

Performing Postcolonial Feminine Identity as Shaman: Building Narrative Bridges
Between Two Worlds

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines the construction of women's autobiographical voices within literature, particularly those produced for Japanese-reading audiences by *Zainichi* women. *Zainichi* typically refers to a specific group of "foreigners" residing in postwar Japan—Korean residents who can trace their diasporic roots to Japan's colonial rule of Korea (1910-1945). Throughout postwar Japanese history, the *Zainichi* experience has been a complicated one, as it has been informed by racism in Japan as well as by Japan and Korea's postwar relationship. My dissertation looks at literary arts produced by *Zainichi* women, with a special focus on the illocutionary power of autobiographical expression as a means to promote social change and equality in contemporary Japanese society.

This dissertation analyzes various trans-medial forms of autobiographical expression utilized by three female authors—Lee Yang-ji (1955-1992), Kim Manri (1953-) and Yu Miri (1968-). These women have a particular commonality: in addition to their writing, they are all, or once were, performing artists (Lee a musician/dancer, Kim a performance artist, and Yu a theater actress/playwright). Despite their different choices of media for self-expression as performing artists, they share similarities in that each artist incorporates such non-verbal elements as dance, music, and theater into their written autobiographical narratives. By constructing complex layers of self-representation through a mixture of verbal and non-verbal public performances, they present the "self" as an expression of an in-between, ambiguous identity. Using the diasporic notion of ambivalence in their autobiographical voices, they not only challenge the power of homogenous hierarchies of ethnicity, race, nationality, culture, gender, and class, but also enhance their ability to reach audiences beyond such social differentiation. They have chosen an empowered stance, rather than speaking from the voice of victimhood as the marginalized "Other" of postwar Japanese society.

Building on the concept of the art of storytelling for personal and community healing, my dissertation explores the ways in which *Zainichi* women share their personal life stories with audiences in the context of Korean women's traditional medium of artistic expression—including shamanism—, producing art as a kind of prayer for social peace

and postcolonial reconciliation. Using a shamanic trope in their autobiographical storytelling, the three Zainichi women emphasize the presence of their own physical bodies as mediums or in-between entities in relation to their diasporic existences in postwar Japan—in which they are regarded as neither completely Japanese nor entirely Korean. In constructing an “I” that emerges beyond the limits of either subject or object, Japanese or (Zainichi) Korean, each woman performs a shamanistic identity of her own choosing—an identity that is both personal and collective—through which to speak to the female ancestors she identifies with, through shared hope for social transformation. For the Zainichi women artists that are the focus of my dissertation, autobiographical expression represents a form of prayer that facilitates communication between two worlds—this world and that of the “Other”—thus subverting such artificial boundaries as nationhood, race, ethnicity, class and gender.

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Introduction:

Zainichi Women Artists' Self-Expressions in Postwar Japan

This dissertation explores the construction of autobiographical voices by three ethnic Korean women artists in Japan: Lee Yang-ji (1955-1992), Kim Manri (1953-) and Yu Miri (1968-). As the daughters of Korean parent(s) who immigrated to Japan during Japan's colonial rule of Korea (1910-1945), these women explore the existential nature of their experiences living in contemporary Japanese society by performing their personal life stories and autobiographical memories through the art of theatre and the written word. Within the creative spaces in which they share their life stories with Japanese-speaking audiences, each woman weaves her artistry through incorporating such non-verbal elements as dance, music and theatre into their written narratives. By constructing complex layers of self-representation through a mixture of various verbal (e.g., both Korean and Japanese languages) and non-verbal public performances—hence making them difficult to define and/or hierarchize in the accepted systems of meaning and knowledge—they deconstruct their “authentic” voices as writers/speakers. In deconstructing while performing the “I” behind the mask of ambiguous identities and voices, they present complex and multifaceted self-portrayals, through which to subvert their audience's gaze, a gaze that—to these women—reduces their existences to a postcolonial Other. With strong emphasis placed upon the multiplicity of the “self,” rather than conceptualizing individual victimhood as the oppressed “Other,” each woman engages in artistic endeavors to perform reality through her own perceptions and the experiences of her lived/living female body, instead of through the worldview shared by the dominant culture's collective identity. Using their own performing/writing/speaking bodies as a site of resistance to assimilation into any single political community, they relentlessly challenge the alienating effects of the hegemonic worldview created by the cult of ethnic, cultural, and national purity in Japan, during both the colonial and postcolonial periods.

Autobiographical Subversion of the Colonialist Gaze and its Production of the Other

Through a close analysis of their exploration of the self and its expression in the light of post-colonial and feminist theories, this research aims to offer a scholarly approach to the various trans-medial forms of autobiographical expression that Lee Yang-ji, Kim Manri, and Yu Miri employ in their work. These women have a particular commonality: in addition to their writing, they are all, or once were, performing artists (Lee a musician/dancer, Kim a performance artist, and Yu a theater actress/playwright). Despite their different choices of media for self-expression as performing artists, they share similarities in that each artist incorporates her nonverbal live performances—such as dancing in front of an audience—into her written autobiographical narratives, with the specific aim of emphasizing the presence of her own physical performing/writing body as a medium of communication among multiple (spoken, written, and gestural) voices, identities and realities. By placing special emphasis on their female bodies as mediums or “in-between” entities in relation to their diasporic existences in postwar Japan, they

position their own personal identities and voices in a place of ambiguity, a metaphorical space that does not belong completely to any “pure” political group, including the ethnic minority group of *Zainichi* Koreans.¹ Through the representation of their bodies as living in state of diaspora that can never settle down in a safe, stable position in society under any formal categorization of human groups, they present and speak the “I” as a gesture of resistance to the objectification of their audience’s gaze in search for the differences between the self and the Other in the realms of gender, class and race/ethnicity.

As both writers and performance artists, Lee, Kim and Yu often narrate their life stories in relation to their own physical bodies as a medium to blur the borderline between the observer and the observed, the self and the Other, and the socially dominant and subordinate in the context of modern Japan’s social norms. In an attempt to destabilize the categories of subjectivity defined by culture, gender, class and ethnicity, their autobiographical works often challenge what some audience members seek in the act of observing/reading them, that is, to understand and conceptualize the realities/the inner lives of the oppressed Other, such as people in poverty, with disabilities and/or from ethnic minorities, through autobiographical confession. In practicing the craft of autobiographical expression that embodies the ambiguous, the irrational, and anything that does not conform to any one of the dominant group identities, they perform the “selves” that defy assimilation and translation into any one single language system, thereby subverting audiences’ desires to decipher and regulate these women’s (inner) lives with their own pre-established values by translating their autobiographical voices into the observer’s own language. Using their autobiographical bodies and voices as an instrument to invite audiences to notice different modes of communicating reality, such as verbal, sonic, and visual representations, they challenge the dominant modes of language imposed on them by powerful groups within the postcolonial world they live in, including *kokugo*—the one unitary national language of modern Japan²— which often

¹ In Japan, the term *Zainichi* (lit. “residing in Japan”) often refers to the Korean population that of Korean immigrants (and their descendants) who came to Japan out of economic desperation during the colonial period (voluntarily or involuntarily), as well as out of political desperation during the turbulent years of the immediate postcolonial period. Starting in 1910, in which Korea became Japan’s colony, Koreans were to be fully assimilated into the Japanese Empire as subjects of the Japanese Emperor. Korean colonial immigrants and their descendants living in Japan during the colonial period were thus considered Japanese nationals. However, in 1952, Koreans living in Japan were stripped of their Japanese citizenship with no advance notice. Having lost their citizenship, *Zainichi* Koreans remained stateless without any legal rights in Japan (e.g., they didn’t have access to healthcare and social care services; they were excluded from all public and private-sector employment). In 1965, Japan-South Korea diplomatic relations were established, and many *Zainichi* Koreans obtained South Korean national status along with legal permanent resident status in Japan. In 1991, all other *Zainichi* Koreans who had not previously obtained South Korean national status—whether by choice (e.g., to politically support North Korea) or circumstance (e.g., lack of information about their legal rights in Japan)—were also granted special permanent resident status (*tokubetsu eijū shikaku*). For the shift in the legal status of *Zainichi* Koreans, see Kyong-sik Park, *Kaihōgo: zainichi chōsenjin undōshi* [After Liberation: The History of *Zainichi* Korean Movements]. (Tokyo: Shakai hyōronsha, 1989).

² The historical construction of the one unitary national language—*kokugo*—took place during the time period between the Sino-Japanese war (1894-5) and the Russo-Japanese war (1904-5), the two wars that marked pivotal historical moments for Japan to rise as the most modern and powerful military nation in Asia. Japan’s victory over Russia, in particular, provided the momentum for Japan to recognize itself as a powerful collective entity equal to Western Imperialist nations. As these two wars occurred during the Meiji period, an era that brought about the rapid modernization under Western influence, which included the establishment of the modern Japanese army and navy modelled after Western armed forces, the

functions to suppress the disharmonious voices of the speakers of different languages, identities, and realities. Through returning the spectator's gaze metaphorically by refusing to remain a fixed object of its observation, these artists simultaneously reveal and challenge the pervasive presence of colonial practices in postwar Japan, which include the imposition of the language of "the colonialist" on the (colonized) Other, a tactic that functions as a way to maintain the borderline between the superior Self and the inferior Other.

Resisting Language as the Essence of Racial Purity and Homogenous National Body

"I belong to no race nor time. I am the eternal feminine
with its string of beads."—Zora Neale Hurston

For these women, presenting the "self" as an expression of their in-between, ambiguous identities and cultural roots also represents an everyday practice of nonviolent—and often nonverbal—resistance to the masculine institutions deeply integrated in the process of modern state formation, such as patriarchal nationalism, militarism and colonialism, and to the concept of borders—a concept these institutions produce to create boundaries of nation, race/ethnicity, and gender. During both the colonial and postcolonial periods, such boundaries have served as the chief mechanisms in (imperial) Japan, by which those in power (the ruling elite) are able to continue to produce and maintain the binary hierarchical systems between "us" (the Japanese race) and "them" (the colonized Other), the normative and the deviant, as well as loyal "productive" citizens (国民 *kokumin*) and the unruly others (非国民 *hikokumin*). In particular, the mass circulation of newspaper and magazine written in the vernacular language of *kokugo* during the colonial period often served the function of strengthening

triumphs in both wars accelerated the nation's efforts to construct a strong modern nation and its national identity. It was not coincidental that the establishment of a modern standard national language through *Gembun'itchi* (言文一致) (which literally means "the unification of spoken and written languages.") occurred during the time period between these wars, as Japan's ruling elite began to perceive the one unitary national language as a means of developing ethnic unity for a population located in the national space imagined as "Japan." The *Gembun'itchi* movement was originally initiated by the Meiji literary elite, who adapted the new colloquial style into their writing by simplifying the traditional writing system (including Sino-Japanese script), which had historically been aimed only at intellectual audiences. By using a unitary linguistic medium for both the general populace and the ruling elite of the Imperial Japan, and spreading their new literary voices widely through literary magazines and serialized novels in newspapers, the prominent Japanese writers during the colonial period often attempted to distill the essence of Japanese *minzoku* (ethnicity/race) into newly invented modern literary expressions. This newly established linguistic nationalism—which considered one unitary vernacular language as the essence of the unified ethnicity and culture—also had a great impact on the development of the discourses on Korean vernacular literary language during the colonial period. Two of the founders of modern Korean literature, Ch'oe Nam-sŏn (1890-1957) and Yi Kwang-su (1882-1950), adapted Japanese *Gembun'itchi* discourse in the Korean literary community by advocating *ŏnmun ilch'i*—the Korean reading of its Chinese characters. On the development of the *Gembun'itchi* stories in relation to the notion of modern nationalism, see Hidemi Suga. *Nihon kindai bungaku no tanjō: gembun'itchi undō to nashonarizumu*. [The Birth of Modern Japanese Literature—Gembun'itchi Movement and Nationalism] (Tokyo: Ota shuppan, 1995), and Yeongsuk Lee. *The Ideology of Kokugo: Nationalizing Language in Modern Japan*. Trans. Hubbard, Maki Hirano. (University of Hawaii Press, 2009). This is a book originally published in Japanese: Yeongsuk Lee. *Kokugo to iu shisō: kindai nihon no gengo ninshiki*. (Tokyo, Iwanami shoten, 1996).

such binary oppositions by spreading the ideologies of the masculine institutions (through Japan's national slogans, including *Fukoku kyôhei*—"enrich the country, strengthen the military"), which promoted and justified the systematic practices of colonial violence and human sacrifice. It was the modern printing technology that contributed to the rise of Imperial nationalism,³ as a number of pro-imperial ideology and nationalist ideas—which were expressed in the common everyday language and disseminated in the form of mass circulation—functioned to create a sense of common purpose to bind the Japanese people together and to mobilize their "voice" for the nation's war efforts. Under the guise of mass culture and popular art, the masculinist ideologies were pervasively transmitted to the general populace of Imperial Japan in support of the nation's imperial ambitions to construct a strong modern nation under one ruler of the ultimate paternal authority—the Emperor.

While art and popular culture during the colonial period often promoted a mobilization of Japanese citizens' collective "voice" for the nation's imperial ambitions, Japan's era of imperial conquest also gave rise to the modern notion of national identity. Amidst wartime Japan's ambitious attitude towards militaristic expansion in East Asia, the idea of mono-cultural/lingual national identity developed along with the eugenic aim of improving the Japanese race through producing loyal and productive Japanese citizens-soldiers. Under the national banner of producing a healthy, strong and racially pure population, women living in the Japanese Empire became particularly vulnerable to social exclusion and stigma. Under eugenic surveillance, ethnic Korean women within imperial Japan, who were deemed biologically/racially unfit to produce such "proper" Japanese offspring were considered to be inherently inferior, and thus, were stigmatized as a deviant Other.

