsula. In the 7th century Silla allied itself with the Chinese Tang dynasty.

In 660, under Muyeol of Silla 654-661, the Silla- Tang alliance subjugated Baekje after the Baekje- Tang war. Silla then fought against Tang dynasty for nearly a decade to expel Chinese forces on the peninsula intent on creating Tang colonies there to finally established a unified Kingdom as far North as modern Pyongyang. The tail end of this period, called the later three Kingdoms period, briefly saw the emergence of the kingdoms of later Baekje and Taebong. Silla was defeated first by later Baekje and the era ended with Silla's submission to Koryo dynasty.

The movement for literary naturalism was launched in the 1920s by a group of young writers who rallied around a new definition of universal reality. Many works of naturalist fiction were first-person narratives in which writers presented themselves as the subjects of case studies. Modern Korean literature attained its maturity in the 1930s through the efforts of a group of talented writers.

They drew freely upon European examples to enrich their art. Korean fiction of the 1930s took shape in the void created by the compulsory dissolution in 1935, Barred from all involvement with social or political issues, some writers returned to nature and sex; others retreated to the labyrinth of primitive mysticism, superstition, and shamanism; still others sympathetically portrayed characters born out of their time, defeated and lonely. In the early 1940s the Japanese suppressed all writings in Korean.

The novelist Yun Hunggil is another example of a writer who cultivated fiction as an instrument of understanding himself and others. In his *The Rainy Spell* for example, Yun says that ideological differences imposed upon the Korean people by history can be overcome if they delve into the native traditions that have given them cohesion.

Modern Korean literature often tackles pressing social and political issues, reflecting the tumultuous history of the Korean peninsula. Modern Korean literature grapples with questions of identity, modernity, and the transition of social mores. In the 1940s as the Japanese tightened their grip with the spread of their aggressive war to the Pacific and all Southeast Asia.

The important task of the 1920s was to work out ways of introducing foreign elements into literary works dealing with the reality of colonial rule in Korea. Many novels of the 1920s centered on themes of the suffering of intellectuals. The lives of farmers were often depicted as pathetic.

The Japanese government strengthened ideological coercion during the 1930s, Korean literature was directly affected. Many novels of the time experimented with new literary styles and techniques.

Min Jin Lee, a Korean American author, was born in Seoul, South Korea, immigrated to the United States at age seven, and grew up in Queens, New York. She studied history at Yale and law at Georgetown, later practicing law before becoming a novelist. Her famous works are *Free Food for Millionaires* and *Pachinko* gaining significant recognition. Her family immigrated to the United States in1976, when she was Seven years old.

Lee's parents owned a wholesale jewelry store. As a new immigrant she spent much time at the Queens Public Library, where she learned to/ read and write.

Lee at a young age, she spent four hours a day commuting to and from the Bronx High School of Science, from which she graduated in 1986. She was inspired by American novelist and social critic Sinclair Lewis.

Lee said that she took too many classes while at Yale. For the classes she couldn't take, she kept their syllabi to review their reading lists, intent on learning as much as possible. In 1987 she returned to Korea to spend a summer at Yonsei University's Korean Language Institute. In her free time, she "Mostly went clubbing with friends,"

Her work *Free Food for Millionaires was* released in 2007, it made numerous editorial and bestseller lists, receiving recognition from several publications that are The New York Times Book Review, NPR, USA Today, and The Times.

It is the first book in what Lee intends to be a trilogy called *The Koreans*. Lee had encountered the subject of her second novel while she was still at Yale, during a talk by a missionary visiting from Japan who had worked with that country's Zainichi community.

In 2019 Lee became a write in residence at Amherst College in Massachusetts, from 2007 to 2011 Lee lived in Tokyo, Japan. Her narrative voice is authoritative but generous, she studied history at Yale College and Law at George Town University.

Her fiction explores the Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, Immigration, Class, Religion, Gender and Identity of a diasporic people. In 2018, Lee stated that the works that most influence her as a writer are *Middlemarch* by George Eliot, *Cousin Bette* by Honore de Balzac and the Bible.

In 2024, the New York Times asked 503 novelists, nonfiction writers, poets, critics and other book lovers to vote for 100 Best Books of the 21st Century and Lee's book *Pachinko* was number 15 on the list. Among her primary literary influences, Lee lists Leo Tolstoy, Edith Wharton, George Eliot, James Baldwin, and Joan Didion in addition to Cather. She grew up reading American and British literature from the 19th century, which greatly impacted her use of omniscient narration. Her novels are renowned for their rich research, engrossing characters, and themes of race, diaspora, love, and class.

The New Yorker's Michael Luo stated in 2022 that Lee's talent is "the ability to write sweeping, magisterial books that take on ponderous political themes, such as the Korean diasporic experience, the invisibility of marginalized groups in history, the limits of assimilation, and to make their unhurried, quiet intrigues read like thrillers."

Lee’s second novel *Pachinko* is an Epic Historical Story which follows a Korean family who immigrated to Japan. She wrote this novel to understand the 20th century experience of Koreans in Japan and to explore the idea that life is like trying to win a game that may be designed to make you lose.

She was inspired to write this novel after attending a lecture in college where she heard a story about a bullied boy from an American Missionary who worked with Korean Japanese Community in Osaka. This novel has been translated into over Thirty-five languages.

Lee wrote this novel because she wanted to describe her own social experience to others, she wanted to convey how much she loves and accepts people. She wanted to criticize the lack of representation for people of Asian hermitage in culture. Lee got the idea for the story in 1989, but it took her 30 years to write.

Pachinko it uses the Japanese name for Pinball as a metaphor for life's chances and the generational gap within the story. The title was originally set to be *Motherland* but was changed to *Pachinko* after Lee noticed that Koreans in interviews related to the *Pachinko* Business. The game is unpredictable, and uncontrollable nature is a metaphor for Character's stories.

The main title sequence represents the evolution of the immigrant family as they start off in Korea, then pass to the second generation in Japan. *Pachinko* takes through one family Tragedy and Triumph across Generations, the novel follows four generations of the family from 1915 to 1989. *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee, exploring the identity struggles of three generations of Zainichi Koreans in Japan. To meet labor shortages, many Koreans were compelled to relocate, especially to Osaka, when Japan colonized Korea in 1910. They received low wages in hard jobs like steelwork and coal mining.

Min Jin Lee to explore the response of three generations of Zainichi Koreans in Japan to the issues of identity and belonging in different historical conjunctures. The novel chronicles the lives of the Baek family through the Japanese colonization of Korea, World War II, post War society and Japan's bubble economy of the late 20th century.

The word *Zainichi* literally means *foreign resident* in Japanese, their existence arose from the Colonialist imperialist history of Japan and further complicated by its conflicted relationship with Korea after its independence from Japan. Neither Korean nor Japanese, the Zainichi occupies a unique position in Japanese society.

In 1945, after Japan's defeat in World War II and Korea's subsequent independence from Japan, the Zainichi could in principle repatriate. After World War II the Zainichi retained their imperial citizenship, which was later stripped off after the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty was enacted.

The treaty restored Japan's political independence from the Allied Occupation under the Americans. The establishment of diasporic organizations such as Mindan in 1946 and Chongryun in 1955 maintained the Zainichi's foreign nationality in Japan the former was affiliated with South Korea, the latter with North Korea.

In the 1970s Kim Tong Myung in *The Third Path for Koreans in Japan* Proposed a new discourse on how to be Korean in Japan. It was called the *Third way* which meant not having to naturalize and gaining citizenship, though one could still maintain one's Korean identity.

Japan born Koreans comprised 49.9% of Zainichi population by the 1970s it had grown to 74.6%, by then the Second and Third generation Zainichi outnumbered the first, whose promotion of homeland allegiance and Anti-Japanese nationalism were no longer suitable to the times.

By the 1990s, another Zainichi discourse on identity came about the concept of and identification with *Korean - Japanese* by then Japan was welcoming more migrant workers to offset labor shortages. From the early 1900s until the late 1980s, Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* is a comprehensive historical fiction that covers four generations of a Korean family.

In Japanese-occupied Korea, the story opens with Kim Sunja, a poor but strong young woman, becoming pregnant with Koh Hansu, a wealthy businessman with ties to the yakuza. To preserve her reputation, she relocates to Japan and weds Baek Isak, a compassionate but ill pastor.

In Japan, Sunja and her family struggle to make a living in a culture that views them as outsiders due to constant discrimination against them because they are Korean. Tragic outcomes result from her older son Noa's devastation upon discovering the truth about his father, despite his desire to blend in with Japanese society. Instead of going to school, her younger son Mozasu succeeds in the *Pachinko* industry, which is a Korean-dominated gaming sector.

. By highlighting the hardships and victories of Koreans in Japan, the book delves into themes of resiliency, selflessness, and community. *Pachinko* powerfully depicts tenacity in the face of adversity through Sunja's family.

CHAPTER - II

POST-COLONIAL APPROACH

My face is the Immigrant's journey, the exile's Nightmare, the American dream gone away

- Alexander Chee

Diaspora refers to the movement or scattering of people away from their original homeland, often due to war, colonization, persecution, economic hardship, or voluntary migration. It also describes the communities formed by these displaced people in new countries. Despite being physically distant, diasporic individuals often maintain strong emotional, cultural, and political connections to their ancestral land.

The word *Diaspora* describes a sizable population that is separated from their ancestral homeland but shares a common cultural and regional background; diasporas are brought on by immigration and forced migration. *Diaspora* is a word that comes from the ancient Greek verb *To Scatter.*

Diasporic populations frequently have a significant impact on both their home countries and the host countries. They support political causes, send remittances, and uphold customs that keep them connected to their home countries while also contributing to the economies, politics, and cultures of the countries where they settle.

It also describes the communities formed by these displaced people in new countries. Despite being physically distant, diasporic individuals often maintain strong emotional, cultural, and political connections to their ancestral land.

Diaspora is a potent theme in literature and art, enabling authors to examine themes of identity, memory, loss, and belonging. It draws attention to how emotionally taxing displacement is and how difficult it is to make peace with the past. Diasporic writers frequently give voice to underrepresented realities, demonstrating the impact of world histories on individual lives.

The idea of diaspora is still changing in the modern world, showing how intertwined societies are becoming. Through political action, transnational commercial networks, or common

cultural festivals, diasporic communities continue to have a significant influence on both their adopted countries and their birthplaces.

The idea has been extended over time to many other groups, including the African diaspora because of the transatlantic slave trade and the Indian diaspora because of labor migration during British colonial rule; the Armenian, Chinese, and Irish diasporas are well-known examples of communities that have spread around the world for historical, political, and economic reasons.

The term *Diasporic literature* describes writings produced by authors who left their own nation and moved to another. It provides a distinct viewpoint on the difficulties of migration and cultural assimilation by reflecting the joys, complexities, and hardships of the diaspora population. Diasporic literature use language to convey the complexity of the diasporic experience and cultural borders.

To convey the fluidity of language and identity in the diaspora, authors frequently use multilingualism, code-switching, and translation in their works. This linguistic diversity effectively communicates the complexity and hybridity of diasporic identities.

A Postcolonial approach focuses on the effects on colonized peoples and their lands, challenges prevailing the cultural, political, and economic effects of colonialism and imperialism. British colonies in Africa, India, and the Caribbean are the sources of post-colonial literature, English-language post-colonial writers frequently address topics including childhood, emigration, national identity, allegiance, and the fight for Independence.

Postcolonial theory is a literary theory or critical approach that studies literature produced in countries that were or are now colonies of other countries. It might also cover literature on

colonies or their people that is written in or by citizens of colonizing countries. The Philosophy is based on the concepts of otherness and resistance.

Many practitioners credit the rise of Postcolonial theory in the 1970s. Edward Said's book *Orientalism*. Theorists usually examine the attempts made by writers from colonized countries to celebrate and express their cultural identities and reclaim them from the colonizers.

Literature created in colonizing nations that addresses colonization or colonized peoples, as well as literature written in previously or currently colonized nations, are the subjects of post- colonial theory.

It focuses specifically on how literature from colonizing cultures distorts the reality and experiences of the colonized people and reflects their inferiority in works by colonized peoples that seek to express their identity and reclaim their past despite the past's inevitable otherness.

Postcolonial literary theory considers the power struggle between the historically colonizing powers of European countries and historically colonized nations.

The purpose of postcolonial literary theory is to address and critically examine literature produced in countries which were previously colonized and deconstruct the Western literary canon, which has traditionally favored white voices.

Postcolonial studies emerged from the experience of colonialism and its aftermath, emphasizing how imperial dominance influenced colonized nations and how they still struggle with its impacts. There is a tradition of anti-imperialist criticism that extends as far back as the 16th century, and yet some of the very same criticism not only was compatible with but was often used to justify imperial domination.

In postcolonial contexts, researchers have engaged in subtle critiques of essentialism, gender dynamics, and the intersectionality of identities as postcolonial theory has developed. As new voices and viewpoints enter the area, they are upending preconceived notions and providing new perspectives on the intricacies of colonial and postcolonial experiences.

In order to clarify recurrent themes, storytelling techniques, and the changing sociopolitical situations that influence these texts, this review critically analyzes significant works in postcolonial literature. This study aims to advance knowledge of how postcolonial literature influences larger conversations about power, representation, and cultural identity in a globalized society by examining both classic and modern writers.

Postcolonialism is also closely associated with a more-specific set of questions, and, although it should not be reduced to these questions, they have proved to be enormously influential. One of the most prominent has been the relation between imperialism and identity.

Postcolonial literature intersects with postmodernist aesthetics in works like Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea.* These texts challenge linear narratives and fixed identities, employing metafictional techniques to deconstruct colonial myths and rewrite historical narratives.