³ In his book, *Shomotsu no kindai*, Kensuke Kono explores how the Russo-Japanese war transformed the publication industry in terms of the print media of newspaper and magazine. According to Kono, the journalistic coverage of the Russo-Japanese war accompanied by visual footage—in particular photographs and geographical information (maps)—became one of the most successful branches of industrial capitalism in Japan. Many Japanese literary elites of the time traveled with the Japanese troops as *jûgun sakka* (campaigning writers) to produce the literary texts and cater to the curiosity of the Japanese readers in relation to the "reality" of Japan's war efforts. These literary texts, often serialized in newspapers and written in the forms of personal diaries and travelogues based on a "real" eyewitness experience, provided the Japanese readers/audience with a space in which they could collectively "witness" the current reality of Imperial Japan, which often led to the general public's vicarious excitement and satisfaction over the heroic achievements of the Japanese Imperial army. See Kensuke Kono. *Shomotsu no kindai: media no bungakushi*. [The Modernity of Printed Media: A Literary History of Media] (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1992). Other scholars such as Pak Yuha and Nakane Takayuki also discuss how the "non-fiction" travelogues and personal diaries written by the prominent writers—such as Natsume Soseki's *Mankan tokorodokoro* (*Travels through Manchuria and Korea*, 1909) and Takahama Kyoshi's *Chôsen* (*Korea*, 1911)—contributed to both a rising sense of Imperial nationalism and a justification of Japan's mission to modernize the uncivilized colonies during the imperial transformation of Meiji Japan. On the roles played by the male writers of the Meiji Japan in shaping the borderline between the Japanese (civilized/modern) self and the colonized (backward) Other, see Yu-ha Park. *Nashonaru aidentiti to jendâ: Sôseki, bungaku, kindai*. [National Identity and Gender: Sôseki/Literature/Modernity] (Tokyo: Kurein, 2007) and Takayuki Nakane. *Chôsenhyôshô no bungakushi: kindai nihon o meguru chi no shokuminchika*. [A Literary History of Representation of Korea: Colonization of Knowledge Surrounding Japan as Modern Nation] (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 2004).

The Feminine Mode of Storytelling Voice as Flesh, Presence and Medium

“I am a border woman.”—Gloria E. Anzaldúa

This dissertation examines how Lee Yang-ji, Kim Manri and Yu Miri use their autobiographical voices and bodies as mediums/in-between entities to unearth the silenced voices and lived experiences of their own and their female ancestors, which have been devalued and marginalized in (imperial) Japan. In cultivating an understanding of these women’s accounts of their physical performing/writing bodies as mediums, this dissertation will show how the autobiographical expressions of these three artists echo through the narrative voices of such female artists/writers as Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, Toni Morrison and Gloria E. Anzaldúa. Special attention will be given to the ways in which all these women share the artistic and political aim to integrate, although in various ways, the notion of the “in-between/ambiguity” into their narrative voices, as a way to defy categorization as simple reflections of reality, in particular, a fixed representation of her own racial, cultural, gender and/or national identity.

With the specific aim of refusing to accept the established hierarchies of victimization surrounding their existences, and of participating in the power games between the oppressor and the oppressed, these artists retrace their own personal identities and voices in relation to figures like themselves, who straddle different borders of culture, race/ethnicity, nation and/or gender, while accepting the emotional pain that accompanies acts of resistance to the pressures of assimilation into the dominant social structures and hierarchies. To represent their narratives as a confluence of personal and collective voices that resist to be incorporated into the dominant modes of language, which often function to suppress different languages (and the voices of the speakers of these languages), they all engage in what can loosely be called “the feminine mode of expression.” Here, the concept of the “feminine” in relation to the construction of their narrative voices indicates an artistic identity of their own choosing, through which to speak in their personal voice in relation to the others they identify with, through shared hope for social transformation—in other words, the voices expressed in this mode symbolize a collective spirit of resistance to the politics of domination that render “us” voiceless.

This dissertation analyzes the new feminine voice of the Korean diaspora in Japan, constructed by Lee Yang-ji, Kim Manri and Yu Miri, referencing Hélène Cixous’ theory of *écriture féminine*—translated as “a feminine practice of writing.”⁴ *Écriture féminine* is a form of nonviolent resistance to artificial restrictions imposed on women by political and patriarchal ideologies. In Cixous’ theory, it is not her intention to emphasize how the concept of the feminine stands in opposition to the masculine. Rather, it is based on an alternative discourse of writing that retraces women’s historical position as those excluded from masculine institutions. The feminine practice of writing is thus symbolic of accepting “the in-between” that can never be defined by fixed binaries, meanings and values. In other words, the narrative voices expressed in this practice cannot be named or represented, but can only be performed by those outside the dominant social structures. Cixous states:

⁴ Hélène Cixous. “The Laugh of Medusa,” trans. by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. *Signs*, 1:4 (Summer, 1976), 883.

It is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded—which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. [...] It will be conceived of only by subjects who are breakers of automatisms, by peripheral figures that no authority can ever subjugate.⁵

Through a close analysis of their autobiographical work, this dissertation shows how Lee, Yu and Kim narrate their personal identities as a link to their female ancestors, who could be viewed as Hélène Cixous' "peripheral figures that no authority can ever subjugate" in the above passage. In the text, each woman's voice often harmonizes with those of different ancestral women, both dead and living. The multiple voices of women are commonly expressed in traditional folk forms of Korean women's artistic expression—including shamanism—and its legacy of women's survival strategies and wisdom transmitted by word of mouth.

In Korea, many performing arts—e.g. traditional dance, music and storytelling—originated in Korean shamanistic rituals called *kut*, that generally aim to connect the living with their ancestors through these mediums.⁶ Throughout the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) and the colonial period (1910-1945), Korean shamanism had been regarded as a superstitious, backward and irrational by the ruling class, and shamans—mostly female—were relegated to the lowest class of society as social outcasts.⁷ Because of the lack of written doctrine, theory or historical records, shamanism has been considered a marginal religion of the common people, especially women. Traditionally, female shamans have been well-trained artists, who use their skills and talents to perform *kut* by singing and dancing with musical accompaniment. In this view, a *kut* is a religious ritual and, at the same time, a highly entertaining performing art. Additionally, Korean shamans have historically acted as mediators in their culture. Due to their ambiguous positions as outcasts in the "official" social structures, these shamans could perform their roles as mediums/"empty" bodies in shamanistic rituals, communicating with both the living and the dead and the self and the other, in order to solve social conflicts, reduce hostility and bring peace to their local communities.

Using a shamanic trope in their autobiographical storytelling, the aforementioned three female artists emphasize the presence of their own physical bodies as mediums or in-between entities in relation to their diasporic existences in postwar Japan—in which they are regarded as neither completely Japanese nor entirely Korean. In constructing an "I" that emerges beyond the limits of either subject or object, Japanese or (Zainichi) Korean, each woman performs a shamanistic identity of her own choosing—an identity that is both personal and collective—through which to produce art as a kind of prayer for

⁵ Ibid., 883.

⁶ South Korea's intangible treasures of national culture include *p'ansori* storytelling performance and *salp'uri* dance, which both originated in Korean shamanism. On the shamanistic origin of Korean traditional music and performing arts, refer to Keith Howard's *Perspectives on Korean Music* (London: Ashgate, 2006).

⁷ For the origin and formation of Korean shamanism and its rituals (available in English), see Boudewijn Walraven. *Songs of the Shaman: The Ritual Chants of the Korean Mudang* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1994); Jung Young Lee. *Korean Shamanistic Rituals* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1981); Michael J. Pettid. "From Abandoned Daughter to Shaman Matriarch: An Analysis of the *Pari kongju muga*, a Korean Shamanistic Song" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1999).

self-healing, social peace and postcolonial reconciliation. For the Zainichi women artists that are the focus of my dissertation, autobiographical expression represents a form of prayer that facilitates communication between two worlds—this world and that of the “Other”—thus temporarily removing such artificial boundaries as nationhood, race, ethnicity, class and gender.

While incorporating projects of resistance and liberation into their work, these artists use the concept of the feminine to reject complete assimilation of their voices into any fixed position in political discourse about racial or gender issues in postwar Japan.⁸ Unlike the direct voices that seek to identify “the oppressor,” as a means of showing how the borders of subjectivity serve as fixed entities that host power relations, the voices expressed in *écriture féminine* identify the borders as ever-changing, fluid spaces. In the narrative journey that embraces the feminine discourse of identity as accepting the fluidity, in-between-ness and the ambiguity of human existence, Lee, Yu and Kim create an individuated space of revamped “autobiography,” in which they tell (hi)stories for—and share life with—others through complex and ever-shifting interactions of communicating, feeling, physical activities, without establishing the powerful voice of an “I” fixed by one linear moment in time to the next—the frozen moments of specific historical and cultural circumstances and contexts.

Performing Identity as a Medium, Building Narrative Bridges between Two Worlds

“Korean shamanistic dance was at first an escape for me from conflicting language ideologies, because while dancing I didn’t have to choose whether to speak Japanese or Korean. But the physical experience of dancing eventually opened a new door for me to imagine where I was beyond the historical boundary marked as the Japanese colonial era in the written language, enabling me to retrace my roots even all the way back to ancient

⁸ Zainichi Koreans have consistently fought for their civil rights and racial equality in Japanese society since the end of World War II. In the Zainichi resistance discourse, the representatives are predominantly Zainichi male intellectuals, and they have seldom acknowledged the status and treatment of Zainichi women. Likewise, mainstream Japanese feminist thought is constructed largely by and focuses primarily on those who are racially Japanese, middle-class, and highly educated. In recent years, several feminist Zainichi scholars, including Song Youn-ok, started to speak out against the mainstream feminist movement. These Zainichi women are strongly critical of the mainstream feminist’s refusal to challenge colonial racism and other forms of oppression in contemporary Japan. As a Zainichi woman artist with a physical disability, Kim Manri argues how disabled women are marginalized as asexual beings. Kim censures able-bodied Japanese women for frequently glorifying the social rules in accordance with the dominant discourse of ideal womanhood—becoming wives and then mothers—sanctioned by the modern institution of marriage. Because disabled women are considered unable to carry out the normative gender role in their married lives (e.g., giving birth to a healthy baby), they are often stigmatized as “non-women.” By sarcastically referring to a married woman with children as “heavily abled-person” (重度健常者), Kim points out how able-bodied, Japanese women help maintain, even unwittingly, the structural underpinnings of privilege and exclusion by failing to be more sensitive to minority women’s issues. See “Ginga kakuran: josetsu,” [The Subversion of the Universe: An Introduction] in eds. Kishida Michiko and Kim Manri. *Watashi wa onna*. [I Am a Woman] (Kobe: Chōsei-sha, 1995), 242-260. On the Zainichi feminist movement, see Song Ryong-Ok. *Datsu teikoku no feminizumu o motomete: chōsen josei to shokuminchi shugi*. [In Search for Anti-Imperialist Feminism: Korean Women and Colonialism] (Tokyo: Yushisya, 2009).

times. While in a dance, my mind and body are filled with
nothing but a deep sense of appreciation for
the presence of my ancestors, dancing with me.”
—Lee Yang-ji

This dissertation consists of three chapters. Chapter One discusses the autobiographical narrative of Lee Yang-ji, the first successful woman writer of Zainichi literature—literary work written in Japanese by Zainichi Koreans. Through a close analysis of her first fiction, *Nabi T'aryōng (The Lamentation of a Butterfly, 1982)*, this chapter explores how her writing constitutes her attempts to escape the ideological prison of Zainichi identity as an artificially-constructed category. I will pay special attention to how Lee's real life encounter with a *salp'uri* dance, a non-verbal performance closely associated with Korean shamanism, inspired her to restore her broken connections to the world outside the limits of her identity as a Zainichi woman, as, up until then, defined by powerful male voices and their written language. By situating herself within the Korean women's tradition of shamanism—a metanarrative that earlier Korean women collectively created to express their previously suppressed feelings—Lee Yang-ji connects her personal identity and voice to her female Korean ancestors. In doing so, she gains enough emotional stability to recreate a new identity for herself, based not on national, linguistic or ethnic inheritance, but on all the people with whom she connects—both past and present—in an attempt to break through the artificial boundaries between two worlds, such as Japan and Korea, past and present, which prevent people from making connections to those on the other side, both physically and emotionally.

Chapter Two examines Yu Miri's autobiographical narrative, *Hachigatsu no Hate (The Bounds of August, 2002)*. This chapter pays special attention to a part of the story that takes place during a shamanistic ritual in which the character, named “Yu Miri,” communicates with her deceased Korean ancestors, who break decades of silence by sharing their personal experiences of becoming dehumanized objects under Japanese colonialism. By focusing on Yu Miri's exploration of her Korean identity in *Hachigatsu no Hate*, this chapter shows how Yu's autobiographical text acts a gesture of resistance to the ongoing ethno-nationalist conflicts between Japan and South Korea and is an affirmation of the struggle of her ancestors, who were forced to sever their connections with the prior and next generations through their submission to and assimilation into the Japanese Empire.

Chapter Three focuses on Kim Manri's memoir, *Ikirukoto no Hajimari (The Beginning of Living a Life, 1996)*. As a woman afflicted with polio at the age of three, Kim Manri was paralyzed from the waist down and forced to spend her entire youth in the care of her family and at a health-care facility. As a writer and performance artist, she constructs an autobiographical voice in relation to her own physical performing body on public display, as a medium with which to blur the borderline between normality and abnormality, and the “abled” self and the “disabled” Other, in the context of modern Japan's social norms. In *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, Kim often enters into a cross-generational dialogue with her mother, whose diaspora/immigrant life in Japan was marked by her resistance to the borders established by normative expectations about the lives of women from colonial Korea. In retracing her personal identity as it relates to the specific feminine traits shaped by her mother's border-crossing experiences, Kim's

autobiographical narrative is used as a medium to challenge the oppressive structures and ideologies in modern Japan and the ways in which they systematically impose the role of cultural or corporeal inferiority on her body, as a Zainichi woman with a physical disability.

CHAPTER ONE

Performing Postcolonial Autobiographical Self as Shaman

“Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?”
—A quote from artist Ray Gwyn Smith in
Gloria E. Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.

“Dead words. Dead Tongue. From disuse. Buried in Time’s memory [...] Restore memory. Let the one who is disuse, one who is daughter restore spring with her each appearance from beneath the earth.”
—Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

This chapter discusses the construction of women’s postcolonial autobiographical voices in the literary texts written by Lee Yang-ji (1955-1992), one of the best-known writers of Zainichi Literature, the genre of literary works written in Japanese by Korean colonial immigrants and their descendants. Since in 1945, the year many Japanese literary critics set as the starting point for the literary careers of the pioneering Zainichi writers,⁹ the discourse on Zainichi literature in postwar Japan has been shaped and canonized predominantly by male authors and critics. It was not until 1982—more than thirty-five years after 1945—that the literary voice of the first successful Zainichi woman writer, Lee Yang-ji, emerged when *Nabi T’aryŏng (A Ballad of a Butterfly)* was published.¹⁰ Based heavily on her own life experiences—such as her difficult childhood characterized by fear she felt under close surveillance of her social authorities (both racial and patriarchal) and the trip she took as a grown woman to reconnect with her ancestral, but foreign, land of South Korea through learning traditional performing arts,—this work of fiction opened a new door for her into the public arena, in which she could tell (hi)stories for others beyond the limits of her identity as “a Zainichi woman,” as defined by her male precursors’ voices and their written language.

For nearly ten years—from her 1982 debut until shortly before her sudden death at the age of 37—Lee Yang-ji produced literary works that were largely autobiographical. The use of this particular form—autobiographical narrative—has played, in fact, the biggest role in shaping the discourse on Zainichi literature. Since in 1945, autobiographical writing has occupied a central part of this literary tradition, largely because questions surrounding “self,” identity and belonging began to hold a significant place among Zainichi literary intellectuals at the end of both WWII and of Japan’s colonial rule of Korea. This was a historical moment for those who, by not returning to their newly-liberated ancestral land of Korea—which was soon divided in 1948 and then turned into a battlefield during the Korean War (1950-1953)—became aware that they (and their descendants) would live in Japan permanently while remaining in the precarious position of assuming ambiguous identities in a culture that did not entirely accept them. In exploring the question of what it meant to be a Zainichi self as a former colonial Other living in postwar Japan, these writers looked not only to themselves for

⁹ The pioneering writers of this literary genre include Kim Talsu (1919-1997), Kim Sijong (1929-), Lee Hoesung (1935-), Kim Sok-pom (1925-), and Kim Hag-yeong (1938-1985). On the canonization of Zainichi literature by the prominent scholars of this genre, see Jiro Isogai, *Shigen no hikari: zainichi chōsenjin bungakuron*. [The Light of A New Beginning: Theory of Zainichi Literature] (Tokyo: Sōjusha, 1979) and Minato Kawamura, *Umaretara sokoga furusato zainichi chōsenjin bungakuron*. [Home Is Where You were Born: Theory of Zainichi Literature] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1991).

¹⁰ In 1989, Lee Yang-ji became the first Zainichi woman writer to receive the prestigious Akutagawa prize, only second to Zainichi male author, Lee Hoesung (1935-).

their literary resources but also to “their people”—Zainichi Koreans—as the primary source of producing works of fiction.

Writing Selves in the Colonizer’s Language

All prominent male Zainichi authors, prior to Lee Yang-ji, were well-known for their autobiographical works. Born before 1945, and having witnessed the brutality of the WWII and its aftermath, these authors used their literary creativity to expose the unequal legacies of late colonialism faced by Zainichi Koreans. Among the legacies that remained deeply rooted in postwar Japan was colonial racism surrounding the concept of *chōsenjin* (ethnic Koreans). The Japanese term *chōsenjin* originates from Japan’s colonization of Korea, the political rhetoric of which included the construction of the image of *chōsenjin* as the uncivilized race, an image that served the function of highlighting the concept of *naichijin* (ethnic Japanese; literally meaning “insiders”) as the civilized and superior racial group of the Japanese Empire.

The negative racial stereotype of Koreans flourished in Japan during the early 1920s largely through the dissemination of the image of *futei senjin* (lit. “the unruly Korean”) in mass circulation, including the propagandistic newspapers. As a result of such propaganda, the word *chōsenjin* came to evoke a multilayered negative image of ethnic Koreans as unruly, violent and immoral in the Japanese public mind by replacing the original term that literally meant only “the people of Korea.” Clearly, promoting the colonialist view of the unruly Korean through the manipulation of language for propaganda purposes was part of a necessary process that helped facilitate the legitimacy of Japan’s colonial claims to rule over its colonies. It also aided in bolstering the constructs that legitimized hierarchical colonial racism, in which the Japanese were the innately superior race, destined to rule over Japan’s colonial, inferior races. According to Benedict Anderson, during the World Wars, the notion of colonial racism often served the function of binding the diverse people of “Empire” (e.g., British and Japanese Empires) into a single national body with the common purpose of “foreign wars,” while, at the same time, creating a race-based hierarchical system within its national boundaries.¹¹ Using the idea of race unified by shared “blood” located “outside history”—race existed as a biological destiny untouched by human civilization—colonial racism justified “domestic repression and domination”¹² by establishing a clear boundary between the two realms of national subject: the inner realm dominated by the “superior/master” race of the Empire and the “other” realm to which its colonial races were excluded. Anderson further argues:

Colonial racism was a major element in that conception of “Empire” which attempted to weld dynastic legitimacy and national community. It did so by generating a principle of innate, inherited superiority on which its own domestic position was [based]... [the imperialists’ power came from their firm belief that they were] superior to the subjected natives.¹³

¹¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Reflections on Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 149.

¹² *Ibid.*, 150.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 150.

During an age of empire-building for the Japanese nation, and in particular, with the rise of militarism and fascism in the 1930s, Japan's ruling elites (e.g. government officials and prominent literary authors) advocated the ideology of Japanese racial pride based on the belief in the purity of Japanese blood and its "innate, inherited superiority." The concept of race as biologically-determined and unchangeable was often used to justify colonial racism against the subjected natives of Koreans—*chōsenjin*—who were inherently destined to be an inferior racial group. The Japanese colonialist view of the inferior ancestral lineage of Korean blood not only rationalized the racial superiority and purity of the "master" Japanese, but also sanctioned Japan's "divine" mission to civilize its colonial races by assimilating them into the Japanese Empire.

During the colonial period, this presumed racial superiority of the Japanese played a major role in justifying Japan's assimilation policies in colonial Korea, which included the imposition of Japanese as the national language (*kokugo*) and the enactment of *sōshi kaimei*¹⁴ (literally meaning "creating family names and changing given names"), a policy pertaining to changing Korean names to Japanese. Among Japan's assimilation policies, the imposition of the Japanese language as the Empire's single official language was a primary tool of strengthening the racial hierarchy that placed *naichijin* at its apex. In *The Ideology of Kokugo: Nationalizing Language in Modern Japan*, Yeounsuk Lee demonstrates how the Japanese colonial government sought to impose Japanese on Koreans with the aim of establishing a power structure to create a means of identifying *chōsenjin* as the inferior Other. In colonial Korea, Japanese had gradually come to dominate as the sole official and educational language, while Korean was relegated to a position of inferiority as a non-formal, vernacular language and eventually prohibited from official use in 1938. Lee writes:

The Korean Education Rescript of 1911 ordered schools (in colonial Korea) to offer Korean language and *kanbun* [classical Chinese]. This title was deceiving, however, because, in reality, what was taught was only *kanbun*, and Korean only as an aid to interpret *kanbun*...[and for teachers] to teach *kokugo*. [After] the Revised Korean Education Rescript in 1922 [...], *naichijin* (homeland people) was legally defined as "those who always use *kokugo*" and *chōsenjin* (Korean people) as "those who do not always use *kokugo*." The negative definition, "those who do not always use *kokugo*," implied that *chōsenjin* were negative beings lacking in something essential to be nation-people, and this something essential was *kokugo*.¹⁵

As suggested in the above passage, the systematic imposition of Japanese as *kokugo* compelled Koreans not only to relinquish their cultural heritage including their ancestral language, but also to internalize their inadequate self-images in relation to their "imperfect" national identity due to the lack of coherence between race (*chōsenjin*) and

¹⁴ *Sōshi kaimei* took effect in November 1939, causing many Koreans to abandon their ancestral names. Even today, many *Zainichi* Koreans still use their Japanese names in order to conceal their Korean roots from Japanese society and avoid discrimination. On *Sōshi kaimei*, see Miyata Setsuko et al. *Sōshi kaimei* (Akashi shoten, 1992).

¹⁵ Yeounsuk Lee. *The Ideology of Kokugo*, 252.

language (Japanese). For many Koreans who were born and educated in the Japanese Empire, the processes of internalizing such a distorted inferior national identity took place in the context of the seemingly neutral facade of modernization, such as the mass media and a centralized education system.

Born and raised in colonial Korea, one of the first Zainichi writers, Kim Sijong (1929-), for example, mastered kokugo rather spontaneously as a young boy without knowing its long-range psychological effects on the dignity of his personal identity in relation to his Korean ancestry. During his elementary school years, Kim never considered kokugo education as a colonial attack on his identity as a *chōsenjin*. Rather, he accepted Japanese as “the gentle songs of Japan” (*nihon no yasashii uta*) while learning the language through the seemingly innocent rhythms of songs for schoolchildren and of lyric poetry written by such prominent writers of modern Japan as Kitahara Hakushu (1885-1942) and Shimazaki Tōson (1872-1943).¹⁶ In replacing his native language of Korean with Japanese through the formal educational system, he began to regard *chōsenjin* who only spoke Korean—including his own parents—as the inferior Other, marked by their deviation from the modern mainstream (*shin jidai kara hazureta chōsenjin*).¹⁷ Soon after the end of WWII, however, he suddenly woke up to the reality of his marginalized identity as an outsider of both Japan and Korea. As a young Korean man who then lived in “postwar Japan”—a nation that denied his citizenship due to his racial background as *chōsenjin*—he was not exiled only from his land of origin, but also from his native language. For many early Zainichi writers like Kim Sijong, creating autobiographically-based selves in Japanese was thus inseparably linked with the traumatic memories of *chōsenjin*’s inferior status in Japan, a trauma deeply inscribed in their minds and bodies through daily experiences of using Japanese—the language of their (former) colonizer.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Franz Fanon explores the psychological violence inherent in colonial practices, which lies in the imposition of the language of the colonizer on the colonized people. He emphasizes how colonialists introduce their own language as the official language of their colonies, in order to position the superior Self (“native speakers” as the constructs of colonizer) over the inferior Other (the colonized). Fanon classifies the “inferior Other” as those who wear “white masks,” arguing that, in the process of mimicking the language and social mannerisms of the colonizer, they end up not only concealing the characteristics of their native culture (e.g., the accent and rhythm of their native tongue) but also internalizing their self-image as the inferior Other. Bound up with such a self-image, which is a cultural product of colonialism, they are forced to be in “a constant effort to run away from his or own individuality, to annihilate his own presence.”¹⁸ In the process of losing their ancestral language of Korean over Japanese during the colonial period, Koreans were forced to “annihilate” their connection to their ancestral roots, internalizing the shame of feeling rootless in the national community they lived. With their internalized sense of inadequacy in relation to their “imperfect/impure” national identity, the (post)colonial identity of Koreans living in the

¹⁶ Sijong Kim. “*Bōrei no jojō*” [Lyricism of Ghost] in *Zainichi no hazama de* [Caught in ‘Being-in-Japan’]. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), 265.

¹⁷ Sijong Kim. “*Kurementain no uta*” [The Song of Clementine] in *Zainichi no hazama de* [Caught in ‘Being-in-Japan’]. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), 15.

¹⁸ Franz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks*. (London: Pluto Press, 1986), 60.

Japanese nation had been historically built around the oppressive binary oppositions between pure and impure, subject and object, as well as the superior Self and the inferior Other. In attempts to overcome their colonial racial legacy, early Zainichi writers constructed their autobiographical narratives as an expression of refusal to remain on the negative side of the two mirror images of Japan's national identity, in which the pure and coherent Japanese Self could be positively reflected. For them, producing Zainichi stories was a way to re-inscribe their "selves" through the language of their own identity-producing texts, and subvert racism's oppression and violence against them and their fellow Zainichi Koreans in postwar Japan.

As former "subjected natives" of the Japanese Empire, in which ethnic Koreans were forced to internalize the public discourse of their self-image and ancestral lineage as "innate, inherited" inferiority, pioneering Zainichi writers attempted to salvage the history of "their people" that the colonialists had altered, by offering their readers an insider's view of the life experiences of Zainichi Koreans. Starting their literary careers in postwar Japan, in which the implied colonial racism of the term *chōsenjin* remained deeply rooted in the society (even to this day, the word is used as a common racial slur against Zainichi Koreans¹⁹), these writers narrated their stories rather self-consciously through an identity that represented a confluence of individual and collective Zainichi "voices," in order to transform their self-image from a dehumanized "object" of the Japanese colonial gaze into a speaking "subject." By shedding light on the conscious cultivation of their personal identities and voices in relation to the lived experiences of Korean colonial immigrants and their descendants in the face of extreme hardship, they represented their autobiographical voices as an affirmation of the continuous struggle of Zainichi Koreans toward collective liberation from colonial oppression.