Edward Said is often considered a key figure with his seminal work *Orientalism*. His book *Orientalism,* is considered a foundational text in postcolonial theory, analyzing the way the West has historically represented and constructed the *Orient*.

Other prominent Postcolonial theorists and authors include Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, Chinua Achebe, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Frantz Fanon, a Psychiatrist and Philosopher,

examines and medically characterizes colonialism as fundamentally damaging in his 1961 book *The Wretched of the Earth*. According to Fanon, the deliberate denial of *All Attributes of Humanity* of the colonized people is the ideological core of colonialism.

Fanon actively supported and participated in the Algerian Revolution for independence from France as a member and representative of the Front de Liberation Nationale. The majority of postcolonial theorists, whether they have written about South Asia, Africa, or another region, have been critical of nationalism, but they have also been critical of the *Nativism* and idealized communitarianism that are frequently presented as alternatives to it.

They have attempted to explore how European political conceptions, as well as assumptions about secularism and historical time in general, have been used to characterize and locate the modes of collective action and self-understanding of non-European peoples along a continuum that ends with the institutions and ideas of contemporary Europe.

Achebe depicts the conflict between colonial ideology and native African beliefs and customs in his writings, which examine the power dynamics inherent in colonialism. In *Things Fall Apart,* the characters such as Mr. Brown and Reverend Smith illustrate the cultural imposition and upheaval brought about by colonialism while also representing many perspectives on colonialism.

He demonstrates how colonial control challenged established power structures and caused social unrest and violence. Chinua Achebe, hailed as the father of African literature, when speaking once of the medium's complicity in colonialism said:

Achebe explores identity and agency in postcolonial Africa in his later works, including *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Arrow of God.* He studies the difficulties people and cultures

encounter when negotiating the intricacies of a post-colonial environment. The aftermath of colonialism, including the establishment of new social and political systems as well as the resulting cultural and economic crises, are all explored in his works.

Homi Bhabha, a well-known postcolonial thinker, noted for his concept of *Hybridity,* which emphasizes the formation of new cultural forms in the *Contact Zones* generated by colonization, questioning the idea of pure or stable cultural identities.

Bhabha argues that cultural exchange and interaction, particularly in colonial contexts, lead to the creation of Hybrid cultures that defy the notion of Cultural Purity or Essentialism. Bhabha offers the concept of a *Third Space* or *Interstitial Space* where civilizations interact and negotiate meaning, questioning the binary opposition of colonizer and colonized.

Bhabha investigates the concept of *Mimicry*, which occurs when the colonized adopt features of the colonizer's culture while subverting and destabilizing the colonial power system. Bhabha emphasizes the ambivalence inherent in colonial relations, where both the colonizer and the colonized are caught in a complex web of power and identity.

Bhabha's work challenges essentialist notions of culture and identity, arguing that cultures are not fixed or static but are constantly in flux and negotiation. Bhabha focuses on the role of language and discourse in shaping cultural identities and power relations, arguing that cultural statements and systems are constructed in the contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation. Bhabha's most influential works include *The Location of Culture* and *Nation and Narration*.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is a well-known postcolonial theorist who has written extensively on the subaltern, deconstruction, and the nexus of Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Marxism, most notably her renowned essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*

Can the Subaltern Speak? This essay, published in 1988, it examines the problem of representing and providing voice to the subaltern, particularly women, and criticizes Western intellectuals' tendency to speak for rather than alongside them. Spivak utilizes the word "*Subaltern*," coined by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, to describe oppressed populations who are excluded from historical narratives and power structures, notably in the context of colonialism.

Spivak's concept of *Worlding* refers to the way colonial narratives and systems of power shape the way colonized people perceive their own cultures and identities, often through the lens of the colonizer.

Spivak used the term *Sanctioned Ignorance* to describe the intentional exclusion or marginalization of particular voices and ideas in academic and intellectual discourse, typically to perpetuate power hierarchies. Spivak's particular postcolonial feminist theory is interested in how narratives are created and articulated in this academic language.

Salman Rushdie is a notable figure in postcolonial writing, noted for his Indian-born, British-American perspective, examining topics of identity, culture, and politics in the context of postcolonial experiences and the links between Eastern and Western cultures.

He often employs magical realism, a literary style that blends realistic narratives with fantastical elements, to explore the surreal and often chaotic realities of postcolonial societies.

Rushdie's work, particularly novels like *Midnight's Children* and *The Satanic Verses*, delves into the complexities of postcolonial identity, cultural hybridity, and the legacy of colonialism.

Midnight's Children is widely regarded as a key work of postcolonial literature, addressing the birth of India and its consequences through the lens of a family history. Rushdie's writing frequently addresses the concept of cultural hybridity, in which various cultural influences merge to generate new forms of identity, notably in the context of diaspora and migration.

Rushdie's work has been evaluated using postcolonial theory, which investigates the cultural, political, and economic consequences of colonialism and its aftermath. Besides *Midnight's Children* and *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie's other notable works include *Shame*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, and *Joseph Anton*, a memoir.

Rushdie's writing addresses a number of important postcolonial ideas, including his critique of colonial discourses and historiography, his criticism of the post-independence state authorities in Pakistan and India, and his depiction of new hybrid cultural identities and global migration movements.

Postcolonial literature intersects with postmodernist aesthetics in works like Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*. These texts challenge linear narratives and fixed identities, employing metafictional techniques to deconstruct colonial myths and rewrite historical narratives.

Postcolonial studies face problems such as Ethical representation, addressing colonialism's legacy in Digital settings, and expanding the canon to include marginalized voices beyond Anglophone literature. Future research should combine indigenous knowledge systems with global Indigenous and Afrofuturist viewpoints through multidisciplinary methodologies.

Postcolonial studies are well-positioned to investigate new developments including Indigenous viewpoints, Afrofuturism, and postcolonial science fiction. Researchers look forward to interdisciplinary partnerships with disciplines such as environmental studies, sociology, and anthropology, which will promote creative methods for comprehending postcolonial legacies and imagining decolonial futures.

Because postcolonial literature is dynamic, it promises to continue exploring social justice, cultural resilience, and international solidarity in the midst of constant change and adversity. Postcolonial literature stands as a profound testament to the complex and enduring legacies of colonialism across diverse societies and cultures.

Digital technology has changed how postcolonial literature is distributed and interpreted. Digital archives and online platforms make literature more widely accessible and accessible to readers worldwide, democratizing literary participation.

Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh are two authors who use internet platforms to reach readers throughout the world, igniting debates about cultural representation and the influence of digital humanities on literature.

Through a critical review of major works in this field, this paper has explored themes of identity, resistance, hybridity, and cultural reclamation. It has highlighted how postcolonial writers,

through their narratives and poetic expressions, challenge dominant narratives, reclaim indigenous histories, and assert the agency of marginalized voices.

Postcolonial theory is still developing in the twenty-first century, addressing both the legacy of past colonization and the emerging neocolonialist movements influenced by globalization, capitalism, and technological advancements.

The conversation to cover gender, the environment, migration, and digital culture, even as influential philosophers like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha continue to play a significant role. Today, postcolonial theory questions how representation and power work in a globalized world where Western countries continue to dominate both economically and culturally.

It looks at how former colonies deal with modernity, language, and identity while fending off cultural erasure and economic reliance. Issues such as diaspora experiences, refugee crises, racial capitalism, and Indigenous knowledge systems have become more prominent.

In the 21st century, the Postcolonial Ideology is about decolonization not just political independence, but also the decolonization of language, culture, education, and knowledge. Scholars make the case for acknowledging and reviving local histories and Indigenous knowledge systems that were suppressed by colonial authorities.

The Postcolonial theory combines with gender studies, critical race theory, and queer theory to examine the complex ways in which colonialism impacts many identities, intersectionality has also grown in significance.

This theory also examines identity and hybridity issues in a globalized environment, particularly for cross-cultural diasporic communities. Postcolonial thought in the twenty-first century is about actively working toward a more inclusive and equitable future, not merely about reflecting on colonial history.

Postcolonial literature is a dynamic representation of the tenacity and inventiveness of oppressed populations around the world, as well as a historical moment influenced by colonial encounters. In addition to its literary value, it is significant because it has the potential to elicit critical thinking about representation, power, and the continuous fight for social justice in a global setting.

Chapter - III

The unforgotten wounds: The Cost of being Korean in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

If you only read the books that everyone else is reading you can only think what everyone else is thinking.

-Haruki Murakami

History has failed us, but no Matter. These opening words of *Pachinko* resonate both a Lament and a Declaration. In Min Jin Lee's sweeping multi-generational novel, being Korean is not just an identity it is a burden, a battle, and a memory etched in scars. The novel unfolds against the backdrop of Japanese Colonialism and the forced migration of Koreans to Japan, where they are treated as permanent outsiders.

This thesis explores how *Pachinko* reveals the cost of being Korean through recurring themes of Alienation, Discrimination, Resilience, and Identity loss, demonstrating how these *Unforgotten wounds* shape and haunt every generation of the Baek Family. The novel traces the lives of a Korean family across four generations, beginning in Japanese occupied Korea, where Koreans are seen as Outsiders in a society that denies them dignity and equality.

Lee illustrates how Colonialism, Poverty, and Systemic Discrimination leave wounds. Being Korean is not just about Nationality it is about Surviving Marginalization, Wrestling with Identity and bearing the inherited pain of homeland.

It argues that *Pachinko* portrays the cost of being Korean as a legacy of Trauma and Resistance, expressed through themes of displacement, social exclusion, identity Fragmentation, and the persistent fight for Self-worth in a hostile world. In 1910, when Hoonie turned twenty- seven years old Japan annexed Korea, the fisherman and his wife, refused to be distracted by the country's incompetent aristocrats and corrupt rulers, who had lost their nation to thieves.

Hoonie and Yangjin were married so quietly, when Yangjin became pregnant, she worried that her child would have Hoonie's deformities. Her first three sons were died because of Diarrhea and Smallpox, later Yangjin gave birth to Kim Sunja her fourth child. When Sunja was Thirteen years old, Hoonie died quietly from Tuberculosis. When her father died, Sunja changed from a joyful girl to a thoughtful young woman.

Sunja grows up helping her mother with the boardinghouse. One day, she meets a wealthy and mysterious fish broker named Koh Hansu, who eventually seduces her. When she becomes pregnant, Hansu reveals he is already married. This revelation devastates Sunja, challenging her future. The following of Japan's invasion of Manchuria was a difficult one, this thing called the Depression was found everywhere in the world. Poor Americans were as hungry as the poor Russians and the poor Chinese.

After learning of Sunja's health, Baek Isak suggests they be married and go to Osaka, where Isak's sister-in-law Kyunghee and brother Yoseb live. Sunja consents, is married to Isak, and follows him to Osaka, where he starts serving as a Christian church preacher. Even though Sunja's pregnancy is no longer a problem, Japan has its own problems. Korea grapples with the pressures

of The Great Depression in the 1930s, Yangjin takes on the duty of maintaining a boarding house to make ends meet.

Baek Isak, a protestant minister from Pyongyang, arrives in their boarding house on his way to Japan. Isak believes in making sacrifices to God and wants to marry Sunja. They later go to Osaka to live with Isak's brother, Yoseb, and his wife, Kyunghee, in Ikaino, a Korean slum where immigrants experience discrimination and substandard living circumstances, and Koreans are not permitted to rent.

The experiences of Korean immigrants in *Pachinko* involve more than just physical relocation; they also involve ongoing balancing between their adopted Japanese culture's expectations and their Korean history. In its conclusion, the study emphasizes how identity building for diasporic populations is a continuous and changing process. It emphasizes how Korean identities are greatly shaped and reshaped by the cultural and social conventions of the adopted country, in this case, Japan.

Koreans living in Japan, the Baek family was among those commonly known as Zainichi, which translates to *foreign resident* in Japanese. The history of Japan's colonialism and imperialism, which was further compounded by its connection to Korea's post-war independence from the island, gave rise to this group. In Japanese society, the Zainichi, who are neither Korean nor Japanese, hold a special place.

The forcible relocation of numerous Koreans to Japan during the Japanese occupation of Korea, as well as the resulting accumulated emotional suffering, are depicted in the novel in vivid detail. As a result of this trauma, the protagonists strive to uphold their identities, negotiate societal structures, and get over the legacy of discrimination.

However, Japan also did not want the Zainichi. Their presence upended Japan's prevailing identity narrative of Nihonjinron, which is built on a homogeneous ideology that supports citizenship and a single-race nationhood based on blood. Along with the intergenerational transfer of trauma, the novel also examines the psychological effects of watching and experiencing violence, discrimination, and loss.

The Zainichi face issues of racism, historical exclusion, nationality, identity, and social belonging because they are an ethnic minority in a society that considers itself to be ethnically homogeneous. *Pachinko* examines these issues.

The Zainichi found themselves in a vulnerable situation when the Treaty of San Francisco was broken, with limited access to state assistance and the potential for deportation. Whether to nationalize or repatriate, the Korean Zainichi were faced with difficult choices that would change their lives.

In Min Jin Lee's Pachinko, "The Zainichi" and Cultural Precarity" makes the case that the Zainichi are an example of a marginalized immigrant group that is impacted by the processes of marginalization, inequality, and Othering. Japan's colonization of Korea and its unsuitable immigration policies set the stage for Zainichi's history, which is rife with discrimination. They still experience pain, violence, and marginalization even when they are permanent residents.

The Japanese government enacted laws to *Japanize* Koreans by stifling Korean language and culture. Korean names were outlawed as a result, and Japanese culture and education were

promoted. In order to escape political oppression or pursue better economic possibilities, a large number of Koreans immigrated to Japan during this time.

Being a Japanese citizen might stabilize their social status, but it would still be viewed as a betrayal of Korean identity because repatriation meant returning to a fractured motherland to which they felt no loyalty.