The Feminization of Race: Male-Authored Representation of Zainichi Women as the Other

Strongly motivated to produce works of fiction that would evoke the particular experience of racial adversity endured by Zainichi Koreans, these writers often constructed their narratives based on actual people they met living in the Zainichi communities.²⁰ One of the most important elements that developed within early Zainichi autobiographical fiction was the literary personification of Zainichi family formed through the male narrator/protagonist's eyewitness memories, as all of the early Zainichi writers were males. Within the narratives, Zainichi family life was frequently marked by poverty, violence and abuse. Such repeated self-representation created literary models of the typical Zainichi family structure, in which the protagonist's *aboji* (Father) habitually abused his *omoni* (Mother), both physically and emotionally. Trapped in the domestic sphere as illiterate, poor immigrant women,²¹ the protagonist's *omoni*'s cries for help

¹⁹ For example, the recent cases of anti-Korean marches in Tokyo and Osaka, which have been often directed specifically at Zainichi Koreans, saw hundreds of nationalist protesters shouting "Kill all *chōsenjin*."

²⁰ Most of the pioneering Zainichi writers lived in *Ikaino*, an area in Osaka which had taken shape as a ghetto during the 1920s. *Ikaino* has a history of continuous influx of Koreans from South Korea, particularly from Cheju Island, including those who escaped the Cheju massacre in the late 1940s.

²¹ The majority of the first-generation Zainichi Koreans came to Japan with no formal education, searching for a path out of desperate poverty they had experienced in the Korean peninsula under Japanese

were largely ignored outside the home. Through the subjective lens of the young male protagonist, women's identities were often recognized only from their roles within the family as wives, mothers or daughters. Having not developed any other facet of their selfhood outside their roles subordinate to the head of the Zainichi family—Father or husband—Zainichi women's identities were reduced to a dehumanized object of violence as a voiceless and helpless recipient of fate under absolute male authority. Ultimately, the image of Zainichi women trapped by the fate of victimhood became one of the most common motifs of early Zainichi literature, an image of suffering women from *chôsen* (colonial Korea) symbolic of the adversities faced by the first generation Zainichi Koreans.

Although the primary concern of their novels was to resist a persisting legacy of colonial racism, early Zainichi autobiographical narratives reflect the difficulties many pioneer Zainichi writers often encountered in their attempts to protest the accumulation of racial discrimination and oppression against Zainichi Koreans in Japan. It would seem this is due to the fact that such action required recognition of the differences between “us” and “them”—the oppressed and the oppressors—and was therefore fraught with the danger of leading to further internalization of the binary systems of late colonialism and its social hierarchies of oppression. Through the repeated (self-)representation of Zainichi women as the oppressed Other, early Zainichi literature often served, ironically, the function of preserving the colonialist gaze cast upon Zainichi Koreans as Japan's internal Other, inferior to the nation's dominant collective identity—the Japanese.

Another complexity of autobiographical representation faced by these writers resided in their use of the Japanese language, or more specifically, the ways in which the language of their (former) colonizers limited their abilities to resist Japanese colonialism and its cultural construction of *chôsenjin*. For many Zainichi writers, the Japanese language—a symbolic language that represented political cooperation based on the perception of Japanese racial superiority over Koreans during the colonial period—had remained icons of an identity dilemma beyond being tools of communication. In expressing Zainichi identity in the oppressor's language, pioneering Zainichi authors were constantly faced with a historical dilemma in the literary spaces they created, being haunted with their own self-images as the inferior Other under “masks” of Japanese native speakers. One of the early Zainichi writers, Kim Sok-pom (1925-) expresses this dilemma surrounding his writerly identity as follows:

For *chôsenjin* [Zainichi Koreans], writing in Japanese signifies the inevitability of being influenced by the perceptions and thought processes associated with “Japan-ness,” which the language connotes in its forms of speech sounds and visual shapes. [...] The Japanese language thus represents an identity dilemma for us—the more sophisticated one becomes

colonial rule. On testimony collections of the first generation Zainichi Koreans, see Zainihon Daikan Minkoku Seinenka. Ed., *Aboji kikasete ano hi no koto o: wareware no rekishi o torimodosu undô hôkokusho* [Father, Tell Us about That Day: An Exercise in Taking Back our History Report], (Tokyo: Zainihon Daikan Minkoku Seinenkai Chuo Honbu, 1988); Eiji Oguma and Sang-jun Kang, eds. *Zainichi issei no kioku*. (Tokyo: Shûeisha, 2008).

in expressing his “self” in Japanese, the further he destroys his individual identity as chōsenjin.²²

Born into the Japanese Empire during the colonial period, these writers often devoted their literary careers to exploring a history of racial tension that comes with acquiring the language of the dominant identity. Strongly motivated to move beyond their mindsets as the colonized, inferior Other, they attempted to establish their individual identities through the construction of Zainichi male subjectivity in their writings. Unable to free themselves from the “curse” of the Japanese language that kept them linked to the system of the dominant culture’s (Japan’s) collective values, however, they re-produced the racial stereotype of chōsenjin through their literary acts of self-representation. And most importantly, Zainichi writers’ internalized “Japan-ness”—in particular the Japanese colonial gaze directed at the inferior Other—manifested itself in their feminization of Zainichi women’s bodies as the weaker and racialized Other. By placing its focus on the Japan/Korea binary in postwar Japan as influenced by the dominant views on the race relations of the Japanese Empire, early Zainichi literature paid little attention to the gendered history of colonial nationalism and how that continued to affect those who were labelled as the inferior Other in contemporary Japan.

Lee Yang-ji’s *Nabi T’aryŏng*: Resisting Zainichi Womanhood as the Voiceless Other

In the face of the historical discourse of this male-dominated literary realm, Lee Yang-ji gradually rose to literary acclaim during the 1980s as the first successful Zainichi woman writer. Although her autobiographical narratives explore the issues surrounding colonial racism the term chōsenjin connotes in the Japanese language, a subject many of her precursory male writers had also investigated in their autobiographical novels, her autobiographical narratives represent her attempts to explore this topic in a different voice.

During the ten years of her career as a writer, Lee produced a total of ten pieces of fiction, most of which placed strong emphasis on the same autobiographical elements she explored in her first novel, *Nabi T’aryŏng*. One of these repeated motifs includes the inner struggle of a young Zainichi woman, isolated from the dominant ethno-national group, both in Japan and in South Korea, and the inspecting gaze cast upon her in-between existence as a Zainichi woman—that is, the ambiguous Other, who is neither completely Japanese nor entirely Korean. Although feeling the constant and intense assimilation pressure from the dominant collective identity in both societies—a pressure to choose between “Japan” and “South Korea”—her protagonist across different stories relentlessly endeavors to find her individual identity and voice beyond the national and cultural-linguistic boundaries. Much of Lee’s fiction revolves around this spiritual journey her protagonist embarks on, a journey to finding a safe place to express her own “voice” unrestricted by the dominating power of social authority, such as parents (over their children), nations (over their citizenry) and cultures (over what “their norms” are). With a strong emphasis placed upon her protagonist’s continuous striving to find a sense

²² Sok-pom Kim. *Ikyō no nihongo* [Japanese as the Language of a Strange Land] (Tokyo: Shakai hyōronsha, 2009), 23. All English translations in this dissertation are mine unless otherwise noted.

of belonging in both her birthplace (Japan) and her ancestral home (Korea) without belonging completely to any “pure” political group, her works of fiction constitute Lee’s attempts as the first successful Zainichi woman writer to refuse to accept the established hierarchies of victimization surrounding her self-image as “the inferior Other” in the postcolonial world she lives in.

This chapter explores the political issues Lee raises surrounding the violence faced by Zainichi women in terms of both gender and ethno-nationalism: as women, they are often forced to submit tamely to the patriarchal authority and, as Zainichi Koreans who carry the legacy of late colonialism, they must endure the shame of being “abject,” the term Julia Kristeva explores in her book, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982), to describe a category of socially excluded (non)-beings who are neither object nor subject. Through a discussion of Lee’s literary representation of her heroine’s sense of rejection and exclusion from Japanese society in reference to the concept of abject, this chapter probes the profound sense of shame that permeates the subconscious psyches of Zainichi women, which is inseparable from their internalized sense of racial, gender and national abjection that has its roots in Japan’s invasion and subsequent colonization of Korea.

Through a close textual analysis of *Nabi T’aryŏng*, this chapter examines the ways in which Lee Yang-ji uses her autobiographical narrative as a medium to transform her self-image from that of “a Zainichi woman”—a gendered racial identity marked by its victimhood and abjection—into a more amorphous, but empowered figure as a transnational storyteller of Korean ancestry. Lee narrates *Nabi T’aryŏng* through an alter ego of herself named “愛子,” the Chinese characters that designate “Aiko” in Japanese and “Aeja” in Korean.²³ The two different pronunciations of her name represent the symbol for her identity: torn between two cultures, or two worlds. Much of the narrative is written in the form of a monologue, spoken by *watashi*—“I”—who expresses the inner feelings of inadequacy and isolation she always felt but often suppressed as a young Zainichi woman caught in the middle of Japan and Korea’s postwar relationship. She desperately tries to find a place to belong within the ethno-national communities of Japan and South Korea, but her attempts repeatedly fail, as she feels constant pressure to give up or hide much of who she is in relation to her “Otherness” under scrutiny of the dominant collective gaze. *Nabi T’aryŏng* narrates how this gaze, which perceives Aiko/Aeja as “the ambiguous Other” in the context of the ethnic collectivist nationalism,²⁴ causes in her a strong feeling of not belonging, and thus, loss of identity and voice in both societies. The pain she feels in relation to this sense of loss manifests

²³ “Yang-ji” is the Korean pronunciation of the author’s name (良枝) which is pronounced “Yoshie” in Japanese. When she gained Japanese citizenship along with her parents at the age of nine, the name on her official family registry (*koseki*), Tanaka Yoshie, automatically became her “real” name. Since her literary debut with *Nabi T’aryŏng*, however, she always used her “original, but unofficial” name in her work as a public figure (writer/dance performer).

²⁴ Many people in Japan and South Korea today tend to believe that their societies are ethnically homogeneous (單一民族 *tan’itsu minzoku* in Japanese and *tanil minjok* in Korean). In both countries, the formal education system often serves the function of implementing the idea of national subjectivity based on “us-identity” (the Japanese/Koreans as racially and linguistically “one people”). In school textbooks, for example, “Japan” and “South Korea” are often referred to only as “our country” (*wagakuni* in Japanese and *uri nara* in Korean), encouraging students from their early ages to identify themselves as part of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity within “our nation.”

itself in various hallucinations, including the image of a white butterfly that is visible only to her when she feels trapped in a world full of pain and sorrow. The frequent appearance of a butterfly serves to emphasize her deep despair and loneliness over the impossibility of putting her pain into words—the pain associated with her self-image as the Other being forcibly removed from membership in any group. Unable to find a way to express such pain in her own voice (language), she gradually loses control over her own body (existence), as this externally-imposed vision of her marginalized self-image begins to dominate her sense of personal identity. Caught between the two sides of her identity as Aiko/Aeja, the white butterfly reflects in her eyes a deeply internalized view of herself as the voiceless Other—a living being hovering aimlessly in the air with no permanent home and no voice audible to the ears of its distant observers.

In *Nabi T'aryŏng*, Lee Yang-ji uses various metaphors to act as visual and auditory hallucinations, which embody the protagonist's mental imagery of herself as a socially excluded (non-)being—a woman of chŏsen (Korea as a colony of Japan). By using the abstract, non-linear nature of hallucinations as tropes that manifest her protagonist's pain in relation to the awareness of her "self," Lee reveals the violence inherent in the historical construction of a linear narrative of a racially-homogenous nation formed by one single official language, the national language of kokugo. By creating an autobiographical self that subverts the idea of a homogeneous national identity, she attempts to bring her own individual voice and that of her women ancestors (including Zainichi omoni/mothers) into the open, voices that were previously diminished and submerged within the languages of powerful groups and of distant observers—including their own aboji/fathers and Zainichi male writers.

To represent her narrative as a confluence of personal and collective voices of "Zainichi women/women of chŏsen," which, she believes, defy translation and thus assimilation into the dominant modes of language, Lee Yang-ji's autobiographical expression emphasizes the multiplicity of the self, rather than conceptualizing individual victimhood as the oppressed Other. In *Nabi T'aryŏng*, Aiko/Aeja's spiritual struggle to overcome the stigmatized self-image as the Other manifests itself in the ways in which she attempts to express her self through a variety of verbal (e.g., Korean and Japanese languages) and non-verbal (e.g., musical instrument) forms of communication. In particular, the heroine's non-verbal performance in traditional Korean arts are often used in the critical scenes, including the last scene, in which her journey from Japan to South Korea in the hope of finding a sense of belonging comes to an end. Toward the end of the story, she gradually finds her way out of life's struggle through her encounter with a *salp'uri* dance, a non-verbal performance closely associated with Korean women's traditional mode of expression—shamanism. It is through engaging in this non-verbal expression that she finally gains a sense of emancipation from the official languages of Japanese and Korean, which symbolize compulsory ethno-nationalism and divide Japan and Korea into this world and that of the Other.