Pachinko effectively depicts the tyranny of the Zainichi in Japan. Isaak from the Baek's family is unfairly brought in, detained, and imprisoned; the Zainichi characters experience brutality and discrimination in Osaka. The fact that the police were cruel and dictatorial in order to highlight the negative effects of Othering on people and communities brings the aspect of Isaak's decline through incarceration even closer to reality.

Because of their alleged Zainichi identity, his children, Noa Baek and Mozasu Baek, are mocked and harassed, causing his family to suffer greatly as well. The suicide case even demonstrates the maltreatment of Zainichi adolescents and other issues that the impoverished minority faces.

The trauma and separation experienced by the Baek's family repeatedly symbolize the migrants' more general experiences with race and culture. They must establish a home in Japan, where they must endure daily acts of aggression, trauma, and misery as permanent foreigners. Such suffering and oppression that spans generations are utilized to highlight the everyday experiences that migrants share.

The case study of Zainichi Koreans in Japan sheds insight on marginalization, inequality, and othering while offering a critical analysis of how society treats these marginalized groups. A

fascinating examination of the intricate and varied experiences of the Zainichi living in Japan can be found in Lee's novel *Pachinko,* which tells the story of the Korean diaspora.

This story revolves around the intergenerational process of identity formation, which is characterized by both resiliency and significant obstacles. The Zainichi are a Korean minority who live in a liminal space, neither completely rooted in their ancestral homeland nor fully accepted by the dominant Japanese society.

This novel explores the complex interplay of marginalization, liminality, and alterity that haunts their lives. Negotiating cultural syncretism, a continuous and delicate balancing act as they attempt to reconcile their Korean background with the realities of their Japanese surroundings. The discriminatory regulations that were placed on the Zainichi Korean minority limited their access to suitable housing and maintained their status in Japanese culture, as seen by the mandatory presence in the Ikaino ghetto. In Japan's native Shinto faith, which involves the worship of kami, these are sites of worship.

The Protestant clergyman who marries Isak and Sunja points out to Sunja the value of being a good Korean while they are still in Korea, saying,

> *Every Korean must be on his best behavior over there. They already have such low regard for us. You cannot allow people to have a negative opinion of us. For thousands of others, one terrible Korean spoil it* (Lee 94).

The idea becomes more significant for characters from the second generation, Noa and Mozasu, who represent the divergent perspectives on what constitutes a good Korean. Although Noa and Mozasu are brothers with comparable upbringings, their post-adolescent lifestyles diverge

greatly, with Mozasu running *Pachinko* parlors and embracing his Korean heritage while Noa poses as someone of Japanese ancestry.

But in Japan, after marrying Isak, she took his family name, Baek which became Boku in Japanese. Her official Japanese name was changed again to Junko Bando. Interestingly, Isak's father had chosen Bando as their Japanese family name because it sounded like the Korean word for objection, subtly mocking the fact that they were being forced to take on Japanese names. Overall, the passage shows how colonialism stripped Koreans of their original identities and how they quietly resisted in small, meaningful ways.

Sunja doesn't get much better at speaking Japanese over time. Even in her later years, Sunja keeps in touch mostly with other Zainichi. The subject of Sunja's lack of education is brought up even at the book's conclusion, when she laments her inability to read when visiting Isak's grave. When the groundskeeper encourages Sunja to enroll in a night school, Sunja believes it is too late. Additionally significant to the first generation of Zainichi characters was their Japanese speech patterns.

His accent never failed to give him away, according to Yoseb, even if he may appear to be Japanese. For the sake of improving her accent, Kyunghee tunes into Japanese radio shows.

(Lee 106)

Noa and Mozasu both speak Japanese without a Korean accent, which allows Noa to pass as Japanese and blurs the once distinct boundaries between Japanese and Zainichi people. This means that sounding Korean while speaking Japanese is not an issue for the next generation. Noa and Mozasu attend a Japanese school where they experience prejudice and bullying. One of Noa's

teachers observed that Noa's diligence is unusual among Koreans, indicating that Zainichi are perceived as being lethargic.

Sunja's brother-in-law Yoseb, who has lived in Japan for a decade, already knows that clothing distinguishes Korean and Japanese people and has changed his clothes:

> *Yoseb wore the street clothes of a modest workingman in Osaka plain trousers, a Western-style dress shirt, and a heavy woolen coat that didn't show its wear. Long ago, he'd put aside the finery that he'd brought from Pyongyang expensive suits his parents had ordered from a tailor who made clothes for the Canadian missionaries and their families.*
>
> *Kyunghee, Yoseb's wife, is also dressed in a Western-style dress rather than traditional attire. Yoseb observes Sunja's traditional Korean attire right away and remarks that she'd need clothes* (Lee, 110)

This line highlights how Yoseb and his wife Kyunghee had adapted to life in Japan by changing the way they dressed, wearing modest, Western-style clothes to blend in and appear respectable among Japanese society. Yoseb had once owned fine, expensive suits from his wealthy life back in Pyongyang, but he gave up that luxury after moving to Japan, focusing instead on practicality.

Sunja appreciates their love and care for her, even if she doesn't share their religious faith. When Sunja and Kyunghee touch her likely with affection or while praying for her, Hana sees it as something pure and sacred almost like a holy experience because of the genuine warmth and love behind their actions. It shows that emotional connection can feel spiritual, even without religious belief.

Despite wearing clothing more like to that of an affluent Tokyo matron, Sunja is once more described as rumpled and ordinary in 1978, when she is sixty-two years old.

Koh Hansu stood out like an elegant bird with milky-white plumage among the other men, who were wearing dark clothes. When Hansu mentions that he had to wash his father's clothes when he was a child, Sunja is in disbelief. Since Hansu's well-made clothing and refined manner give the impression that he is Japanese, his polished appearance is not merely for show.

For example, Hansu was well-liked by Japanese people and was so well dressed, that when Noa and Mozasu first encounter him in 1944, they are shocked to learn that he speaks Korean fluently. As Mozasu begins working in a *Pachinko* parlor, he also observes how people's perceptions can be influenced by their attire. Mozasu starts wearing like Hansu in well-made suits rather than the traditional white shirt and black pants. When Sunja first arrives in Japan, she and rest of the Baek family live in Ikaino, a Korean ghetto. Compared to the well-maintained Western style houses in downtown Osaka, Ikaino is a jumble of decaying buildings:

Ikaino was a misbegotten village of sorts, comprised of mismatched, shabby houses. The shacks were uniform in their poorly built manner and flimsy materials. Here and there, a stoop had been washed or a pair of windows polished, but the majority of the facades were in disrepair. Matted newspapers and tar paper covered the windows from inside, and wooden shims were used to seal up the cracks. The metal used on the roof was often rusted through. The houses appeared to have been put up by the residents themselves using cheap or found materials not much sturdier than huts or tents. (Lee, 111-112)

This line describes Ikaino, a poor neighborhood where many Koreans lived in Japan. The area is portrayed as rundown and badly built, with houses made from cheap or leftover materials, showing the poverty and hardship faced by the residents.

Even though some people tried to keep their homes clean, most of the houses were falling apart, with rusted roofs, cracked walls, and windows covered with old newspapers and tar paper for insulation. The description emphasizes how Koreans in Japan were forced to live in rough, unstable conditions, building their own homes because they were often excluded from better housing options.

> *One of the nicer places to live in the ghetto, where rent takes up the majority of money, is the Baek family's home, which Lee describes as a boxlike shack. The Baek family is fortunate to possess their home. Seeing the absurdity of his predicament, Yoseb jokes that only pigs and Koreans belong here. The Baek family stays together for a number of years since the costs are too expensive*. (Lee, 112)

This passage explains that even though the Baek family's home is just a simple, boxlike shack in the ghetto, it is considered one of the better places to live because many Koreans in Japan struggled so much that even having a home was a big achievement. Rent was very expensive, and many families couldn't afford proper housing.

Yoseb, seeing the harsh reality and discrimination they faced, bitterly jokes that only pigs and Koreans belong in such a poor, dirty area. Despite the tough conditions, the Baek family sticks together for many years because moving elsewhere would be too costly, showing their resilience and the difficult circumstances they had to endure.

His interest in the Korean Independence Movement stems from his late brother Samoel, a pastor who died while opposing the Japanese occupation, even if many of Isak's actions are strongly tied to his religious beliefs. Isak also believes that battling for independence is holy because it was Christlike to resist oppression (Lee, 118).

Even though Isak himself does not engage in independence agitation, he is nonetheless detained in 1939 after Hu, a Chinese sexton at the church, mouths the Lord's Prayer during a required tour to a Shinto shrine when he is meant to swear loyalty to the emperor. Christianity has the power to divide Japanese society. Because of their understanding of this, the Japanese government forces Christians to participate in shrine rituals in an effort to subjugate and control them.

When Sunja arrives wearing traditional Korean clothes, Yoseb immediately notices because her appearance stands out and would likely attract unwanted attention or discrimination. His comment about her needing new clothes shows how important it was for Koreans in Japan to assimilate outwardly to avoid trouble and survive.

In order to conceal her Korean heritage. As Sunja visits the butcher shop, she observes the difference in how Kyunghee and she are viewed based on their attire:

Kyunghee, who looked smart in her midi skirts and crisp white blouses, easily passing for a school teacher or a merchant's modest wife with her fine features, was welcomed in most places. Everyone thought she was Japanese until she spoke; even then, the local men were pleasant to her. For the first time in her life, Sunja felt aware of her unacceptable plainness and inappropriate attire.

She felt homely in Osaka. Her well-worn, traditional clothes were an inevitable badge of difference, and though there were enough older and poorer Koreans in the neighborhood who wore them still, she had never been looked upon with scorn with such regularity, when she had never meant to call attention to herself.

Within the settled boundaries of Ikaino, one would not be stared at for wearing a white hanbok, but outside the neighborhood and farther out from the train station, the chill against identifiable Koreans was obvious. (Lee, 138-139)

As the Baek family's financial circumstances improve, Sunja's attire also changes. In 1968, she was dressed in a black wool coat, which was neither ostentatious nor shabby. The appearance was store-bought. In addition to wearing Western-style clothing, such as a camel-colored sweater and brown woolen trousers, Sunja is no longer required to wear clothing that she produced herself. Sunja is dressed even more upscale in 1978, as seen by her imported French designer dress and Italian leather shoes.

Sunja has hard time getting used to her Japanese name. The novel features a brief description about how the naming system works:

Due to the colonial government's requirements, it was normal for Koreans to have at least two or three names, but back home she'd had little use for the Japanese tsumei, Junko Kaneda written on her identity papers, because Sunja didn't go to school and had nothing to do with official business. Sunja was born a Kim, yet in Japan, where women went by their husband's family name, she was Sunja Baek, which was translated into Sunja Boku, and on her identity papers, her tsumei was now Junko Bando.

When the Koreans had to choose a Japanese surname, Isak's father had chosen Bando because it had sounded like the Korean word ban-deh, meaning objection, making their compulsory Japanese name a kind of joke. (Lee, 139)

This line explains the complicated identity struggles Koreans like Sunja faced during and after Japanese colonial rule. Because of government rules, Koreans were often forced to have multiple names: their Korean name, a Japanese-style name for official documents, and sometimes other versions depending on where they lived. Sunja, originally from Korea with the surname Kim, had little need for her Japanese name when she lived back home because she didn't go to school or deal with government matters.

He first makes an effort to converse with the Japanese police officer. The guard's thoughts are included in the novel. Yoseb's mind goes to his Japanese boss,

He thinks that Christians are rebels. The people who were in charge of the March 1 demo were Christians. All the Japanese know that (Lee, 172).

The police close the church but members of the congregation still continue to meet in secret. The faith of other first-generation Zainichi characters likewise provides them with comfort.

Despite trials, Kyunghee, Sunja, and Yoseb remain optimistic because they believe that God has a purpose. It opposed to having children, Kyunghee believes that assisting Sunja raise her sons is the Lord's plan for her. Isak had not stopped Hu from mouthing the Lord's Prayer during any shrine ceremony, but instead admired Hu's faith and gesture of resistance.

Under considerable duress, the decision-making authority of the Presbyterian Church had deemed that the mandatory Shinto shrine ceremony was a civic duty rather than a religious one even though the emperor, the head of the state religion, was viewed as a living deity.

While Isak's elder Pastor Yoo believed the shrine ceremony was a pagan ritual, he attended the meetings so that members of his congregation would not be punished. (Lee, 174)

Even if they dislike Japanese control, other characters are afraid of dissension behavior and still condemn the Independence Movement's acts, largely attributing the harsh treatment Zainichi endures to it. When Yoseb attempts to free Isak from prison, it is clear that he disdains Christianity and its connections to the Korean independence movement. Food serves as a quick way to identify oneself in the book. The Baek family prepares and consumes Korean food, which Sunja and Kyunghee also sell because they are extremely poor at the beginning of the book. Food continues to be used as a means of differentiating Zainichi from Japanese people.

However, the family also begins to eat more Western food on special occasions as their wealth increases. Since eating or selling Korean food is not directly associated with discrimination, as are many other identity markers in the novel, food is primarily shown as the "safe" way to present one's identity.

Sunja's primary clientele consists of Korean women who worked in factories and didn't have time to make their own banchan, as her primary product is kimchi. As the family's financial circumstances improve, they also begin to eat non-Korean cuisine. In 1968, for instance, Sunja serves tea and imported butter biscuits to Hansu. In 1979, the family celebrates Solomon's birthday with a big "American dinner" that includes foods like potato salad and fried chicken.

Western cuisine appears to be consumed on exceptional occasions, such as during parties or when guests are present, although Korean cuisine is still consumed daily at home. The identities of the younger characters are significantly shaped by both education and language.