Aiko/Aeja's physical experience of performing a *salp'uri* dance also leads her to finding a place in the world, as well as the awareness of her positive self-image. Lee Yang-ji suggests such an epiphany surrounding the protagonist's inner transformation of her self-image in the last scene, in which Aiko/Aeja engages in a solo performance of a *salp'uri* dance, dressed in a traditional Korean shaman's white costume. Through the verbal representation of her heroine dancing in the winds, which catch her long outer

skirt (“*chima*”) and thus make her body float like a white butterfly, Lee uses the visual cue to imply a shift in her protagonist’s perspective about herself both as a person and in relation to others. By portraying an image of the heroine’s dancing body like a white butterfly, Lee represents the discovery of her protagonist’s new sense of self in relation to her female Korean ancestors without labeling this personal identity with any fixed names or categories. By finding her self-voice that emerges beyond the limits of either self or other, Japanese or Korean, Aiko/Aeja presents a new identity for herself based on her own creativity and passions as an artist that she has drawn and inherited from her women ancestors. Through a close analysis of how Lee Yang-ji narrates her protagonist’s journey to finding the power of acceptance of her in-between identity as Aiko/Aeja, this chapter will show how, in resisting the particular social roles, identities and self-images imposed on her (protagonist) by others as the voiceless Other, Lee represents her own performance/writing/speech as a site of protest of power and domination and of self-transformation.

Writing a Life Story from the Perspective of Death and Dying

Nabi T'aryōng is retrospectively narrated by “I,” a woman in her twenties, looking back on the past pivotal moments in her life leading up to the last scene, in which she reflects upon her most recent memories—the deaths of her two brothers. Strongly moved by the desire of putting her life story in a written form from the perspective of dying—as if writing a will²⁵—Lee Yang-ji made her literary debut with this piece of work, through which to create a literary space between autobiography (“I”) and fiction (Aiko/Aeja), as a linking of her private life and memories to her public performance as a writer. In the narrative, the “I” voices flash back and forth in time to retrace her journey of transformation from a socially rejected Zainichi girl into a grown woman who is re-evaluating the significance of past events that have brought pain into her life. The first half of the story narrates how “I” spent her youthful days in Japan, hiding behind a mask as a Japanese girl called Aiko, a name her father encouraged her to use in order to conceal her Korean roots from Japanese society and avoid discrimination. The author’s autobiographical alter-ego, Aiko, is a second generation Zainichi woman, raised by Korean parents whose growing hostility toward each other drives the entire family into a painful divorce process that ends up taking ten years to complete. Parental conflict forces Aiko and her siblings to form two opposing camps at young ages: at the early stage of separation, her father takes her two male siblings into his household, and Aiko and her sister live with her mother. Aiko’s inability to choose between her parents and to develop a sense of stability and belonging drives her to drop out of high school and run away from home. The opening scene of *Nabi T'aryōng* starts with the reflective voice of “I” remembering the feeling she experienced when returning back to her family home in Tokyo from Kyoto, where she spent two years as a runaway teen:

夕闇が迫っていた。イルミネーションが点滅し始めている。人々は焼けたトタンの上を歩くような足取りで、昼間は色あせていた路地の奥に消えていく。並んでいる建物の配置は変わっていない。時差の違う国から今、帰ってきたばかりのような戸惑いと懐かしさが身体中の血管で泡立ち、私は重心を失っている。²⁶

Dusk was falling. The city began to ignite itself with illumination. A score of people, walking as if they were stepping on a heated steel plate, wandered into the narrow alleys leading to taverns, the alleys left deserted during the daytime. All the buildings stretched before my eyes remained the same in their layout as before I left Tokyo. Standing in the middle of the city, I felt like someone who’d just come back from a foreign country in a different time zone. The two contradictory feelings of inadequacy and familiarity were simultaneously circulating around my entire body through my veins, and my body felt completely out of balance.

²⁵ Yang-ji Lee. “Watashi ni totte no bokoku to nihon” (What my Motherland and Japan Mean to Me), in *Lee Yan-ji zenshu*, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 660.

²⁶ Yang-ji Lee. *Nabi T'aryōng* in *Yuhi/Nabi T'aryōng (Yuhi/A Ballad of a Butterfly)*. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1997), 7.

This passage, in which the teenage Aiko stands in the middle of metropolitan Tokyo at twilight upon her homecoming, epitomizes a theme that recurs throughout the narrative: the concept of the borderline experience in relation to one's existential situation of being in-between, and of suffering from constant emotional and social instabilities. The outside scenery in the twilight, during which the world is neither completely lit nor entirely dark, is integrated into the expression of Aiko's inner feelings about her "home." In this scene, the city view fading into the approaching darkness of night represents the increase of Aiko's uneasiness and anxiety about returning to her dysfunctional home, where she and her siblings are constantly forced to take sides in conflicts between her parents. Upon returning to Tokyo, Aiko becomes overwhelmed with a strong feeling of ambiguity, as if caught between two worlds, such as inside (home) and outside (foreignness), the feelings of inclusion (familiarity) and exclusion (inadequacy), as well as light (public/the Japanese "Aiko") and darkness (secret/the Korean "Aeja"). The movement of traveling across the geographical border between Kyoto and Tokyo gives her a profound feeling of rupture in her sense of identity, heightening in her a keen awareness of being a border person in her home (country), and a stranger in her own land (body). By opening her narrative with the description of the national capital city, an outside world that evokes ambiguous emotions in the inner landscape of Aiko's heart, Lee Yang-ji foreshadows the life story she is about to share with her readers, in which her (protagonist's) attempts to understand reality through her own perceptions and the experience of her body—not through the dominant culture's worldview and language—often painfully isolate her from the community to which she desperately wants to belong.

In her storytelling, the "I" often narrates flashbacks to her girlhood days, during which her feelings of helplessness against the authoritative power of her father grew more intense as the years went by, partly because of his obstinacy in refusing to share his wealth with his wife (and his daughters who live with her) upon his divorce from her, leading to a long, agonizing divorce process. Aiko remembers how frequently her father used to snatch her from school and drive to *Kawaguchi-ko*, a lake famous for its close proximity to Mount Fuji, for the purpose of convincing her that he was the victim suffering in the divorce process, with her mother as the aggressor:

「君にこんな話はしたくないんだが」

父は話の区切りごとにそう言い添える。私はそのたびに富士山を睨む。固定されたハンドルを横から思い切り動かせば、富士山も消え、父の話も消え、私も消えることができるだろうか。

「済州島の女は無教養なんだよ。結局ね、男を男と思わないんだ。君にこんな話はしたくない、だが、、、どうしておとうさんとおかあさんがこんな風になってしまったのか、君がわからなくちゃ。君たちがわからないままだとおかあさんのようになってしまふんだよ」

父は涙をすすりながら私の横で話し続けている。父は自分の声の抑揚に浸りきり、弾みのつく哀しさに酔っているようだ。富士山を睨んでいた私の目も潤みだす。どうしてこうなのだろう。母に対してもそうなのだ。聞いているとどちらが悪いのか解らなくなってくる。淀みきった密室の空気が重く身体を締め付け、歯痛にも似た苛立ちの中で、富士山はぐらぐらと歪み始めた。

「それじゃあ、別居なんてしてないで早く別れてしまえばいいじゃない。」

とたんに身体がシートにおしつけられた。父が強くアクセルを踏んで車体が瞬時浮き上がる。硬く唇を噛んでいる父の横顔。ハンドルを握む父の手が赤く腫れていた。富士山に向かって車は猛スピードで疾走する。²⁷

“Though I don’t want to tell you such a thing . . .”

Each time my father punctuated his long story with this set phrase, I automatically began to glare at Mount Fuji, standing grandly before my eyes.

What if I suddenly snatch the wheel from him and turn it to the side? Would it make everything vanish—Mount Fuji, my dad’s story, and even myself?

“Women from *Cheju-do* are low-born and uncultured. After all, they don’t look upon men as men. I don’t want to tell you such a thing, but you must understand why the relationship between your dad and mom has deteriorated in the way it has. If you girls can’t understand the roots of all this, you will end up becoming someone just like her.” My father went on sobbing his account to me, quietly sitting in the passenger seat. He seemed to be indulging himself with the dramatic tone in his voice and the momentum of his sorrow. My glaring eyes that were fixed on Mount Fuji began to overflow with tears.

Why does he always confuse me like this? And so does my mom—the more I listen to each of their sides of the story, the more confused I become.

The stale air of the closed space in the car constricted my body; I became overwhelmed with feelings of frustration, as if I had a constantly throbbing toothache. Reflected in my eyes, Mount Fuji looked wobbly and distorted.

“Dad, why don’t you just get a divorce, instead of living separately and continuing to fight each other?” At the moment I uttered these words, my body was violently pressed against my seat. The car suddenly increased in acceleration, making it float in the air for a moment. He was biting his lips violently; his hands turned red from grabbing the wheel too hard. The car was speeding up at a faster pace, heading toward Mount Fuji.

It should be noted that Lee Yang-ji’s father, on whom Aiko’s father is modeled, had emigrated from Korea’s Southern-most island of *Cheju-do* during the Japanese colonial period, after which he settled down in a town at the foot of Mount Fuji. He soon adopted a Japanese family name to conceal his Korean roots, and later on, the prejudice he experienced drove him to insist that the whole family take Japanese citizenship along with him.²⁸ In the above passage, Lee Yang-ji uses the image of Mount Fuji—Japan’s iconic national emblem—to represent the vision of the nation as the main ideological source of Aiko’s father’s aggression, the attitude he dons in his attempts to prove his innocence and his wife’s guilt in divorce court so that he can feel justified in casting her

²⁷ Ibid., 20-1.

²⁸ Yang-ji Lee. “Watashi ni totte no bokoku to nihon,” 651.

out of the marriage. Here, he is taking his daughter toward Mount Fuji by force, an act symbolic of his arrogant demand for her submission to assimilate herself into the Japanese “nation.” His scornful comments about his wife further illustrate his gratuitous violence against his daughter. His statement conveys his “concern” for the well-being of his daughter living with his wife, who, being “uncultured” and unruly by nature, is a threat to the social order in the closed community of his house. Aiko’s immediate physical reaction to her father’s “concerned” voice—a strong feeling of constraint in “the stale air of the closed space in the car”—however, signals both her deep awareness of the peremptory tone in his voice and her repressed sense of entrapment in the dysfunctional family controlled by her father. By suggesting that Aiko’s rejection of his plans would turn her into an unruly woman of *chôsen*—an object of disdain in his eyes—, her father threatens her with abandonment if she refuses to submit tamely to his authority. The demand that she accept this view of her mother as an outcast and relinquish her own Korean ethnic heritage brings tears to Aiko’s eyes, which keep “glaring at Mount Fuji” all through his speech. Inside the car driven by her father rushing toward his chosen destination or “goal,” that is, to establish a pure subject for himself as *nihonjin* or a Japanese person, by erasing the ethnic “contaminations” from his life, including his wife from *chôsen*, Aiko is experiencing a gap between what she hears (her father’s scornful comments on his ancestral land of Korea, juxtaposed with his secret vision of Mount Fuji as an object of adoration and reverence) and what she sees (Mount Fuji as a symbol of authoritative oppression). The perceptual gap that the visual image of Mount Fuji creates between Aiko and her father stands as a metaphor for the constant pain Aiko experiences as a child who is financially and emotionally dependant on her father for survival, a pain described as having “a constantly throbbing toothache” without finding any cure. In her tearful eyes, she sees both Mount Fuji and her father as “distorted” sources of her emotional confusion in trying to establish her identity, for, while they both provided her with her place of birth, they question her legitimacy as a respected member of the community. Through highlighting the psychological and physical dangers Aiko feels inside her father’s car in this scene, Lee Yang-ji draws attention to the complexity of systematic discrimination surrounding the assimilation process for *Zainichi* Koreans in postwar Japan, in which they are almost forced to internalize the social structure of Japanese nationalism and its accompanying attitude of superiority, sustained through a strong disaffection for those of inferior ethnic origins, or more specifically, former colonial subjects, such as *chôsenjin*.

Throughout the narrative, Lee Yang-ji often depicts the visual hallucinations and distortions in Aiko’s perception of reality accompanied by a powerful sensation of pain in her physical body through which to recount Aiko’s mental distress under the structures of ideological oppression, which keeps her on the verge of exclusion from both family and nation. Unable to find a secure place of belonging as a teenager, Aiko drops out of high school and leaves home for Kyoto, where she works as a maid in a *ryokan*, a traditional Japanese inn, a job she takes to escape the painful situation at home. But despite her inner resistance against her father, who forces her to relinquish her Korean cultural heritage, Aiko feels even more conflicted in Kyoto, where she realizes that outside her “safe” environment at home, she needs to hide behind a disguise as a Japanese girl called Aiko, a name her father forced her to adopt in order to conceal her ethnic origins. In the following passage, Aiko recalls how her escape from her family home forced her to

realize the impossibility of avoiding a submission to—and assimilation into—the patriarchal national system envisioned as Japan:

父と母の放つ生命力、その二つの大きな磁力にはさまれて均衡をとりきれないまま、私は腹這って父と母を見上げているしかなかった。小さな自尊心や自己主張が、せめぎ合う磁力の間で歪み、萎縮していく。私は身体をもぎとるようにして家からとび出して来た。ぽっかりと大きな穴があいた従業員部屋の天井、湿っぽい布団—だが京都のこの小さな旅館でも私はやはり腹這いのままねずみが落ちてくる暗い天井を怯えながら見上げているのだった。
「ばれたらどうしよう、ばれたらここにもいられなくなる、、、」²⁹

Unable to maintain a balance between the two large magnetic forces of the vital energies of my parents, all I could do was to grovel and look up at them. My already fragile pride and voice, which were becoming increasingly more pent-up between my parents' hostile, repelling magnets, began to atrophy. I ran away from home by forcibly dragging my body away. Yet, here in this small ryokan in Kyoto—with a large hole in the ceiling of the staff room and the damp bedclothes I sleep in—I am still grovelling and looking up at the ceiling, from which the mice could fall down on me at any minute.