Sunja is illiterate, but her kids and grandkids attend reputable universities. They acquire English and Japanese language skills. The third generation Zainichi, however, are unable to speak Korean and have few options for communicating with their grandparents as a result.

Since it is more difficult to tell Zainichi apart from ethnic Japanese people due to this shift in language and educational attainment, there is disagreement on how they are typically viewed. First-generation Zainichi's educational attainment varies according to their gender. Isak and Yoseb both have formal educations and are fluent in Japanese, but Sunja and her sister-in-law Kyunghee have neither.

With Sunja as an ally, Kyunghee, who aspires to make a living by selling pickles and kimchi, is forced to become a street vendor after Isak's incarceration. Despite some challenges such as difficulty obtaining the necessary ingredients and rising cabbage prices, the women are able to come up with inventive solutions:

> *When there were no cabbages at the market, the women pickled radishes, cucumbers, garlic, or chives, and sometimes Kyunghee pickled carrots or eggplant without garlic or chili paste, because the Japanese preferred those kinds of pickles.* (Lee, 179).

This line shows how the women, including Kyunghee, adapted their cooking based on what was available and to fit Japanese tastes. When they couldn’t find cabbages which are usually used for making traditional Korean kimchi, they pickled other vegetables like radishes, cucumbers, and carrots instead.

Like all the other Korean children at the local school, Noa was taunted and pushed around, but now that his clean-looking clothes smelled immutably of onions, chili, garlic, and shrimp paste, the teacher himself made Noa sit in the back of the classroom next to the group of Korean children whose mothers' raised pigs in their homes.

Everyone at school called the children who lived with pigs Buta. Noa, whose tsumei was Nobuo, sat with the Buta children and was called garlic turd. At home, Noa asked his aunt for snacks and meals that didn't contain garlic, hoping this would keep the children from saying bad things to him. (Lee, 183)

This line shows the harsh discrimination Noa faced as a Korean child in Japan. Even before, Korean kids like him were bullied at school, but after his clothes started smelling like traditional Korean food ingredients and the bullying got worse. Even the teacher treated him badly by making him sit in the back of the classroom with other poor Korean children whose families raised pigs a job looked down upon.

These kids were cruelly nicknamed Buta meaning "pig" in Japanese, and Noa was also mocked as "garlic turd" because of the food smells. Feeling ashamed and desperate to fit in, Noa asked his aunt to cook meals without garlic, hoping to avoid further bullying. This highlights how deeply racism, class prejudice, and cultural shaming affected Korean children's daily lives in Japan.

Kyunghee sometimes even made milder pickles without strong flavors like garlic or chili paste, because Japanese people preferred simpler, less spicy pickles. It highlights how Korean immigrants adjusted their traditions to survive and fit into Japanese society.

In addition to becoming a Christian after marrying Isak, Sunja finds great comfort in her faith, particularly as she ages. Christianity and religion overall are not as important for younger members of the Baek family.

Although Noa is raised as a Christian since childhood, he is also interested in other religious traditions. After Isak's imprisonment Noa starts to doubt his Christianity:

> *Noa did not believe in God anymore. God had allowed his gentle, kindhearted father to go to jail even though he had done nothing wrong. For two years, God had not answered Noa's prayers, though his father had promised him that God listens very carefully to the prayers of children.* (Lee 195)

Noa hides this from the rest of his family. Later in life, he feels respect towards Buddhism and questions the connection between Christianity and other religions.

In *Pachinko*, the myth of return is a recurring theme that shapes the lives and decisions of the characters. For Hansu*, the idea of return and the notion of 'Home Korea' is dismissed as he thinks that they are living for a dream of a home that no longer exists*. (Lee, 203**)**

While Yoseb believes that Korea is still considered home because his parents are there, Hansu tells him that they are not and that they were shot. All landowners who were foolish enough to stick around were shot.

> *They could have very well been shot. The conditions in the communist-occupied North were awful. There were numerous landowners who'd been rounded up, killed, and shoved into mass graves.* (Lee, 203).

The religious overtones of the Shrine rituals caused resistance among Korean Christians, some of whom refused to comply and acknowledge loyalty to the emperor, including Isak, Yoo, and Hu. Yet, the Japanese portray this act as patriotic despite their claims that the practice is purely patriotic and non-religious.

Whenever you go to these meetings, I want you to think for yourself, and I want you to think about promoting your own interests no matter what. All these people both the Japanese and the Koreans are fucked because they keep thinking about the group. But here's the truth: There's no such thing as a benevolent leader.

I protect you because you work for me. You lived with that farmer Tamaguchi who sold sweet potatoes for obscene prices to starving Japanese during a time of war. He violated wartime regulations, and I helped him, because he wanted money and I do, too. Those communists don't care about you. They don't care about anybody. You're crazy if you think they care about Korea, for people like us, home doesn't exist. (Lee,210).

Pachinko explores the relationship between the characters hybridized identities, who are in a state of perpetual exile due to the conflict between the realities they face in the Japanese setting and the attraction of their ancestors' legacies. A deep sense of exilic consciousness is created in the Zainichi characters as a result of their ongoing liminality and their attempt to balance their Korean ancestry with the Japanese milieu in which they were born and raised.

The trauma Sunja experiences is often only alluded to by context and content of the novel, but there are also some instances where she is devastated or visibly suffering. One of these instances is after her son Noa finds out about his biological father and cuts ties with the family.

Sunja is so affected by Noa's decision that it results in years of trying to find him again. She has known that Noa suffered a lot because of his ethnic background and wants to be acknowledged in Japanese society, even though 'good Koreans' are still seen as *A-stained race.*

Despite having gone through tragedy, his younger brother Mozasu, welcomes and accepts his culture and heritage and uses the chances provided to him to create a life for himself. He does not even attempt to conceal his identity since he feels that there is no possibility given that he has

> *A first name from a Western religion, an obvious Korean sur-name, and a ghetto address (*Lee 269).

Mozasu is not as driven in school as his older brother, and he in fact believes that School was a misery, that his teachers called him a Korean fool, which he attributes to his ethnicity. Instead of attending college, he began working at a *Pachinko* parlor at the age of sixteen, where he not only learned more about the world than in all his years of school, but he also went on to become a manager at the age of twenty one.

The disparity between these two brothers approaches to their upbringing demonstrates how drastically different lives may be just by responding differently to the trauma brought on by racism, discrimination, and political oppression. Similar to Noa, when anything occurs or does not conform to the societal standard, one may decide to try to please the oppressor or to give up one's identity, which may result in additional misery or follow Mozasu's example, accept the circumstances, make the most of it, support your family, and provide better opportunities for future generations.

. Noa works as an accountant for a Japanese man after graduating from high school and getting ready for university admission examinations.

Noa wanted to work in a Japanese office and have a desk job, even though he is aware that he might earn more money working for a Korean corporation or yakuza (Lee, 267).

Noa has internalized the idea that *Pachinko* is bad. Noa wants Mozasu to work for the family confectionery instead of a *Pachinko* parlor because of its ties to the yakuza. Furthermore, according to Noa, all the worst. He has a powerful negative auto-stereotype. The brother conception of Korean identity is framed by their disagreement over what constitutes a good Korean. They had been compared since their school days:

Noa informed Mozasu that his previous teachers had praised him as a good Korean, and Mozasu realized that those same teachers would consider him a bad one due to his own low grades and poor manners (Lee, 269).

These lines show the difference between Noa and Mozasu in how they were seen by their teachers. Noa's teachers praised him as a *good Korean* because he did well in school, behaved properly, and fit into Japanese society's expectations.

Mozasu has a Japanese boy who is likewise an outsider because he has a brother with a disability as his only buddy at school, whereas Noa has no pals. Because they had experienced discrimination together, the two become lifelong friends. A Zainichi student in the book kills themselves as late as 1976 as a result of being bullied by Japanese classmates.

The individuals who drove the victim to commit suicide cannot be punished by the police. Although the new Korean schools that were formed following World War II are not mentioned in the book, they appear to function similarly to *Pachinko* parlors in that they permit Zainichi to create their own area without facing the same discrimination that Japanese schools do.

Noa's costs at Waseda University push the family's finances to its limit, but this is seen as a necessary sacrifice:

The boy has to go to Waseda. He deserves to go. Even if no one hires Koreans here, with his degree he can go back to Korea and work for a better salary. Or move to the United States. He'll know how to speak English. We have to think of his education as an investment. (Lee, 291)

This line shows how important education is seen as a path to better opportunities for Koreans who face discrimination in Japan. The speaker believes that even if Korean graduates are not hired easily in Japan, getting a degree from a prestigious university like Waseda would give the boy more options he could return to Korea for better job opportunities or even move to the United States, where knowing English would help him succeed. They view the boy's education not just as personal achievement, but as an investment in his future and in escaping the unfair limits placed on Koreans in Japan.

Hansu meets Noa every month and is happy that his son is able to go to school, noting that while he has met many rich people, he was most impressed with educated men who write well. By attending an international preschool where only English was spoken, third-generation Zainichi Solomon is able to receive an international education.

The family begins to speak more Japanese and sporadically English throughout this period. Solomon also speaks very little Korean, according to Sunja*: He spoke English at school and Japanese at home. He replied in Japanese with a few Korean words strewn throughout after Sunja spoke to him in Korean*.

This shows how the boy, growing up in Japan, had to juggle multiple languages as part of his daily life. He spoke English at school, showing the importance placed on learning it for future success. At home, he mostly spoke Japanese, the dominant language in the society around him.

When Mozasu heard this, he realized that his own teachers would likely see him as a *bad Korean* because he had low grades and didn't act the way they wanted. It highlights how Koreans in Japan were judged harshly not just for being Korean, but also based on how much they could meet Japanese standards of "good behavior" and success. Yoseb, who was hurt in the Nagasaki nuclear assault, views his body's deterioration in a same manner:

> *My father used to say that you get your body back when you die and go to heaven. I can now put this one behind me* (Lee, 298).

This line reflects a character's sense of acceptance about death. The speaker recalls their father's comforting belief that after death, you are restored your body is healed and whole in heaven. By saying, *I can now put this one behind me,* the speaker is expressing a kind of emotional or physical release, as if they are ready to let go of their earthly suffering or burdens, trusting that something better awaits after death. It shows a moment of peace and resignation.

According to Lee, Noa states that he *didn't want to be fascinating*. Noa believes that despite Akiko's harsh criticism of Japanese culture, she generalizes about foreigners much too much. This is demonstrated when Akiko tries to reassure Noa that he is not ashamed of his Korean heritage after realizing that he is.

> *I think your Korean heritage is fantastic. I'm not at all bothered by it. I appreciate your Korean heritage, even though it may annoy my racist parents or any other stupid person. Korean males are really attractive, and they work hard and are intelligent.* (Lee, 340).

These lines show someone expressing strong support and admiration for Korean identity, especially in a society where Koreans often faced racism.

While Akiko seems to have good intentions, her attempt is patronizing and makes Noa understand that he cannot be with her because she sees him as a token, not a person:

> *She would always believe that he was someone else, that he wasn't himself but some fanciful idea of a foreign person; she would always feel like she was someone special because she had condescended to be with someone everyone else hated. His presence would prove to the world that she was a good person, an educated person, a liberal person* (Lee, 341).

Despite the discrimination they face at school, many characters especially Isak and Noa see education as something that would improve their situation. Sunja thinks fondly about Isak's support of Noa's studies:

> *Isak had said that Noa would help the Korean people by his excellence of character and workmanship, and that no one would be able to look down on him. Isak had encouraged the boy to know everything as well as he could, and Noa, a good son, had tried his best to be the very best.* (Lee, 343)

This line shows how Isak, Noa's father, believed that by being an honest, hardworking, and excellent person, Noa could help uplift the Korean community in Japan. Isak taught Noa that if he showed strong character and did his work perfectly, people would have no reason to look down on him because of his Korean background.

Following his father's advice, Noa, who wanted to be a good son, worked very hard to be the best at everything he did, hoping to earn respect and overcome the discrimination Koreans faced. Hansu sees Noa's education as an investment that benefits all Koreans. It is important that older Koreans support young Koreans in their studies. How else will we have a great nation unless we support our children?

The speaker is saying they genuinely respect and value Korean heritage, even if their own parents or other prejudiced people might dislike it. The fact that his bio-logical father is part of the yakuza shatters Noa's worldview and memories. He tells his mother that "the worst Koreans are members of these gangs" and that he will "never be able to wash the dirt from his name" by having accepted Hansu's money. Noa goes on saying:

> *All my life, I have had Japanese telling me that my blood is Korean that Koreans are angry, violent, cunning, and deceitful criminals. All my life, I had to endure this. I tried to be honest and humble as Baek Isak was; I never raised my voice. But this blood, my blood is Korean, and now I learn that my blood is yakuza blood. I can never change this, no matter what I do. It would have been better if I were never born. How could you have ruined my life? How could you be so imprudent? A foolish mother and a criminal father. I am cursed*. (Lee, 345).

With this statement he not only emphasizes the trauma he had to suffer, but also how those of Korean descent were treated in Japan because of its monoethnic ideology. By finding out that he was lied to and that the man he has looked up to and aspired to become was not his real father, all of his hopes and memories come crashing down on him.

In order to overcome these obstacles, we need to be ready to confront the real adversary. when we are aware of the precise adversary who has prevented us from defining who we are. This is because an enemy's abstraction does not immediately contradict or resonate with his own life experiences.

He was unable to defame Japan or hate the culture that had brought him the predicament; he could only curse his own corrupted blood. It was hard to go over these barriers because of his guilt about his blood, which kept him from knowing himself, his parents, and his heritage completely. He aspired to be the decent, honest person his father respected, but he was too young to fully adopt his principles.

Therefore, even in a field that is often dominated by Koreans, he is compelled to pass as Japanese (Lee,356).