“What if my secret comes out? If it comes out, I won't be able to stay here anymore.”

The first part of the passage describes how her parents' constant conflict with each other leaves Aiko no choice but to “grovel” and suppress her own opinion or “voice,” silencing her freedom of expression. The latter part of the passage shows how Aiko's hidden ethnic origins begin to haunt her as she gets out into the world, where she harbours an indefinable but constant fear of “the mice fall[ing] down on her”—the moment her secret becomes known—when she will be excluded from Japanese society. Aiko remembers how constantly this visual image of “the mice inside the ceiling” possessed her with fear and anxiety while working as a maid in Kyoto, the object of an image that is entirely in her mind, despite it feeling as real as if it were physically present. This hallucinatory image serves in the narrative to designate a source of Aiko's mental anguish—that is, the Korean part of her identity named “Aeja” which remains hidden in a “dark” space, separate from the official reality in which the Japanese “Aiko” lives. Despite the fact that Aiko has not yet faced direct racial discrimination at this point in her life, from the moment she enters the world on her own, her thoughts are dominated by an overwhelming fear of her hidden identity being exposed, which will turn her into a repulsive Other, just like her mother, whom her father has rejected and is trying to exclude from his life. Clearly, Aiko's sense of shame as a repulsive Other in Japanese society has its roots in her father's internalized sense of Japanese nationalism, through which he sees his wife as an uncultured Other. Through her emphasis on Aiko's constant feeling of danger, inside and outside the home, the author represents both the conflict between the heroine's mother and father and her sense of shame as *chōsenjin* as

²⁹ *Nabi T'aryōng*, 27.

inseparable from the history of colonial nationalism and the discourse of assimilation of ethnic Koreans into the authoritative, patriarchal power of the Japanese “Empire.”

Darkness, Abjection and Colonial Violence

Working as a live-in maid in a ryokan in Kyoto, Aiko continues to act as a “normal” Japanese girl by hiding her “dark” secret behind the persona, Aiko, in an attempt to become a respected member of the ryokan community. Despite her constant struggles to belong, her sense of alienation only increases every day; however, Aiko gradually develops profound sympathy for one of her co-workers, a woman named Chika, whom the ryokan workers regard with disdain due to her social behavior, which they arbitrarily deemed deviant. The following lines narrate Aiko’s recollection of the days during which she frequently experienced the fear of vicarious rejection and exclusion from the community, as she observed the mental and physical violence visited ritually on Chika:

勝手口で独り言を言っていたおたふく顔の女は洗い場専門でお千加といった。お千加は勝手口側の中二階に寝起きしていた。中二階に通ずる小さな梯子段に近寄るとカビ臭い何とも言えぬ腐臭が鼻をつく。食べかけのパンやカビのはえた蒲鉾、卵の殻、お千加はいつも口をもぐもぐさせていた。食事の時は客の残したおかずを片っ端から井に盛り合わせ、その上に吸い物をかけ卵を割る。そして箸でぐにやぐにやになるほどかき混ぜて食べるのだ。

「お千加、向こうへ行行って誰もみえへんところで食べ。きしょく悪うてしゃあないで」

番頭の山田がそう言うとお千加は井を大切そうにかかえて土間に行った。それははいはいをしていた赤ん坊がやっと歩き始めた時のような歩き方だった。

「お千加のアホ、あいつチョーセンとちがうか」

山田は口癖のようにきまってそう吐き棄てた。思わず箸を動かしていた私の手がびくっと止まった。

お千加の皿洗いと残飯処理は全くあてにはできなかった。片手を口もとに当て科を作ると「ほんまやねえ」「そうどっか」と身体をゆらせて笑ってばかりいるのだ。

「お千加、はよう奥の間の洗い物してえな」

大奥さんが腰を曲げて調理場に入ってくる。大奥さんは何かにつけてお千加を折檻した。孫息子の健一の木刀を持ってきてみんなの前で叩きつける。お千加は泣く、という表情を知らないのだった。何をされても「そうどっか」と片手を口もとに当てて笑う。それが大奥さんをよけい激怒させた。³⁰

The woman I had seen murmuring alone at the back door when I first arrived at this ryokan was a dishwasher named Chika. As a live-in maid, she was residing in a small room on the mezzanine near the back door [for forty years]. Whenever I approached the small ladder leading to her room, I could smell some indefinable pungent odour or something rotten and musty—half-eaten bread, moldy fish cakes and egg shells. At mealtimes, she would gather all the leftovers from the

³⁰ Ibid., 28-9.

customers' meals in her bowl, pour her soup and raw eggs into the bowl, stir them up with her chopsticks and eat.

"Chika. Go somewhere else and eat your food alone. You make me feel sick!" said the head clerk, Yamada, and then Chika would quietly move to the area with the dirt floor, while carefully holding a big bowl in her hands. She walked like a baby who has just stopped crawling and learned how to walk.

"That crazy woman. I guess she is *chôsen*," Yamada spat out, as if it were a pet phrase of his, and when I heard this phrase, the chopsticks in my hand automatically stopped moving.

Although Chika was assigned to dishwashing only, we could never rely on her to clean up the dishes and leftovers at all. Whenever such incomplete tasks were pointed out, she would say, with her hand over her mouth, "Is that so?" while smiling and shaking her body coquettishly.

"Chika, hurry up and finish the dishes left in the inner room!"

Shouting, the head mistress³¹ came into the kitchen with her waist bent. She disciplined Chika on every occasion, by beating her up with her grandson Kenichi's bamboo sword in front of everyone. Chika didn't seem to know how to put an "I-am-weeping" expression on her face. No matter what cruel treatment she received, she always smiled with her hand over her mouth and said, "Is that so?" Such reactions made the head mistress even more furious at her.

The above description of the head mistress hitting Chika cruelly "in front of everyone" suggests that such violence is accepted as the customary practice in this ryokan community. Clearly, the justification for such violence comes from this closed society's perception that Chika's departures from the social order of the community disturb it; she cannot act in accordance with its established rules, such as completing the tasks assigned to her in an efficient and timely manner. In this scene, the portrayal of Chika's room, in which she has lived for the past forty years, serves to further emphasize Chika's marginalized existence within the ryokan community. Her room is located in an in-between, dimly-lit area of the building ("on the mezzanine near the back door"), throwing into sharp relief a well-lit front entrance hall, which represents the public face of the ryokan. This room is also filled with "some indefinable pungent odor" caused by her habit of keeping her "half-eaten" food in it. Here, it is suggested that the ryokan staff sees Chika as the visual embodiment of the filth and nauseating odors that emanate from her place of residence, which makes her "disorderly" behavior—including the way she eats the customers' leftovers with "her miso soup and raw eggs"—the source of their strong repulsion toward her. The stigma the ryokan staff attach to Chika is thus attributed to the space that she inhabits, a liminal space that constantly challenges the fixed

³¹ Most of the ryokan have traditionally run their businesses through successive generations of their own families. The *okami* is the general manager of the ryokan and the representative of its tradition, elegance and hospitality and is usually the wife of the owner. Many ryokan family businesses are managed by the three generations together, in hierarchical order from the oldest to the youngest—*Ô-okami* (the head mistress), *okami*, and *waka-okami* (the young mistress).

boundaries of the communal ryokan identity from within, blurring the borders between normal and deviant, as well as between the civilized Japanese (equipped with proper hygiene and manners) and the uncultured Other (associated with filth and disorderliness). Under the banner of community justice to protect the sanctity of a group life from the threat of the unruly Other, Chika remains susceptible to the whims of an intolerant majority, left defenceless against verbal and physical abuse, which invariably occurs behind closed doors within the ryokan community.

To this ryokan community, which can be described as a unitary subject under the authority of the owner's family, however, the most disturbing and threatening aspect of Chika's existence is her inability to don "proper" social masks. In the above scene, what humiliates the head mistress and makes her "even more furious" at Chika is Chika's habitual response of "Is that so?" accompanied by a smile on her face, while clearly suffering physical violence under the guise of "discipline." Such reactions obscure the important distinction between Chika's submission to and resistance against the head mistress as a moral disciplinarian, thereby making her "the ambiguous and unruly Other"—a security threat to the harmony of the ryokan community unified by a sense of shared norms under the authority of the owner's family.

Chika's ambiguous "external" expressions (both facial and linguistic)—which defy translation and thus assimilation into the dominant value system of the ryokan community—make her the *abject* of this closed society. The term abject, defined by Julia Kristeva as that which must be kept away from the realm of proper society, is used in a range of academic disciplines (e.g., literature, postcolonial studies and gender studies) to describe those who are marginalized in their communities, such as linguistic minorities, the disabled and the poor. Kristeva develops the idea of the abject from a psychological viewpoint in order to articulate how the person rendered abject is demoted to a position that exists only for the purpose of being socially excluded, a necessary process for a person or social group to form the pure subjectivity as "the Self" (I/we). According to Kristeva, the abject is "a something that I do not recognize as a thing (object),"³² yet am repulsed by and identify with at the same time, because it is an inherent part of the "I" that was expelled to establish the self-identity of pure consciousness in the context of such given symbolic systems as race, culture, gender and nation. Unlike an "object" that can be fully perceived by "I" through its name inscribed in a social realm of language (e.g., wife, father and the West), the abject, which is "neither completely self nor entirely other,"³³ provokes a strong feeling of fear in the way it appears outside of the given symbolic code. Facing the abject, for example, a corpse, existing between life and death, can be extremely disturbing, but this very psychological reaction, such as repulsion, abhorrence and even nausea, is what the subject needs in order to draw the boundaries between inside (self) and outside (other), purity (nativity) and contamination (foreignness), as well as life and death. In other words, it is through a psychological process of rejecting the abject that the subject (re)gains its pure consciousness as "I/we" with a fixed name and identity (e.g., the Japanese). Kristeva describes the ways in which a perceived presence of the abject evokes a strong feeling of horror in the mind of the subject (-to-be) as follows:

³² Julia Kristeva. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Trans., Leon S. Roudiez. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, 4.

It is not lack of cleanness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite. The traitor, the liar, the criminal with a good conscience, the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a savior... Any crime, because it draws attention to the fragility of the law, is abject, but premeditated crime, cunning murder, hypocritical revenge are even more so because they heighten the display of such fragility... [The abject] is immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady: a terror that disassembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses the body for barter instead of inflaming it, a debtor who sells you up, a friend who stabs you.³⁴

Through the use of metaphorical language, Kristeva suggests that, when viewed from the perspectives of a collective identity of the powerful and dominant groups in society, the abject represents what “is immoral, sinister, scheming and shady”: someone who does not function and live in conformity with the dominant group’s social norms. In the above scene from *Nabi T’aryōng*, Chika’s habitual, ambiguous response (“Is that so?” said with a smile) to the frequent abuse is what gives Chika an abject quality, as it symbolizes “a hatred that smiles” in Kristeva’s words, a hatred that, because it “draws attention to the fragility of the law” and authority of the owner’s family, disrupts the cultural traditions of Kyoto, which the ryokan community represents. Kristeva’s analysis suggests that what makes Chika the abject of the ryokan community to which she belongs is not filth or ill-health, but those ambiguous features and traits of her public behavior and expression which are perceived as deviations from the dominant culture’s norms.

By narrating Chika’s marginalized existence through the eyes of a Zainichi woman who feels a strong sense of not belonging in Kyoto, a city many regard as the spiritual home of the Japanese, Lee Yang-ji discloses the dark side of the Japanese conception of national identity, as the preservation of its purity almost always involves the social production of the abject. Modern Japan’s cultural hub, Kyoto, is widely known for its strong emphasis on the preservation of the uniqueness of Japanese culture represented by a range of cultural heritage and historical sites, to which many Japanese make pilgrimages in order to reconnect with their national identity. To maximize their experiences in Kyoto, these tourists often choose to stay at a ryokan. Built in traditional modes of Japanese architectural styles, such as wooden structures, *tatami* (woven straw mat) floor mats, paper sliding doors called *fusuma*, typical ryokans in Kyoto are designed to encourage customers to behave according to old established rules, such as sitting on *tatami* floors and using Japanese-style public baths, following the proper etiquette and manners. The ryokan space thus provides symbolic environments where people can participate in the collective performance of Japanese cultural traditions, through which to engage in (re)imagining their own bodies as belonging to a unified national body and (re)discover a vision of themselves as fully formed subjects with a fixed name and identity: “Japanese.” Given that reifying identity demands the exclusionary process of the abject in light of Kristeva’s theory, however, such collective traditions, which provide a(n) (imagined) space of national belonging and identity, also serves to perceive the presence of an unruly body that leaks and cannot be contained in the national body, pushing it away for lack of cultural normalcy. By narrating how Chika’s body is

³⁴ Ibid., 4.

repeatedly abused and marginalized due to her ambiguous public performance, while being trapped within a closed ryokan community for forty years, Lee Yang-ji represents what it is like to live in a body stigmatized as the abject of Japanese society, an identity imposed to play a social role of the unruly Other within in maintaining the fixed notion of Japan's national identity built around the ideas of cultural uniqueness and racial purity.