This line means that even though the field likely business, entertainment, or another profession is mostly filled with Koreans, the person still feels pressure to hide his Korean identity and pretend to be Japanese. It shows how strong discrimination is that even among many Koreans, being seen as Japanese is still considered safer or more acceptable in society.

Would God keep away from temples or shrines? Did such places offend God, or did He understand those who may wish to worship something, anything? (Lee, 360).

While religion is not as important anymore, the Baek family still continue to go to church every Sunday. Solomon also reflects on his family's continuing connection with Christianity,

Mozasu, who nearly gets in jail for assaulting a Japanese man, brings up the subject in passing at first. Mozasu considers his older brother Noa's advice when discussing the problem with the police officer,

Lately, Noa was warning him that since the Koreans in Japan were no longer citizens, if you got in trouble, you could be deported. He had never taken her there. They'd meant to go. With some difficulty, it was possible now for them to get the passports, but he hadn't bothered. Most Koreans in Japan couldn't travel.

If you wanted a Japanese passport, which would allow you to reenter without hassles, you had to become a Japanese citizen which was almost impossible, and no one he knew would do that anyway. Otherwise, if you wanted to travel, you could get a South Korean passport through Mindan, but few wanted to be affiliated with the Republic of Korea, either, since the impoverished country was run by a dictator. The Koreans who were affiliated with North Korea couldn't go anywhere, though some were allowed to travel to North Korea. (Lee, 378).

These lines describe the difficult situation for Koreans living in Japan, Zainichi Koreans after World War II. To travel easily, they would have needed a Japanese passport, but becoming a Japanese citizen was extremely hard and many refused to give up their Korean identity. Some could get a South Korean passport through the organization but South Korea was a poor, dictator-run country at the time, making it an unattractive option.

Meanwhile, Koreans affiliated with North Korea had even fewer rights and were mostly unable to travel anywhere, except sometimes to North Korea itself. Overall, they were trapped between identities, with limited freedom and no easy choices.

This complexity of possible choices also brings attention to the choice not only between Japanese or Korean citizenship, but also the question of two Koreas. Mozasu manages to bring attention to the difference between them,

> *Although nearly everyone who had returned to the North was suffering, there were still far more Koreans in Japan whose citizenship was affiliated with the North than the South. At least the North Korean government still sent money for schools for them, everyone said.* (Lee, 378).

For Mozasu, choosing a citizenship would be an act of dissensus as it requires the re-examination of his Zainichi identity. Mozasu's own understanding of these issues at this point is fairly straightforward,

> *Nevertheless, Mozasu wouldn't leave the country where he was born. Where would he go, anyway? So, Japan didn't want them, so fucking what?* (Lee, 378).

Solomon, Mozasu's son, struggles more with being officially a foreigner in Japan despite having been born and raised there.

This line emphasizes the belief that education is crucial for the future success of the Korean people. It suggests that if older generations of Koreans don't support and encourage the younger ones in their education, the community will not be able to grow strong or improve its situation. By helping children succeed in their studies, they are investing in a better future for their people and building the foundation for a greater, stronger Korean nation.

Noa leaves his family and all ties to Korean culture to attend Nagano instead of going back to school. Despite his Korean heritage, Noa ironically begins working for a *Pachinko* parlor owner. The image of a good Korean also comes up again before Noa's job interview.

Noa weds his coworker Risa Iwamura, who is similarly shunned by Japanese society due to her father's suicide. Each other provides comfort to Noa and Risa. However, he is still plagued by Korean culture and his fear of being identified as an ethnic minority: *Noa carried the story of his life as a Korean within him like a dark, heavy rock.* This line means that Noa felt the weight of his Korean identity as a painful and burdensome part of his life.

While their living situation improves with the new house, the fact that they still live in the Korean ghetto marks them as Zainichi. The Baek family gets wealthier, their living arrangements also change, making it harder to distinguish them as Zainichi from just their living place. In 1968, Hansu visits Sunja's house and the contrast with the house the family's first house is immediate:

> *It was a brand-new three-bedroom in the Westerners' section of Yokohama the furnishings resembled sets from American films upholstered sofas, high wooden dining tables, crystal chandeliers, and leather armchairs. Hansu guessed that the family slept on beds rather than on the floor or on futons. There were no old things in the house no traces of anything from Korea or Japan.* (Lee, 387-388)

This line describes a new, modern house in Yokohama, located in a neighborhood meant for Westerners. The inside of the house looks like something out of an American movie, with expensive furniture like upholstered sofas, tall wooden dining tables, crystal chandeliers, and leather chairs very different from traditional Korean or Japanese homes.

Where people often sat on the floor and slept on futons. Hansu notices that the family has fully embraced Western living, with no signs of their Korean or Japanese heritage left in their home. This shows how some families tried to assimilate into a Western lifestyle, leaving behind their cultural roots to fit into a new image of success and modernity.

Being Korean in Japan brought him constant discrimination, shame, and struggle, so instead of feeling proud of who he was, he carried it like a "dark, heavy rock" something that dragged him down emotionally.

Like with citizenship, Mozasu concludes that there is nothing he can do, as he is seen as an outsider in both Korea and Japan:

> *This country isn't going to change. Koreans like me can't leave. Where we going to go? But the Koreans back home aren't changing, either. In Seoul, people like me get called Japanese bastards, and in Japan, I'm just another dirty Korean no matter how much money I make or how nice I am. So, what the fuck? All those people who went back to the North are starving to death or scared shitless.* (Lee, 416-417).

This blunt attitude towards his situation seems to characterize both Mozasu's relationship with identity and citizenship, and also the novel's attitude towards it. Akiko, a Japanese girl who finds Noa's Korean heritage intriguing, and Noa begin dating.

Despite being employed at a *Pachinko* parlor, Noa works as a bookkeeper, while his brother Mozasu's life is inextricably linked to running *Pachinko* parlors before opening his own sites. Mozasu can be in an environment where he is not judged for being Zainichi thanks to *Pachinko,* which helps him reconcile with his Korean heritage.

Mozasu can become quite wealthy by running *Pachinko* parlors, but doing so also entails stigma. According to Mozasu, his girlfriend Etsuko is already an outsider in Japanese society as a divorced mother of children, but being married to him would only make her predicament worse:

> *Her kids already despise her. She would suffer greatly if she were to wed a Korean Pachinko.* (Lee, 417).

This demonstrates how Koreans are impacted by Japan's monoethnic mentality, which forces them to adopt false identities in order to obtain employment and survive.

> *Without disclosing his true name or race to anyone, he creates a whole new life for himself, marries a Japanese woman, and has four children (Lee 424).*

All of his choices and the hardship that appear too much for Noa, and he ends his life when Sunja discovers him and apologizes once more. It's interesting that the story skips ahead a year to the next significant event in a character's life without providing an explanation or illustrating how the other characters respond to this news right away.

They are pushing back against racism by openly appreciating Korean culture and people, praising Korean men as attractive, hardworking, and smart. It's a way of reassuring the person they're speaking to likely a Korean that their background is not a flaw, but something to be proud of. The issue of citizenship becomes more complicated with Korea's independence and subsequent split into North and South Korea.

> *Koreans born in Japan after 1952 had to report to their local ward office on their fourteenth birthday to request permission to stay in Japan. Every three years, Solomon would have to do this again unless he left Japan for good* (Lee 432).

These lines explain that Koreans born in Japan after 1952 were not automatically considered citizens, even though they were born there. Instead, when they turned fourteen, they had to go to the local government office and formally apply for permission to continue living in Japan.

As stateless people are seen as bringing dissensus into the distribution of the sensible of the Japanese community, the process of applying for alien registration cards, visas and other documents concerning travelling is made uncomfortable for them, possibly to incentivize them to choose a citizenship.

It is hopeless. I cannot change his fate. He is Korean. He has to get those papers, and he has to follow all the steps of the law perfectly. Once, at a ward office, a clerk told me that I was a guest in his country (Lee, 437).

Mozasu's patience runs out when Solomon is fingerprinted and afterwards calls the registration papers Dog Tags. This makes the clerk angry,

The fingerprints and registration cards are vitally important for government records. There is no need to feel insulted by this, it is an immigration regulation required for foreign (Lee,438).

Because memories whether familial, collective, or cultural influence and define an individual's identity, he battles with it. However, disregarding them might result in a painful identity crisis, which is what Noa goes through. Thus, it's probable that everything became too much for him when his mother visited and his old and new lives merged, and the only option he saw was ending his own life.

In the novel, the protagonist experience largely unacknowledged pain brought on racism, social and political oppression, and what are known as micro-aggressions, since they face constant discrimination. These experiences have an impact on people even though they are not acknowledged in theory.

When Sunja, his mother, spoke to him in Korean to keep their cultural roots alive, he answered mostly in Japanese but included a few Korean words. This mix of languages reflects the boy's complicated identity balancing his Korean heritage with the realities of living in Japan and needing English for future opportunities.

When talking to each other, Mozasu and Solomon also mix Japanese and English, for example, with Solomon thanking Mozasu by saying arigato very much. Later, Mozasu reflects on these educational choices:

> *Mozasu had chosen the international school in Yokohama because he liked the idea of Westerners. He had specific ambitions for his son: Solomon should speak perfect English as well as perfect Japanese; he should grow up among worldly, upper-class people; and ultimately, he should work for an American company in Tokyo or New York city Mozasu had never been to but imagined as a place where everyone was given a fair shot. He wanted his son to be an international man of the world.* (Lee, 446)

This line shows Mozasu's hopes and dreams for his son, Solomon. Mozasu chose an international school in Yokohama because he believed being around Westerners and learning perfect English and Japanese would give Solomon better opportunities. He wanted Solomon to grow up in a more privileged, global environment, far from the discrimination Koreans often faced in Japan.

The hero's trauma is impacted to some degree by political or historical events over which the protagonists have no control. For instance, the Japanese occupation of Korea had an impact on Sunja's decision to relocate from Korea to Japan.

Since they could no longer be referred to as Japanese colonial nationals" following the Japanese defeat in World War II, Koreans residing in Japan were deprived of all their rights and opportunities.

Pachinko portrays its male characters differently than most of the Zainichi literature, particularly that authored by the second generation. In contrast to second-generation Zainichi literature, which frequently employs the aggressive father theme, *Pachinko* emphasizes the diligent matriarch of the household. Its ability to link Zainichi literature to the larger body of Korean diaspora literature. There are multiple Zainichi identification marks in *Pachinko.* I will focus on the two fundamental identification markers that identify Zainichi as being of Korean heritage in this section citizenship and ethnicity.

The Zainichi's collective position with regard to the distribution of the sensible as it is portrayed in the book by examining the role citizenship and ethnicity play in shaping the identities of the characters. After Japan loses the war, citizenship begins to play a bigger part in the book.

This permission wasn't permanent they had to renew it every three years, proving again and again that they were allowed to stay. If they didn't, they risked being forced to leave Japan forever. It shows how insecure and difficult life was for Korean residents, even if they had lived in Japan their whole lives.

Later, when Solomon is applying for the card, Mozasu is unusually silent despite the clerk's discriminatory remarks about Koreans. Mozasu's Japanese girlfriend Etsuko writes that rather than arguing with the clerk, Mozasu Averted his eyes from the clerk and stared at Solomon's right hand

Etsuko, Mozasu's Japanese girlfriend, observes that rather of clashing with the cashier, Mozasu turned away from the clerk and gazed at Solomon's right hand. In their subsequent conversation, Mozasu recalls his prior encounters obtaining registration documents, saying,

Solomon's parents and himself were born in Japan, the clerk and many other Japanese characters in the book nevertheless view them as guests or foreigners.

> *Why did her family think Pachinko was so terrible? Her father, a traveling salesman, had sold expensive life insurance policies to isolated housewives who couldn't afford them, and Mozasu created spaces where grown men and women could play pinball for money. Both men had made money from chance and fear and loneliness.* (Lee, 450)

This line explains that Hana's family thought working in *Pachinko*, a gambling game was shameful because it involved making money from people's weaknesses. Her father made his living by selling expensive life insurance to lonely, vulnerable housewives who couldn't really afford it using their fear to profit.

The first part is more explicitly connected with religion because after their arrival in Japan, Isak works as a minster at the Hanguk Presbyterian Church. The church is seen as a place where Zainichi go to ask for both mental and material advice, thus making it an important place for the Zainichi community. Japanese people still view Christianity as alien, even after all these years.

One of his father's acquaintances remarks that Kazu most likely Just wanted the Korean staff to go away when speaking with him. The biblical names of several Zainichi characters are Isak and his brother Yoseb, Noa, Mozasu, and Solomon. They are the most overt allusions to Christianity.

Since Christianity gives Zainichi people a place to gather with one another and its links to independence activism provide more space for disagreement, it might be considered an early example of dissensus. Even though Zainichi experience religious persecution in the first part of the book, it nevertheless enables them to locate a location free from prejudice on a daily basis.

When Hana must stay in a hospital before passing away, her views on Christianity shift. Hana is pleased that Solomon's family members pray for her despite her lack of faith in God, and she considers Sunja and Kyunghee touching her to be something holy.

Mozasu earned money by running *Pachinko* parlors, where people spent money on games of chance, often because they were lonely or desperate. Both businesses took advantage of fear, luck, and loneliness, so the family saw them as morally questionable, even if they were legal ways to survive.

Mozasu and his men tinkered with the machines every morning to fix the outcomes there could only be a few winners and a lot of losers. Nevertheless, we continued to play because we thought we would be the fortunate ones. In the end, Etsuko remarks that "Pachinko was a foolish game, but life was not, illustrating how the novel uses the unpredictable nature of the game as a metaphor for life. (Lee, 450)

This line explains that Mozasu and his workers rigged the *Pachinko* machines so that most people would lose, and only a few would win yet players kept gambling, believing they might get lucky. It shows how people cling to hope even when the odds are against them.

Despite all the restrictions, she had always hoped that Higuchi-San the interviewer could somehow go to North Korea. Koh Hansu had told her husband that her parents and in-laws were dead, yet she still yearned to hear news of home. Also, she wanted to know if Kim Changho was safe. No matter how many sad stories she heard from the others whose family members had gone back, she could not imagine that the handsome young man with the thick eyeglasses had died. (Lee, 456)

While Kyunghee understands that going back to North Korea would ultimately be impossible, she still sees it as home and chooses to deceive herself about her relatives and friends. Mozasu and his wife Yumi, in particular, have aspirations of relocating to the United States. When they first meet, Yumi is already enrolled in English classes at the neighborhood church, and Mozasu begins going with her.

But you don't do anything interesting like get naked outdoors in a group or sacrifice babies? Hana asks, comparing Christianity to a cult. According to what I've read, if people in America are serious Christians, they do things like that (Lee, 462).

This line shows Hana teasing or mocking Christianity by jokingly comparing it to strange or extreme cult-like behavior. She sarcastically asks if Christians do shock things like getting naked outdoors or sacrificing babies obviously absurd and not true.

She’s making fun of the wild and wrong ideas she’s heard or read about American Christians, suggesting that she’s gotten a very distorted or exaggerated view. Her comment shows both her misunderstanding of Christianity and her playful, cynical attitude toward religion.

Like everyone in his family, Solomon was a Christian. His paternal grandfather, Baek Isak, had been one of the early Presbyterian ministers in Osaka. When Solomon was growing up, people at church referred to his grandfather as a martyr because he had been jailed for his faith and had died upon his release. Sunja, Mozasu, and Solomon went to service each Sunday. (Lee, 463).

Although *Pachinko* offers a way to make money without experiencing the discrimination found in Japanese businesses, it is also viewed as a shady enterprise because of its alleged ties to yakuza and the fact that Zainichi runs the majority of the parlors. *Pachinko* allows Zainichi to create an environment that is virtually devoid of discrimination, which introduces dissensus into the distribution of the sensible.

Discrimination permeates every facet of Japanese society, despite the novel's brief depictions of minor disputes between Koreans and Japanese prior to Sunja's arrival. When people realize he is Korean, Yoseb, Isak's brother and Sunja's brother-in-law, who has lived in Osaka for more than ten years before Sunja and Isak do, remarks, from appearances alone.

He could approach any Japanese and receive a polite smile, but he'd lose the welcome as soon as he said anything. Yoseb also considers the perception of Koreans as natural troublemakers who are also wily and cunning. Yoseb observes that while many Japanese people claim to be able to distinguish a Korean person from Japanese person by their looks, that is not true. While Yoseb sympathizes with other Koreans, he also perpetuates some of the negative opinions held by Japanese people

Isak contends that they ought to assist their fellow Koreans, but Yoseb emphasizes that everyone faces difficulties and counsels Isak and Sunja to use additional caution while interacting with other Koreans. In relation to the Korean independence movement, Yoseb also brings up this point, telling Isak not to become involved. The ethnic discrimination that Zainichi face is also reflected in their living conditions and work opportunities.

Most Zainichi in Osaka live in a ghetto where buildings are deteriorating and living conditions are very cramped. The work that Zainichi are able to get is also very limited with Sunja and her sister-in-law Kyunghee selling Korean food as street peddlers.

Yoseb is not faring much better because even though he is a good mechanic, he only finds work as a biscuit factory foreman where he makes only half the salary of one Japanese foreman. His Japanese boss Shimamura is very strict with all of his workers and sees the fact that Yoseb does not want to punish factory workers as a sign of the weakness of Korean people.

Shimamura thinks that this is something that can be fixed by Japanese discipline. When the Baek family moves to the countryside in 1944 to escape the bombing of Osaka, they start working at a sweet potato farm.

While Tamaguchi, the Japanese owner of the farm, is at first doubtful about taking them in, he discovers that the family are not lazy as he had suspected. His fears are based on rumors. As Tamaguchi is portrayed as a man who predominantly cares about his profits, the fact that he treats the Baek's equally to others make the family's stay in the farm relatively happy.

When the war ends, Tamaguchi offers the family to stay at his farm as long as they like even though some Japanese workers refuse to work with Koreans. The identity of the Zainichi characters is still shaped by their Korean origin even after the Japanese Empire fell.

This is demonstrated by the disparate perspectives that the characters of the second generation have toward their ethnicity. Zainichi characters are influenced in a number of ways by the novel's prevailing concept of what it is to be a good Korean.

It is claimed that Noa looks like a Japanese person, in his crisp, clean clothes, Noa looked like a middle-class Japanese child from a wealthier part of town, bearing no resemblance to the unwashed ghetto children outside his door. While Noa believes that educating themselves to become decent members of Japanese society will stop discrimination against Zainichi, Mozasu, then thirteen, just wanted to hit everyone who said mean things.

Etsuko's comment, "*Pachinko* was a foolish game, but life was not," points out that while gambling on a machine is foolish because it's designed for you to lose, life itself is different it's serious, meaningful, and not just about luck.

In the novel, *Pachinko* becomes a metaphor for life: both are unpredictable, unfair, and full of risks, but life still has real value beyond the randomness.

Working at a *Pachinko* parlor might be seen as a way to redistribute the distribution of the sensible because it gives Mozasu and many other Zainichi the opportunity to establish a space free from discrimination. By employing primarily Zainichi workers, supporting their families, and providing pensions to retired employees, Mozasu, who eventually owns a number of *Pachinko* parlors, also maintains this system.

When Phoebe and Solomon move to Tokyo after college, she experiences a severe case of cultural shock. She struggles to adapt to Japanese culture and the treatment of Zainichi like Solomon.

> *As a Korean Japanese educated in the States, Solomon was both a local and a foreigner, with the useful knowledge of the native and the financial privileges of an expatriate, the novel says, presenting Solomon's experience with other cultures in a positive light.* (Lee, 482)

Phoebe, on the other hand, becomes irate when asked about her Korean ancestry and finds it hard to comprehend why Zainichi are still viewed as aliens in Japan:

> *In America, there is no such thing as a Chosenjin. Why the hell would I be a South Korean or a North Korean? That makes no sense! I was born in Seattle, and my parents came to the States when there was only one Korea, she'd shout, relating one of the bigotry anecdotes of her day. Why does Japan still distinguish the two countries for its Korean residents who've been here for four fucking generations? You were born here.*
>
> *You're not a foreigner! That's insane. Your father was born here. Why are you two carrying South Korean passports? It's bizarre.* (Lee, 482)

Phoebe also reflects on talking about Zainichi with her American friends in New York, with them having been Incredulous at the thought that the friendly, well-mannered Japanese they knew could ever think she was somehow criminal, lazy, filthy, or aggressive the negative stereotypical traits of Koreans in Japan.

Phoebe recalls a naïve comment one of her American friends made as if to sum up the situation. While Phoebe thinks that she can understand the Zainichi identity better, her limited understanding of Solomon's situation as a third generation Zainichi living between two cultures leads to many problems.

Since Mozasu's employer and subsequently Mozasu himself assist those who are otherwise viewed as misfits, *Pachinko* parlors in a way become into miniature social structures. During a poker game his Italian co-worker tries to make fun of his family's perceived connections with yakuza.

> *Koreans here are smart and rich. Just like our boy, Solomon. It wasn't like I was calling him a yakuza! You're not going to get me killed, are you, Solly?* (Lee, 487).

His Japanese boss Kazu tries to console him by pointing out that many other occupations are not available for Koreans in Japan,

> *Maybe your dad could have worked for Fuji or Sony, but it wasn't like they were going to hire a Korean, right? I doubt they'd hire you now, Mr. Columbia University. Japan still doesn't hire Koreans to be teachers, cops, and nurses in lots of places*. (Lee, 492)

This line highlights the deep discrimination Koreans faced in Japan. Even though someone like Solomon who studied at a prestigious university like Columbia is highly educated and talented, the speaker is saying that it's still very hard for Koreans to get good jobs in Japan.

Companies like Fuji or Sony, and even public jobs like teachers, police officers, and nurses, often reject Koreans simply because of their ethnicity no matter how qualified they are.

Mozasu dreamed that Solomon could work for an American company, either in Tokyo or in New York a city Mozasu had never visited but imagined as a place of fairness and equal opportunity. Ultimately, Mozasu wanted Solomon to become a successful, worldly man, free from the limitations Mozasu himself had faced.

Solomon can study in the United States at Columbia University. Finding a language to communicate in at family gatherings becomes particularly challenging when he and his Korean American fiancée Phoebe return to Japan. While Solomon spoke primarily in Japanese to the elders and English to Phoebe, Phoebe speaks Korean, which causes the family to communicate in three languages unlike Korean or Japanese, English is seen as a language of prestige even though it does not serve as an instant identity marker.

Despite beginning extremely bad circumstances, the Baek household's financial status significantly improves. The progressively shifting descriptions of lifestyle, particularly living areas and attire, also reveal the individuals' problems and identity shifts. Changes in living arrangements and attire, like those in education and language, create disagreements on how Zainichi are typically viewed and demonstrate how the family's way of life becomes more like that of wealthy Japanese families, making it difficult to tell Zainichi from Japanese people.

Sunja's home is also equipped with modern gadgets like a color TV. By 1989, the house has again been refurbished, with Solomon noting that the house was unrecognizable from the one of Solomon's childhoods filled with dark American furniture:

> *The interior designer had removed most of the original interior walls and knocked out the small back windows, replacing them with thick sheets of glass. Now it was possible to see the rock garden from the front of the house. Pale-colored furniture, white oak floors, and sculptural paper lamps filled the vast quadrant near the woodburning stove, leaving the large, square-shaped living room light and uncluttered. In the opposite corner of the room, tall branches of forsythia bloomed in an enormous celadon-colored ceramic jar on the floor.* (Lee, 495)

This line describes a beautifully renovated house where the interior has been completely transformed to feel open, modern, and elegant.

The designer removed many of the original walls and replaced small back windows with large glass panes, making it possible to see the peaceful rock garden from the front of the house. The living room is designed to feel spacious and light, with pale furniture, white oak floors, and stylish paper lamps.

It's minimalistic but thoughtfully decorated, with a striking touch tall, blooming forsythia branch placed in a large, greenish celadon-colored ceramic jar. The overall feeling is one of simplicity, beauty, and harmony with nature. As the political landscape shifts due to Korea's independence and Japan's defeat in World War II, some first-generation Zainichi characters long to return to Korea, while younger generations hope to establish new lives in the US.

The aspirations of the subsequent generations to establish a new life in the US as a neutral location expose a third party to the binary understanding of Zainichi identity as something connected to Korean and Japanese culture, whereas the aspirations of the first generation to return to Korea do not redistribute the sensible since it can be seen as a logical action for those who were born and raised there.

Mozasu believes Yumi is *irrationally biased in favor of America and anything from America,* but they still talk of migrating to the US together even though Mozasu no longer has a reliable source of income. In addition, Mozasu calls the nation “this magical place so many Koreans in Japan idealize," raising the possibility that Noa migrated there after leaving college. Yumi observes that a large number of Zainichi relocate to Korea, but she could not muster any affection for either nation.

Solomon is the only member of the third generation who is eligible to attend Columbia University in the United States. After returning to Japan, Solomon still views the US as a location with more opportunities, even though he does not appear to miss living there. He offers to get Hana treated in the US when he visits her in a hospital where she is dying, not because the US is associated with an abstract aspect of hope.

In America, everything seemed fixable, and in Japan, difficult problems were to be endured. Although Solomon is able to travel between nations with ease, this does not always mean that he can reconcile with various aspects of his identity.

Pachinko presents Phoebe, a Korean American woman who becomes Salomon's lover while he is a student at a US institution. After they relocate to Japan, Solomon begins working for a large corporation. Because of her limited conception of identification and her attempts to comprehend the Zainchi experience through the prism of American multiculturalism, Phoebe serves as a vehicle for bringing dissension into the book and giving readers an outsider's perspective on Zainichi identity.

Phoebe and Solomon also argue a lot because of their different conceptions of identity. The sole chapter that is not set in Korea or Japan and is set in 1985 in New York City introduces readers to Phoebe. Hana and Solomon's future problems are hinted at by Phoebe's contemptuous attitude toward her troubles.

Although Solomon is more at ease with his dual identities, Phoebe encourages him to look for employment in the US. Solomon acknowledges that many aspects of Phoebe that he found appealing in the US are bothersome in a foreign cultural setting,

It's clear that Etsuko's family and kids dislike Mozasu's Korean heritage, even though they appear to be primarily worried about his ownership of the *Pachinko* parlor and any potential ties to the yakuza. Solomon must endure prejudices against Koreans in his global workplace, despite being shielded from many forms of ethnic discrimination by his family's wealth. While many Japanese have similar presumptions, Solomon remarks during a poker game that it was just strange to hear such a thing coming from a white Italian who had lived in Japan for twenty years.

Solomon believes that his Japanese boss Kazu was becoming very agitated about the subject. Kazu deceitfully leverages Solomon's ethnicity and his father's *Pachinko* ties to pressure a Korean homeowner into selling her home so that it can be developed. Solomon is fired by Kazu once the agreement is reached, though.

This line highlights the deep discrimination Koreans faced in Japan. The speaker is saying that even if Solomon’s father was talented enough to work for big companies like Fuji or Sony, he wouldn’t have been hired because he was Korean. The speaker also doubts that Solomon, despite graduating from a prestigious school like Columbia University, would easily get hired in Japan for many jobs. It points out that, no matter how qualified Koreans were, racism and prejudice still blocked them from opportunities in important professions like teaching, policing, and nursing.