Words that Hurt: Verbal Pain and the Violence of Dominant (Colonial) Language

In her portrayal of the events of Aiko's life in Kyoto, in which Aiko is constantly living in fear as a helpless witness to the ryokan community's violence against Chika, Lee Yang-ji sheds light upon Aiko's increased internal anguish and fear of her invisible stigma inscribed into her body as *chôsenjin*, a body that was historically othered by the dominant group's experience and language, and its establishments as the norm. Living in Kyoto as a runaway teen, Aiko tries to escape the pain she felt at home living under the constant pressure to conform to the authority demands of her father, by finding a new place to belong within the ryokan community. In order to be included in a "normal" group of the community, she conceals her ethnic origins behind a mask which she uses to exert control over her personal emotions—such as fear, shame and anger—associated with the social stigma attached to the Korean part of her identity named Aeja. In spite of her constantly donning such a mask, however, she is not only unable to establish a sense of belonging there, but also persistently feels the pain of rejection and exclusion from the community by witnessing the invisible suffering of Chika. Such vicarious pain is accidentally brought to surface when Aiko hears the ryokan's head male clerk, Yamada, insulting Chika in front of everyone. In the passage quoted above, Yamada blatantly says, "That crazy woman. I guess she is *chôsen* (チヨーセン)," and in response to such a comment, Aiko's body is frozen with fear, temporarily losing control over her body movements. Here, Yamada is using the word *chôsen* as the ultimate insult against Chika: She must be a *chôsen*—a Zainichi Korean—because she is such a "crazy woman" with her filthy and disorderly nature. Despite the fact that Yamada's comment is not directed at Aiko, Aiko's immediate reaction to his remark—her temporary inability to move her chopsticks—represents her uncontrollable fear and shock over the malicious tone in his voice against her existence as a Zainichi woman. In this scene, Aiko's suppressed fear is designed to draw the reader's attention to this particular word, *chôsen*, and the violent hatred toward *chôsenjin* connoted in this term, highlighting the ways in which the legacy of colonial racism—the image of *chôsenjin* as a filthy and uncivilized mob—has profoundly permeated postwar Japanese society. Through this, the author demonstrates the deeply-rooted stereotypes associated with the image of *chôsenjin* as the abject of the modern Japanese nation, an identity imposed by a collective gaze of (Imperial) Japan's sovereign subject, *nihonjin*—ethnic Japanese.

The word *chôsen*, one of the common ethnic slurs for Zainichi Koreans, has historically been used to reinforce the abject quality of the Zainichi population. This is especially true for the first generation Zainichi Koreans, like Aiko's (and the author's) father, as the term originates from an age of empire-building for the modern Japanese nation that occurred in conjunction with Japan's colonization of Korea, whose politics included a negative construction of the image of the Korean people:

Chôsen, originally the name of an ancient Korean state, was resurrected by the Japanese colonial government when the country was annexed. Chôsenjin, the term referring to the people [of colonized] Korea, took the connotation of inferiority [from the propagandistic newspapers]. In those, chôsenjin were an incorrigible mob; they were filthy, uncivilized and violent; they cheated, polluted, and caused trouble, and so on. [The term chôsenjin in the mass media, literature and popular culture helped to create the image of Koreans] in Japanese popular discourse as unruly people with criminal tendencies.³⁵

The discourse of (post-) colonial racism in (imperial) Japan is closely related to the construction of Koreans as Japan's internal Other "with criminal tendencies" (*futei senjin*) through language manipulation. During the colonial period, the difficulty differentiating between the Japanese and Koreans by their visible racial characteristics posed a problem for Japan's racial ideologies in the context of the legitimacy of the colonial dominance of the "master" Japanese over the racially-inferior Koreans. When viewed from the perspective of *nihonjin*, a collective identity of the dominant racial groups in imperial Japan, chôsenjin, who, being neither completely the Japanese self (they are not racially Japanese) nor entirely others (they are Japanese nationals), provoked a strong feeling of fear in the way they appeared to be inherently part of the Japanese, as they represented an imminent threat to the cohesion and purity of a collective identity of the Japanese. In order to keep intact the border between the Japanese and Koreans within the Japanese nation, the Japanese government manipulated language, through which to artificially construct a unique and superior national identity for the sovereign Japanese subject. Under the banner of solving the "Korean problem" in the Japanese nation during the colonial period,³⁶ which revolved around the nation's mission to protect its ability to defend the rights, safety and privileges of the "master" Japanese, the systematic propaganda campaign against chôsenjin was extensively conducted by the Japanese government with the collaboration of the mass media. In the form of the mass circulation of newspapers, magazines and literary texts, the negative racial stereotype of chôsenjin was widely disseminated to the general populace in imperial Japan.³⁷ By giving a new "connotation of inferiority" to the Japanese term

³⁵ Koichi Iwabuchi, "PC, Postcoloniality, and Self-representation" in *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin*. Sonia Ryang, ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 57.

³⁶ Ken Kawashima demonstrates how the image of Koreans as *futei senjin* was manipulated by the state power—in particular, the Japanese police system—to justify racial profiling of Koreans living in Japan during the colonial period:

The significance of the unruly Korean [...] is that it was deployed in ways that criminalized all Koreans [living in Japan], since, as the police argued, it was difficult to recognize *futei senjin*, to separate them from Japanese ethnically, and even more difficult to separate *futei senjin* Koreans from non-*futei senjin* Koreans. *Futei senjin*, therefore, became a policing sign that operated less through the identification of Korean lawbreakers, and more through a general misidentification of all Koreans as potential or probable criminals.

Ken C. Kawashima. *The Proletarian Gamble: Korean Workers in Interwar Japan* (Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2009), 154.

³⁷ According to Kim Puja, by the late 1930s, the negative racial stereotype of young Korean men as *futei senjin* had deeply permeated throughout the Japanese society. This was largely due to the mass media's

chōsenjin, the imperial nation's intellectuals and elite succeeded in making ethnic Koreans' land of origin—chōsen—the realm of the in-between posited by liminality, abjection and incomplete national belonging. Furthermore, the language and imagery used in such Japanese propaganda facilitated to shape a collective perspective of the Japanese masses, which, through imagining chōsenjin as the unruly Other, confirmed its own Self-location as nihonjin (the Japanese race) with a superior moral standard. Under this “gaze,” Korean colonial immigrants and their descendants living in Japan became particularly vulnerable to the whims and violence of an intolerant majority, which occurred within a nationalist system that rejected them. Through the repeated portrayals of Aiko's desperate efforts to keep her ethnic origins hidden from public eyes, just like one of “the mice in the ceiling”—a hallucinatory vision representing Aiko's fear of her (Zainichi) body being attacked and eliminated—Lee Yang-ji shows the deep sense of horror and pain Aiko feels living in her lived/living body into which the memories of past colonial violence have been deeply inscribed. When the word chōsen evokes an overwhelming fear in Aiko, which causes her to lose control of her emotions and physical body, the author is emphasizing the persisting legacy of Japan's colonial nationalism associated with the function of the dominant culture's language as a collective performance of social control and surveillance in the imaginings of national belonging and identity.

Performing Body Memories, Resisting the Silencing of Female Voices

After her first experience of leaving her parents' nest and starting out in the world working as a maid in Kyoto, Aiko's subconscious awareness of the conflict between her parents paralleling the legacy of colonial nationalism and its power dynamics between the Japanese and Koreans becomes more acute. In particular, Aiko gradually becomes more conscious of her suppressed feelings of pain attached to her racial background as chōsenjin through her encounter with Chika, who remains helpless in her own plight under the “protection” of the ryokan owner's family, without whom she is even more defenceless against the violence and threats of an authoritative, judgemental society. Chika's circumstances remind Aiko of the oppressive situation in which Aiko and her mother live under the authoritative power of her father and serve as a vehicle through which she can begin to face the dark emotions she is afraid to show. In Kyoto, through a growing awareness of her repressed sense of inferiority, Aiko not only begins to process her suppressed feelings and “voice” by looking into these feelings, but also develops a keen awareness of the violence inherent in the construction of imagined national

wide dissemination of the distorted image of chōsenjin as a barbaric and violent mob starting from the early 1920s—an image against which the Japanese colonialist gaze defined an ideal human form: the civilized and self-disciplined body of pure-blooded Japanese males. A pro-Empire propaganda campaign surrounding futei senjin started after the Korean independence movement of 1919. Immediately after this movement was brutally suppressed by Japanese military force, Koreans in Japan were commonly portrayed in the national press as futei senjin: an unruly and hostile mob. In 1920s Japan, for example, the propagandistic national newspapers often stereotyped young Korean male immigrant workers as violent and menacing street thugs, including a stereotype of them as “possible” rapists. On the creation and propagation of racial stereotypes about Koreans during the 1920s, see Puja Kim. “Kanto Daishinsaiji no ‘reipisuto shinwa’ to chōsenjin gyakusatsu: kangan shiryō to shinbun hōdō o chūshin ni.” *Ohara shakai mondai kenkyusho zasshi*. (669: July, 2014), 1-19.

boundaries, which are sustained through the repetition of the collective performance of traditions. In the following lines, Lee Yang-ji illustrates the ideological impact of living in Kyoto on the heroine's psyche, which cannot help but absorb the vision of Japanese uniqueness and superiority that lingers there, through both tangible and intangible cultural properties that attract and haunt her simultaneously. In this passage, Aiko is reminiscing about how she was attempting to fulfill her role as a model maid at a ryokan in Kyoto, by being perfectly obedient to the social authority of the owner's family, while, at the same time, she felt a strong sense of incongruity between her social behaviors/actions and her body:

従業員は毎晩寝る前に奥の間に行き、襖ごしにこの主人一家に挨拶するのがしきたりになっていた。

「お先にやすませていただきます」

顔をあげると襖の隙き間から天皇一家の写真が見える。私はそのたびに不快なめまいを覚え、身体中の関節が軋む音を聞いた。それは自分の家とは違うもう一つの暗い密室にいる自分を痛感する瞬間だった。³⁸

It was a tradition of this ryokan that every staff member went to the owner's quarter before bedtime and paid their respects to the entire family through the *fusuma* door. I usually said while bowing low to them, "Please excuse me for going to bed before you." As I raised my face from bowing, I could gain a glimpse of the Emperor's family portrait hung on a wall through an opening of the fusuma door. Each time the image caught my eyes, I felt uncomfortable dizziness while hearing all my joints creaking at the same time. Such were the moments when I became fully aware of the fact that I was still inside another dark, closed space, in place of the one I had been in at home.

Here, Aiko is performing the formal ritual of bowing her head respectfully to the owner's family as part of her daily routine in the ryokan, in which the staff deliberately performs customary gestures while putting on their traditional costumes, the purpose of which is to preserve, through acting upon, ancient Japanese cultural traditions. However, her immediate reaction—the dizziness and physical constraint—at catching sight of the "portrait" indicates her understanding of how, through her participation in the collective performance of "bowing," she is figuratively submitting herself to the Emperor who, as the ultimate paternal authority, stays at the top of a hierarchy of social divisions that eternally relegate Zainichi/chôsen women to the "dark, closed space" of abjection. This physical reaction of Aiko's, in which her suppressed emotions suddenly manifest as the physical symptoms of losing control over the mobility of her own body, is often repeated in the story, as when she reacts to the degrading and insulting comments about unruly, "crazy" women of chôsen (as referring to her mother and Chika) made by her father and the ryokan's head male clerk. The author uses this repeated motif to represent Aiko's deep sense of entrapment in relation to her self-image as a Zainichi woman, which highlights the dilemma of, on the one hand, wanting to belong to the community, while, on the other, resisting assimilation into a patriarchal nationalist system that rejects her.

³⁸ *Nabi T'aryŏng*, 30.

Growing into a young adult woman, Aiko gradually accumulates substantial psychological tension as a spiritual outcast, and is unable to position her identity in Japanese society. Not knowing how to cope with the sense of defenselessness against psychological violence and threats she feels both inside and outside the home, Aiko unwittingly adds to her feelings of alienation and inadequacy as a secondary citizen excluded from the public sphere and forced into isolation as a person with an ambiguous national identity. Soon after returning from Kyoto to her parents' home, Aiko begins to engage in the act of self-inflicted violence, such as burning her skin and binge drinking, as an external way to express her inner turmoil that cannot be put into words. In the process of turning the invisible pain kept hidden inside as an unofficial conscious into an external reality (e.g., burn scar), she eventually finds a way to physically express and voice the ineffable feelings of pain in a positive way through musical performance, by learning how to play the *kayagum*, a Korean stringed instrument, in place of the Japanese *koto*, a similar stringed instrument that she has played since her early teens³⁹:

「韓国にもお琴があるの？」
二十歳になったばかりのある日、私は一人の女子大生に訊き返した。
「...」
伽耶琴の音色は低かった。音が、音そのものが吐露しきれぬ想いの深さで悶々としている。伽耶琴は爪をつけない。あぐらをかいたチマの上にじかにのせて弾くのだ。音は指先を通じて桐の胴体に共鳴し、弾く者の身体全体から伝わってくる。
「...」
千五百年前から弾き継がれているという伽耶琴に触れるごとに、遠い実感のない言葉としてのウリナラではなく、音色が確かな太いともづなとなって、私とウリナラを結びつけた。⁴⁰

“Is the koto in Korea as well?”

Such was a question I asked a female college student when I just turned twenty.

[...]

The kayagum created a low tone. It produced the echoes on the sound as if it were trembling with frustration, being unable to convey the depth of emotions hidden inside. A kayagum player didn't use ivory

³⁹ Prior to her literary debut with *Nabi T'aryŏng* in 1982, Lee Yang-ji published a few personal essays while in her early twenties, in which she wrote autobiographically about her families' and her personal struggles as Zainichi Koreans. In them, she mentions how she played the koto during her teens, while receiving lessons in other traditional Japanese arts, such as Japanese dance (*nihon buyō*) and Japanese flower arranging (*kadō*). This was part of her father's attempts to assimilate her into “mainstream” Japan by training her to become a Japanese woman with traditional femininity (*nihon teki na josei*). In her first work of autobiographical fiction, *Nabi T'aryŏng*, Lee Yang-ji delves into the issues surrounding her father's envisioned ideal of assimilation—comforting to the mainstream—in a way that she did not explore in her personal essays. Throughout her career as a writer, she has used the power of fiction to find a way to express her voice in relation to such sensitive issues as racism and gender-based violence in postwar Japan. For the personal essays based on which she has produced her works of autobiographical fiction, please refer to: “*Watashi wa chōsenjin*” [I am chōsenjin, 1977], “*Sanjo no ritsudō no naka e.*” [Into the Rhythmic Cycles of Sanjo, 1979], in *Lee Yang-ji zenshū* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993).