After Solomon is fired from his employer due to his father's alleged yakuza connections, the story completes a circle when he begins working at Mozasu's *Pachinko* parlor. Since *Japan will never change and Integrate foreigners, Etsuko's daughter Hana has suggested carrying on the family company* (Lee, 517).

Pachinko gives Koreans the opportunity to get wealthy and do whatever you want. Although Solomon first has doubts about this concept, Mozasu begins teaching Solomon about the *Pachinko* company at the end of the book by opening a ledger.

Sunja also thinks back on her time in Korea a lot, but she knows that returning would make things even more difficult for the family, particularly because Noa was old enough to have to serve in the Korean War by then. Only one character, Kim Changho, eventually goes back to North Korea.

He talks to Hansu about it in 1949, but he dissuades him, saying, "They'll kill you in the North, and they'll starve you in the South." Everyone despises Koreans who have been residing in Japan. Hansu stops Changho in his tracks when he shares some talking points, he hears at the communist groups he attends. However, Changho wants to visit the graves of his dead parents. He and Kyunghee are both confused about the situation in North Korea and wonder if Korea would ever become free.

In 1959, Changho finally returns to North Korea. Changho extends an invitation to Kyunghee to accompany him so that they can visit their parents' graves and return to "rebuild a nation." Even though Kyunghee lacks Changho's passion for nation-building, she misses her childhood home and is saddened by his invitation.

As an adult Solomon sees citizenship almost as an alien concept. Unlike Mozasu, however, he does not have doubts about the possibility of getting a citizenship. Instead, it is something that he would be able to apply for if and when he wants it. When thinking about marrying his Korean American girlfriend Phoebe and getting an American citizenship, he ponders about potential citizenship opportunities:

Yet now, when she put forward the idea of marrying for citizenship, he realized that he didn't want to become an American. It made sense for him to do so; it would have made his father happy. Was it better to be an American than a Japanese? He knew Koreans who had become naturalized Japanese, and it made sense to do so, but he didn't want to do that now, either. Maybe one day. She was right; it was weird that he was born in Japan and had a South Korean passport. He couldn't rule out getting naturalized. Maybe another Korean wouldn't understand that, but he didn't care anymore. (Lee, 521).

Solomon's general identification issues as a third-generation Zainichi, who is told he is Korean in Japan and is viewed as Japanese in Korea, are reflected in his inability to choose which citizenship to apply for. Becoming a citizen is one of the only ways Solomon, who would otherwise be indistinguishable from a Japanese person, can connect with his Korean history.

It shows that his Korean heritage, rather than being a source of pride, became a deep, hidden sorrow that he couldn't escape. Even though ethnicity isn't always obvious from a person's appearance, *Pachinko* demonstrates that people make an effort to do so.

The manager of the *Pachinko* parlor where Noa begins working, Hideo Takano, takes pride in his alleged ability to tell a Japanese person from a Korean by looking at them. Takano interviews Noa, who is posing as Japanese, and verifies his Japanese nationality by asking him about his parents and place of birth. Since he is not quite satisfied with Noa's justifications, he asks at the end of the interview, *You're not a foreigner, right*.

Even though Takano is known for detesting immigrants, particularly Koreans, readers learn more about his intentions in regard to Noa. Later, Changho is only mentioned sporadically because there isn't much information available regarding those who traveled to the North.

Kyunghee still seemed to regret not returning to North Korea following the Korean War, even after all these years have passed. He uses firsthand accounts rather than a collective perspective:

Her composure, which had seemed so important in the States, seemed like aloofness and arrogance in Tokyo. Solomon objects to her generalizations about his countrymen, saying, Yeah, there were jerks in Japan, but there were jerks everywhere, nee? (Lee, 521).

Kazu was a shit, but so what? He was one bad guy, and he was Japanese. Perhaps that was what going to school in America had taught him. Even if there were a hundred bad Japanese, if there was one good one, he refused to make a blanket statement. Etsuko was like a mother to him; his first love was Hana; and Totoyama was like an uncle, too. They were Japanese, and they were very good. She hadn't known them the way he had; how could he expect her to understand? (Lee, 521-522)

This line shows Solomon's growth in how he views people beyond their nationality. Even though Kazu, a Japanese man, treated him badly, Solomon doesn't judge all Japanese people based on Kazu's behavior. His time studying in America taught him not to generalize he believes that even if many people are bad, finding even one good person matters.

He thinks fondly of Etsuko like a mother to him, Hana, his first love, and Totoyama like an uncle, all of whom are Japanese and treated him with kindness. Solomon realizes that others, like the person he's speaking to, might not understand this because they didn't personally experience the good relationships he had with these individuals.

Lee uses Phoebe to highlight outsiders' limited understanding of the contradictory Zainichi identity. While she protests against discrimination, Salomon and his generation see themselves as Japanese, not Zainichi. This example highlights the difficulty of making generalizations about transnational identity. In *Pachinko*, the significance of cultural identity in maintaining resilience is one of the most recurring themes. The narrative highlights the importance of Korean ancestry right away.

Sunja's father, Hoonie, is shown as a man of immense moral courage and cultural pride despite his physical limitations and lack of wealth. This cultural heritage of quiet dignity has been passed down to Sunja, who has remained true to her Korean heritage throughout her life, cooking traditional Korean food, using Korean at home, and refusing to compromise her identity for the illusive prospect of Japanese acceptance.

One of the main indicators of identification in the book is language. In a complex multilingual society where fluency in Japanese is essential for survival yet speaking Korean preserves one's cultural and familial ties, characters like Sunja and her sons must manage both languages.

Tragically, Noa, Sunja's older son, attempts to break with his Korean heritage in an effort to fit in with Japanese society. He even takes on a Japanese name and breaks off contact with his mother. But in the end, his emotional breakdown is caused by this rejection of who he is.

Sunja's youngest son Mozasu is more accepting of his Korean heritage. His choice to work in the pachinko industry, which is primarily controlled by Koreans in Japan, is a form of resistance, despite the fact that he too experiences bigotry and isolation.

Instead of assimilation, Mozasu choose to flourish in an environment that embraces and even celebrates his identity. The actual *Pachinko* parlors serve as symbolic safe havens, representing both social cohesion and economic survival.

Lee skillfully incorporates the idea of family into almost every aspect of the story, showing how ties to one's family serve as a source of emotional stability as well as a means of survival. The novel's protagonists, especially the women, view family as more than just a biological or social unit; it is a haven, a duty, and a source of unshakeable strength.

Instead of being portrayed as a singular accomplishment, resilience is shown to be developed via love, sacrifice, and the interwoven lives of generations. Family is established as the cornerstone of endurance in the story. Even though they live simply in Yeong do, Hoonie and Yangjin establish a home that emphasizes integrity, compassion, and dignity. Their careful parenting of Sunja, which included developing a strong work ethic, moral principles, and kindness, lays the groundwork for Sunja's eventual resiliency.

When Hoonie passes away, Yangjin assumes all responsibility for the boarding house they co-own. Sunja teaches her first lesson in the kind of tenacity that doesn't make headlines but is essential to survival through her quiet, unrelenting efforts to keep the home afloat. Sunja herself becomes into the focal point of the story and its emotions.

Sunja has experienced discrimination, poverty, displacement, and treachery throughout her life, she is unwavering in her resolve to keep her family safe. She made a statement about the sort of future she wants for her child one based on love and integrity, not on secrecy and submission when she first turned down Hansu's proposal and chose to wed the ailing but compassionate priest Isak.

She embarks on a completely new life in Japan, but she is steadfast in her resolve to provide her sons with a home where they feel safe, loved, and appreciated. The sacrifices that characters make for one another further illustrate the power of family. The selflessness that characterizes Pachinko family is highlighted by Isak's readiness to wed Sunja and accept her pregnant child as his own, despite the likelihood of suffering.

His dedication, which is based on spiritual conviction and emotional generosity, is a unique and gentle form of masculinity in the book. In a same vein, Isak's sister-in-law Kyunghee transcends Sunja's status as a mere relative. She turns into a friend, surrogate mother, and sister. The two women manage their home together, withstand conflict, and bring up their kids with a fortitude that comes from solidarity.

In *Pachinko*, family ties are particularly strong since they span generations. Because the book covers four generations, readers can observe how the hardships and tenacity of past characters continue to influence the lives of their offspring. Sunja's parenting of Noa and Mozasu is still influenced by the principles that Hoonie and Yangjin taught her.

Both brothers are profoundly influenced by their mother's affection and discipline, even though their paths diverge Mozasu embraces the Korean community through the *Pachinko* industry, while Noa aspires to academic assimilation. The quiet integrity and need for stability that Noa learned from Sunja are still present in him, even if he tragically removes himself from his family. Sunja and Noa's connection are arguably one of the most tragic and moving examples of familial love. Her once-gentle and bright youngster, Noa, is filled with guilt over his father's identity and his own Korean heritage.

He is unable to reconcile his self-worth with the bigotry and rejection he encounters, even in the face of Sunja's unconditional affection. Not only is his suicide a personal tragedy, but it also illustrates the emotional toll that integration takes and the division it may bring about in families. However, despite this terrible loss, Sunja, who possesses a strength that transcends mourning, continues to look after Mozasu and later Solomon, Noa's nephew.

An alternative relationship with family is shown in Mozasu's path. Even though he is not as intellectually inclined as his brother, he nevertheless manages to succeed and maintain stability via hard work and stays close to Sunja. His love for his son Solomon is a reflection of Sunja's own parenting style, providing emotional stability while fostering ambition. Solomon is a member of a new generation that has been influenced by the bravery and sacrifices of his predecessors, having grown up in a postwar Japan with access to the world.

In *Pachinko*, women are very crucial to the survival of families. The book celebrates the emotional and physical work that women do to keep families together, from Yangjin to Sunja to Kyunghee. Although the society in which they live hardly ever acknowledge or thank these women, their significance is indisputable. Because of their devotion and determination, women continue to uphold the family's structure even in cases where men are imprisoned, die young, or are compelled to keep emotional distance.

Sunja's existence in Japan is full of people who, although not being related by blood, become family through love, devotion, and a common struggle. Her family is shaped and supported by a network of individuals that includes Kyunghee, Baek Isak, and even Hansu in his own complicated way.

Pachinko is able to emphasize how resilience is not limited to nuclear families but rather encompasses groups that have been formed in exile, poverty, and resistance thanks to this expanded definition of family. In *Pachinko,* family is not idealized. Lee exposes the flaws, miscommunications, and difficult decisions that accompany it. Children cannot always be protected by their parents. As they become older, kids make different decisions. Love alone isn't always enough to keep people safe.

However, perseverance more than perfection is what gives these ties their resilience. When the world around them tries to obliterate them, this family is able to endure by continuing to be there for one other to prepare one more dinner, write one more letter, and forgive one more failing.

Sunja's family is not defined by material success or public acclaim but by continuity. They endure. And in their endurance lies a quiet, defiant resilience one built on love, sacrifice, and the unbreakable ties that bind generations together. Baek Isak, the kind and gentle Christian minister who marries Sunja, religion first becomes a significant part of the story.

Isak's faith is genuine and deeply ingrained in his worldview; having been raised in a Christian family and educated in seminary, he believes in the value of compassion, justice, and sacrifice in addition to the doctrines of the Church. His faith leads him to accept Sunja and her unborn child without hesitation, despite the hardship it causes him; his actions embody the Christian ideal of grace choosing love and charity over judgment and selfishness.

Through Isak, the notion that faith may be a potent motivator for moral behavior is introduced. He chooses to wed Sunja out of a strong sense of morality and purpose rather than because of romantic attraction. Isak leads a saintly life in many respects gentle, patient, and modest.

His faith in God's plan, even for the suffering of others, keeps him going and gives him the strength to face his incarceration and eventual demise. Even in the face of growing gloom, his steadfast confidence in God's benevolence keeps him compassionate and hopeful. However, Lee does not romanticize religion. She portrays it as a complex, individual source of resilience instead. Isak's death serves as a reminder that faith alone does not always save individuals from injustice, and his pain is genuine. But his impact on Sunja and other people endures.

By his silent example, he sows the seeds of faith not necessarily in religion, but in tenacity, dignity, and hope. The family's ideals, particularly Sunja's steadfast attempts to continue in his absence, are a living testament to his legacy. *Pachinko* is not just a Christian religion, Many types of belief, whether cultural, hereditary, or even ideological, can provide comparable sources of strength, as the novel recognizes. Despite not being Christian, Sunja's mother Yangjin serves as a role model for her daughter because of her values of sacrifice, honor, and hard work.

Korean values, familial responsibilities, and Yangjin's belief that doing the right thing even when it is challenging are the foundations of her faith. She has a gentle spirituality that is as potent as any sermon because it is connected to the earth, memory, and tradition.

Pachinko presents religion as a complex subject. It encompasses religious devotion as well as the fortitude to have faith in something bigger than oneself. This faith is shown in Sunja's conviction that her sacrifices will have meaning, that her sons can live better lives, and that she must persevere despite all the attempts by the outside world to break her spirit. Isak's brother Yoseb is one of the more poignant examples of faith.

Although Yoseb lacks Isak's warmth and tenderness, he is a proud and strongly traditional guy with a strong sense of duty. He follows moral principles and goes to church, but his faith is more dogmatic centered on social stability, respectability, and pride. A contemporary, less religious, more existential kind of religion is embodied by Solomon, the fourth-generation figure.

Originally believing in meritocracy and individual achievement, he is ambitious and educated overseas. He sees a Korean landowner decline to sell her property to a Japanese firm in one of the most impactful scenes for financial gain, but for honor.

It is a spiritual moment, though not a religious one. He begins to see that the legacy of his family's suffering and strength carries a kind of sacred truth. In this way, he rediscovers faith not in God necessarily, but in the enduring worth of who he is and where he comes from. Sunja returns to the grave of Noa and quietly prays. Her faith, though battered and sorrowful, remains. She does not ask for miracles, she simply continues to love, to remember, and to hope.

It is in this moment that Lee offers one of her most profound insights: resilience is not loud. It does not always come in the form of triumph or victory. Sometimes, it is as quiet and unwavering as a mother praying for her lost son. It is the choice to keep going, to keep believing in life and love even when the world has taken so much.

Min Jin Lee demonstrates that human resiliency requires belief, whether it be in one's future, family, or religion. Even in the face of overwhelming obstacles, faith provides the fortitude to behave compassionately, to endure the intolerable, and to envision a better world. After losing his high-profile career, Solomon turns to his father Mozasu and his family pals Goro and Haruki for comfort at their usual curry restaurant.

Goro tells Solomon that the old Korean woman who died and who's passing indirectly resulted in Solomon's termination died naturally. He makes it clear that Solomon's former boss, Kazu, probably hired Solomon because of his Korean ties and didn't really think Goro was to blame for the woman's passing.

Solomon pays Hana a visit at the hospital. Honest and unvarnished, Hana tells Solomon that Japanese culture would never accept Koreans like them and suggests that he join his father's pachinko business. She highlights Mozasu's moral character and contrasts it with the hypocrisy of the supposedly respectable Japanese men she has met.

Solomon's acceptance of his ancestry. To make it easier for him to relocate, his girlfriend Phoebe offers they go back to America and even pops the question. Phoebe leaves after Solomon decides not to. After that, he tells Mozasu that he wants to get involved in the pachinko industry. Solomon is unwavering, declaring that he no longer cares about what other people think, but Mozasu at first apprehensive, fearing social condemnation.

Sunja considers her previous relationships, especially those with Hansu and Isak. The groundskeeper tells her that Noa had been going to Isak's cemetery every month for years without her knowing. Sunja feels a sense of connection to her deceased kid that is both heartbreaking and enlightening.

In 1868, Japan wrote to the Korean government to introduce itself in an effort to establish diplomatic ties. The Joseon Kingdom, which only acknowledged one empire, disregarded the letter since they thought Meiji was on par with the Qing Emperor.

Because of this alleged injury to the emperor, Japan entered the forbidden waters of Ganghwa island in 1875, forcing Korea to sign the 1976 Treaty of Ganghwa, which allowed Japanese trade and reduced the power of the Qing Dynasty on the peninsula.

All Korean periodicals were once more banned by Japan in 1940. In Korea, Japan introduced a Japanese-style educational system that prioritized integration and "*The Imperial Citizen.*" In addition to proposing the necessity of modernizing "*Backwards*" Korean villages, the controlling regime pilfered 10,000 artifacts from Korea. Thus, Korean culture and daily life were influenced by Japanese rule.

Korea quickly became industrialized, and by the time Japan surrendered in 1945, it was the second most industrialized country in Asia. That's not to suggest that the time under Japanese authority was good or free. A symptom of Japanese control, industrialization was initiated by the Gwangmu Reform, which took place prior to Japanese authority.

The Korean Empire was intended to be modernized and westernized through a sequence of events known as the Reform. Therefore, industrialization during Japanese administration shouldn't be seen as a boon to Korea, a country that had already started its industrialization.

CHAPTER – IV

CONCLUSION

Literature is dangerous: it awakens a rebellious attitude in us.

-Mario Vargas Llosa

Pachinko provides examples of how the concept of transcultural identity is growing. Instead, then providing a rigid definition of Zainichi identity, Lee employs identity markers that often portray Zainichi characters as empowered despite their differences from the rest of Japanese culture. By redistributing the sensible, Lee depicts the community as genuinely re-enforcing equality.

Except for Noa, the Baek family members do not conceal their Korean ancestry, though. across the course of the book, the citizenships of the characters likewise shift across several decades. Prior to Japan's defeat in World War II, the Zainichi characters were Japanese nationals.

As a result, this common citizenship with the Japanese is one of the few elements in the novel that enables the Zainichi characters to participate in the distribution of the sensible without having to create space for it. All of the Zainichi characters, with the exception of Noa, decide to remain stateless rather than petition for South Korean, North Korean, or Japanese citizenship after World War II, despite having a number of alternatives in this respect.

Noa is the only member of the Baek family who does not conceal their Korean ancestry, nevertheless. As the story progresses across multiple decades, the citizenships of the characters also shift. The characters created by Zainichi were citizens of the Japanese Empire until the Japanese defeat in World War II.

One of the few elements in the book that enables the Zainichi characters to participate in the distribution of the sensible without having to create space for it themselves is their shared citizenship with the Japanese. Despite having a number of citizenship alternatives following World War II, the Zainichi characters aside from Noa all decide to remain stateless rather than petition for South Korean, North Korean, or Japanese citizenship.

Throughout the novel, they change in a way that throws off the sensible distribution. In the end, the Zainichi characters are almost identical to the Japanese. Nonetheless, food continues to be a significant identity marker and a secure means of self-expression for all Baek family generations. Through the inclusion of a Korean American viewpoint and the portrayal of the identity difficulties of second and third generation Zainichi characters, Lee also explores fluid identities.

Since Noa and Mozasu both battle with their identities, identity is already a fluid concept for second generation characters. By introducing a Korean American viewpoint into the book and

illustrating the identity conflicts of second and third generation Zainichi people, Lee also explores fluid identities. Since Noa and Mozasu each face unique identification challenges, identity is already a fluid concept for second generation characters.

Noa eventually hides his Zainichi identity and poses as Japanese as a result of his identity conflicts. But this doesn't make him happy. The allocation of the sensible and the roles that accompany it generally are not called into doubt by his choice to conceal his Korean ancestry. Solomon has relatively few connections with Korean culture, he relates more to being Japanese. However, the Japanese society still sees him as Korean and he faces discrimination.

Phoebe does not understand his lack of willingness to stand up against discrimination and defend his individual rights. Phoebe's connection with Korean culture is also different from Solomon's as, unlike him, she speaks the Korean language. This allows her to find some common ground with older Zainichi characters like Sunja.

Phoebe's limited understanding of Solomon's identity ultimately leads to her return to the US. Phoebe is used in the novel to bring in an outsider perspective and, by making her Korean American, Lee is able to open up a discussion on the wider Korean diaspora and the differences between various diaspora communities.

The novel also raises the issue of the larger Korean diaspora, as Lee shows younger characters viewing the US as a place where they could begin a new life free from their constrained Korean and Japanese identities and first-generation characters desiring to return to Korea. Although just one character from the first generation goes back to Korea, other characters also long for their native country.

Younger characters hope that the US would embrace diversity and offer greater chances, thus they wish to relocate there. A third-generation character does not idealize the US, but he does accept that it is a country with numerous opportunities. Rather, he sees his future in Japan in spite of the prejudice.

As the first English-language novel to concentrate on Zainichi and their identity was *Pachinko*, Lee's portrayal also highlights Zainichi's significance to Korean American and American literature in general. Although the novel's Korean American character serves as an outsider's viewpoint, Lee's primary focus is on Zainichi identity.

As a result, the book is able to discuss American literature as well as more general Korean diasporic literature. Lee's portrayal of transcultural identities highlights the significance of including diasporic identities from other regions of the world in addition to the US.

A transnational and transcultural identity that transcends national and ethnic boundaries is what Lee's book seeks to depict. By examining the characters' Zainichi identities, Lee places them within the framework of Japanese society's sensible distribution. Distribution of the sensible and dissensus, however, enabled me to examine components of identity that are regarded as unconventional as having the potential to empower individuals and enable them to live and even prosper while preserving their culturally fluid identities.

A profoundly human tale that reveals the nuanced and agonizing facts of what it means to be Korean in a society that is set up to reject and destroy that identity, Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* is more than just a historical fiction book. The lasting cost of being Korean in a society founded on exclusion and colonial memory is highlighted in Lee's touching depiction of grief, tenacity, and survival across the four generations of the Baek family.

In addition to violently uprooting Koreans, the historical burden of Japanese colonization and its aftermath deprived them of a feeling of personal, cultural, and national stability. The reader can comprehend the tragedy as a lived, inherited reality rather than an abstract idea thanks to Lee's meticulous attention to historical context, which forms the basis of the story.

From Sunja's relocation to Japan to her descendants' internal exile as they attempt to conform to society's expectations of them, the topic of displacement manifests as both psychological and physical. Their experience shows that even if they may go from their native country, they cannot truly recover from the sorrow of loss and separation.

The identity conflicts that plague Solomon and Noa, two different but equally agonizing reactions to growing up Korean in Japan. The anxiety of never belonging, the guilt of having two identities, and the weight of social prejudice all contribute to terrible choices and broken lives. In addition to being tools of assimilation, names, looks, and education all highlight the high price of rejecting one's roots.

The *Pachinko* industry, which appears frequently in the book, is a reflection of Koreans' inventiveness as well as the constraints imposed by society. It turns into a sign of surviving in a world with limited respectable or legal opportunities. But like the individuals who run it, it is never stigma-free.

For Koreans in Japan, even achievement has a cost, as seen by the socioeconomic marginalization described in the *Pachinko* industry, which appears frequently in the book, is a reflection of Koreans' inventiveness as well as the constraints imposed by society. It turns into a sign of surviving in a world with limited respectable or legal opportunities.

In spite of these harsh facts, it demonstrates that *Pachinko* is also a tale of perseverance. The significance of familial ties, the modest yet potent acceptance of cultural and spiritual identity, and the strength of women like Sunja and Kyunghee all point to a distinct form of resistance. It's not as dramatic or political, but it's just as brave. It takes defiance and dignity to choose to live and love in a hostile world as a means of survival.

The *Unforgotten wounds in Pachinko* are not merely scars from the past; rather, they are active components of the protagonists' current lives. They influence the way generations dream, grieve, love, and think.

Min Jin Lee makes apparent the unseen suffering, pride, and tenacity of a long-marginalized people by giving voice to the historical silences surrounding Koreans in Japan. She demands through her narratives that these injuries be recognized, valued, and recalled not just as expenses but also as testaments to identity and survival.

Th thesis examined how displacement affects people emotionally, generationally, and geographically. The movement of people from Korea to Japan represents a more profound break in cultural continuity. The matriarch, Sunja, feels both shame and necessity for leaving her country of origin.

However, the challenge for her descendants Noa and Solomon in particular lies in the intangible feeling of rootlessness a home that is both culturally and physically rejected. These characters show how social rejection, internalized guilt, and identity crises are signs of displacement. This thesis examined how assimilation and identity fragmentation are crucial aspects of younger generations' lives.

Solomon's balancing act between his Korean ancestry and Western opportunities, as well as Noa's eventual demise, illustrates the agonizing intricacy of dual identities. In order to exist in a society that does not fully accept them, people change their names, appearances, language, and even aspiration. These figures are expertly used by Lee to illustrate how identity is always changing due to internal conflict and external prejudice.

The final portion of the analysis focused on the resiliency that underlies the story's sadness. *Pachinko* provides a potent antidote to hopelessness through Sunja's unflinching strength, Kyunghee's empathy, and the continuing familial ties.

The act of remembering, religious belief, and cultural pride are all kinds of resistance. Because of their affection for one another and their implicit reluctance to vanish, the characters' survival is not passive but highly deliberate.

Pachinko illustrates that the cost of being Korean especially under occupation and in diaspora is paid not just in material hardship, but in fractured identities, generational wounds, and buried dreams. Yet, these costs are not without meaning. They represent a testament to the resilience of a people who, despite being erased from official histories, refuse to be forgotten. Lee’s novel honors that legacy by giving voice to those silences.

After the war, systemic discrimination made the wounds worse for Koreans residing in Japan. Lee provides examples of how Zainichi Koreans are viewed as permanent foreigners despite being born in Japan. Noa's life is particularly representative of this. His wish to blend in, pass for Japanese, and conceal his Korean heritage all demonstrate the suffering caused by internalized prejudice.

In addition to being a personal tragedy, his eventual suicide serves as a political reminder of the intolerable weight of having a shattered identity in a culture that rejects your humanity. As a younger generation struggles with the same history, Mozasu and Solomon's experiences illustrate how identity traumas persist.

They are nevertheless stigmatized and excluded due to their Korean ancestry and affiliation with pachinko, even if they have achieved financial success. Despite his foreign education and fluency in both Japanese and English, Solomon discovers that the old prejudices still persist.

Achievement does not heal the wounds of racism; rather, it deepens them, as seen by his humiliation at the hands of his Japanese boss. Assimilation, according to Lee, just serves to conceal the suffering behind a flimsy façade of acceptance; it provides no real sanctuary.

The women in the book bear the brunt of these wounds. Being the matriarch, Sunja represents the fortitude of the injured. Her power is not in forgetting, but in persevering in the face of suffering. Although she experiences social criticism, her choice to raise her sons with pride in their heritage is radical. *Sunja's wound is generational, but she chooses to carry it openly, teaching her sons not to be ashamed of their scars.*

The "Unforgotten wounds" in *Pachinko* are more than just metaphors; they are actual historical facts. They discuss the ongoing fight of the Korean diaspora for respect, acknowledgment, and a sense of identity. Lee does not provide a simple solution or atonement. She invites readers to see, recall, and experience the silent, enduring pain that her characters go through instead.

Although these wounds are inherited, they are also fought against. Through their survival, love, and sacrifice, Pachinko's characters turn suffering into legacy. As this thesis has argued, the

“Unforgotten wounds” in *Pachinko* are not merely scars of the past, but living truths that shape every generation. Through them, Min Jin Lee ensures that history, while it may have failed, can still be remembered and in memory, perhaps, healed.

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