⁴⁰ *Nabi T'aryŏng*, 45-6.

picks; she played it with bare fingers, with the instrument placed on her lap. Its sound, therefore, echoed through the tips of the fingers—the body of the kayagum made of a single piece of paulownia wood—and then the body of its player

[...]

Each time I touched the kayagum with my bare fingers, an instrument that had been played for fifteen hundred years, the sound created a concrete strain that built a connection between myself and *uri nara* [“our” or “my country” in Korean], the Korean word that had always sounded so foreign to me before.

Throughout the first half of *Nabi T'aryong*, Lee Yang-ji shows how Aiko's name affects her in her girlhood and teenage years. By suggesting that this name “Aiko” reflects the dominant power of colonial nationalism that constantly oppresses her by seeking to impose the will of one people on another, the author places a strong emphasis on the underlying significance of Aiko's father's enmity toward what symbolizes “chôsen” or “uri nara” for him as a consequence of the violent powers associated with Japanese colonialism. As a former subjected native Korean, who emigrated from Korea under Japanese colonization, Aiko's father feels the need to erase the racial ambiguity and cultural otherness from his life in order to be included in the nationalist system called Japan. This leads to his attempts to exclude his wife from the family, while trying to make his young, pliant daughter look and act an “ideal” Japanese woman through her mastery of the ritualistic performance of traditional Japanese arts.

The shift from being a koto player to a kayagum performer shortly after her twentieth birthday signifies the first step in Aiko's journey to free herself from the invisible violence of male authority in Japanese (colonial) nationalism, which defines its powers not only by making ethnic Koreans feel ashamed of their Korean race and ancestral bloodline—which, by their definition meant inherently inferior to the Japanese—but also by forcing them to abandon their Korean cultural heritage. The above passage demonstrates how playing the kayagum touches a chord in Aiko more than playing the koto, which indicates the (re)discovery of her suppressed voice and identity in relation to her Korean ancestry. Aiko feels a strong connection with *uri nara*, her ancestral land of Korea, through her sensuous experience of the sound she creates while playing the kayagum—a sound (*sori* in Korean⁴¹) that has been passed down through the generations over fifteen hundred years.⁴² Although the kayagum and the koto are sister

⁴¹ In Japanese, the term “koe” indicates the sound uttered by the mouth, especially which uttered by human beings (so it can be translated as “voice” in English), whereas the word “oto” usually refers to the tone or sound emitted by anything other than human “mouth.” In Korean, the term “sori” refers to “any” tone, voice or sound which is perceived by humans without identifying whether sounds they hear are a product of human production or the natural environment or classifying them into category hierarchies.

⁴² The twelfth-century *Samguk sagi* (The History of Three Kingdoms), one of Korea's oldest extant historical records, traces a history of the kayagum and its survival, despite the fall of its land of origin, the Kaya kingdom (42-562 AD). The kayagum, which literally means the zither of Kaya, was taken over by the neighboring Shilla kingdom when Shilla annexed Kaya to unify the Korean peninsula:

[The *Samguk sagi*] describes how King Kashil [of Kaya] heard a *zheng* [Chinese zither] and commented that since [the two] countries do not share languages they should not have the same music. U Rūk, a musician from Sōngyōl prefecture, was ordered to compose music for a new instrument [the kayagum]. He did so, giving

instruments, as the kayagum was introduced to Japan through the Korean Shilla dynasty (57 BC-935AD) and came to be called Shiragi koto or “koto (zither) of Shilla” in Japan,⁴³ these two instruments have developed different ways of producing sounds. While a kayagum player plays the instrument with bare fingers, placing its head on the lap, a koto performer plucks the strings using plectrums (like guitar picks) called *tsume*, which means nails in Japanese, and rests the right end of the instrument on a stand. One of the most significant differences between the two instruments is how playing the kayagum causes pain, as the player plucks the thick strings with bare fingers, until the bare skin of her fingers becomes calloused, i.e., as strong as nails, after having played the instrument repeatedly over time. Through the direct contact of the strings with the flesh of the player’s fingers, the kayagum renders a lower tone, when compared to the high-pitched, sharp sounds the koto player produces using plectrums. Accompanied by the constant vibrations of the strings, which are directly passed on to the player’s body, this low tone can echo in human ears as quivering and emotion-laden sounds, such as a sobbing voice. Unlike the koto, which Aiko played with a pick while placed on a stand—and is thus artificially separated from her body—the sound Aiko produces on the kayagum using the flesh of her body provides a new vehicle that allows her to express the inner emotions hidden beneath the surface of her social mask as an obedient and well-mannered “Japanese” woman. By finding the voice of her female body (as opposed to only the brain) and the listening to the insides/memories of the physical body, she gains her hopes of becoming strong enough to overcome pain in her life, caused by the violent imposition of the dominant group’s language, values and worldview, through retracing and reconnecting herself with her ancestral and cultural heritage.

Despite the (re)discovery of the sound of uri nara as a medium for developing her own individual voice, rather than engaging the voice (the language) of the powerful groups in society, Aiko finds it difficult to internally maintain her newly-found voice when in public. Soon after beginning to take private kayagum lessons, Aiko develops a comforting sense of safety and belonging that she has sought all her life within her music teacher’s house. There, she can express what was once forgotten and omitted in her physical voice: the rhythm and musicality of the sound that connects her to the Korean part of her identity called Aeja. Although she can freely sing her emotions without fear of reprisal inside her music teacher’s house, once she goes out in public, especially where crowds gather, she is immediately thrown back into a state of anxiety, a constant experience of tension and apprehension:

部屋にたちこめているほのかなにんにくの匂い、キムチの色合い、立て掛けられた伽耶琴に見入りながら間断ないチャンダン（リズム）に浸りきった。だが稽古が終わって一歩外に出る。横断歩道を渡る。山手線のつり革にもたれる。気づくと私の身体からチャンダンも散調も旋律も消えているのだった。音を彼方からたぐり寄せるようにして口ずさもうとする。膝を叩いてチャン

names to 12 pieces based on places in Kaya. [...] The titles [of which] suggest the appropriation of folksongs. [As the] political turmoil of his homeland was gradually absorbed into Shilla], U Rūk fled to Shilla, where [the king welcomed him as a renowned musician and the music of the kayagum became a respectable musical form.]

Keith Howard. *Korean Musical Instruments*. (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995) 27.

⁴³ Ibid., 27

ダンを引き出そうとする。音は消えてしまったままいくら頭を振り、肩を動かしてもこみあげてはこない。車窓にたち現れる東京の景色、隣りでしゃべっている女たちの会話、車内放送、つり革を握る手のひらの汗、男の腕がしきりに私の肩に触れる。ありふれたそれら一つひとつが執拗に私を圧迫し干渉してくる。音が消えた。声も消えた。⁴⁴

At Ms. Han's [her kayagum teacher's] house, I could indulge myself looking at the bright color of *kimchee* and savoring a slight scent of garlic that surrounded the entire house. Her house was a place where I could soak myself in the traditional Korean rhythm of *changdan* and look attentively at the body of the kayagum that was leaned against the wall.

I left Ms. Han's house after my music lessons, crossed the street by the crosswalk, took the Yamanote line and held on to a strap on the train. I soon noticed that the *changdan* rhythm, *sanjo*, and all the melodies accompanied with the Korean music I had felt inside my body completely disappeared. I tried to draw in a string attached to the sounds of my memories, wanting to hum a tune to myself. I desperately tried to bring the rhythm back into my body by tapping on my knee. All the sound had gone by then, however, never coming back to me, no matter how hard I shook my head and moved my shoulders. The view of Tokyo from the train window, the conversation of the women next to me, the voice of an announcer on the train, the sweat I felt in my hand holding onto a strap and a man's arm touching mine frequently. Every one of these ordinary sensations that surrounded my body in the public space kept interfering and oppressing me so persistently that, eventually, all the sound and voice I had discovered in Ms. Han's house vanished completely.

Inside Ms. Han's house, Aiko finds comfort in what represents *uri nara* (*chôsen*) for her, including the color of *kimchee*, the scent of garlic and the traditional Korean rhythmic cycle called *changdan*. All of these subjective bodily sensations provide her with a means to retrace her personal identity and voice back to her ancestral roots in her imagination, restore her broken connections with her cultural heritage, and find a sense of belonging and acceptance in the world. While out in public, on the other hand, in particular when her body is hit by the sound of language from the outside (such as the passengers' conversation and the voice of the announcer on the train), she feels forced to disconnect herself from what was discovered in her body at Ms. Han's house. In the scene above, while on the train, Aiko's attempts to imagine her physical body as a site of her alternative memories, voice and subjectivity as a *Zainichi* woman fail, and this seems to symbolize Aiko's feeling of helplessness under close surveillance of the Japanese masses in terms of the "deviant" speech that subverts the power of majority ethics in postwar Japan. Knowing that her social position is fundamentally defined by her relationship to her social authorities, such as her father, the modern nation imagined as

⁴⁴ *Nabi T'aryŏng*, 46-7.

“Japan,”⁴⁵ with the Emperor as the ultimate paternal figure, and its citizenry conceptualized as “the Japanese,” Aiko feels implicit pressures not to speak her voice in public—break her silence—and reveal that she is, in fact, not a subject (Aiko), but an in-between object being (a Zainichi woman).

The Power of Hallucinations: Materializing Invisible Violence in the Realm of Performance

In *Nabi T'aryōng*, Lee Yang-ji underlines the psychological pressure Aiko endures while hiding her identity as a *chōsenjin* by repeatedly using the motif of Aiko's physical symptoms of illness and constraint. These symptoms initially occur as temporary discomfort in Aiko's body, triggered by her exposure to nationalist ideologies and institutions, which manifest themselves in the forms of collective performance embedded in everyday life, such as ritualistic gestures (e.g., bowing to social superiors) and vernacular language that carries the legacy of its historical role in establishing the power relations of late colonialism.

In repeating this motif, the author places a strong emphasis on the heroine's intuitive detection of the dangers hidden in collective performance, which functions to ritually strengthen imagined national boundaries between members of the ethnic-national collective and those who are ambiguous, or deviant, from its norms, and then stigmatize the latter's identities as abject. As the story develops, Aiko's physical symptoms begin to strike her more often, especially when she is in enclosed public places—in particular, on public transportation—constantly alerting her to possible dangers from members of the Japanese masses. In the following passage, Aiko recollects how she began to feel threatened for her life in public, triggered by her sudden, intensified fear of being caught with Japanese crowds inside a train. This incident happens when Aiko is headed for the office of her father's lawyer, where she hopes to seek an increase in alimony on her mother's behalf. Accompanied by her eldest brother, Tetsuo, she takes the train, but soon begins to have strong feelings of ill-being in the closed space of the crowded conveyance:

屋近くなのに電車は混んでいて、「...」私は息苦しい吐き気を覚えた。

「...」

目の前に老婆が座り、一人おいて老人が座っていた。二人は夫婦らしく、人ひとり間にはさんだまま顔を突き出してしきりに話をしていて。間に座っている会社員風の男は居眠りをしていてそのことに気づいていないのだった。

「哲ちゃん」

私は哲ちゃんの腕に唇をあてたまま言った。

「なんだ」

「哲ちゃん、どうしてオヤジとオフクロはあんなふうになっちゃったんだろううね」

語尾が哲ちゃんの腕の中に消え、口もとが熱くなった。

「わかんないよ。あの二人にもわからないんじゃないか」

⁴⁵ Benedict Anderson defines a nation as a political community that is “imagined” by its “members [who] will never know each of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” In his book, Anderson emphasizes the illusionary quality of nationalism, as the nation is not a community created by its members who have known and interacted with each other in “real” life. See *Imagined Communities*, 6.

社員風の男が目を醒ました。そして両側の気配に気づいて老人と席を入れかわった。私はぼんやりとその光景を見ていた。吐き気がする。光線が容赦なく足もとに照りつける。殺せ、殺せ、殺したかったら私を殺せ—私は呟いた。気づくと涙がたまっていた。おろおろとした。左の乳房の下がやはり痛む。涙が止まらず嗚咽を始めた。自分で一体何をしているのだろうと思った。哲ちゃんが、

「おい、どうしたんだ」

と驚いて訊いた瞬間、支えを失って私はその場にうずくまった。

「おい、よせよ、よせよ」

哲ちゃんの声が遠くに聞こえる。乗客たちが一斉に私を見つめているのが解る。それでも私は嗚咽を止めることができなかった。

「...」

何故涙が出るのかどうしても判然としない。人いきれや身体に触れる人の体温がますます私の神経を逆なでにする。

「キチガイだ」

どこからか男の声が聞こえた。

「殺せ、殺せ、、、殺したかったら、、、」

鼻汁がつまり頭が重い。苦い汁がごぼごぼ音をたてて口から嘔きこぼれそうになる。唇を噛む。ドアが開いた。私と哲ちゃんは押し出されるようにしてホームに降りた。脇腹にナイフが刺さっている。脇腹に手を触れてみた。ナイフはなかった。何の傷跡もなかった。⁴⁶

It was around noon, but the train was crowded. [...] In the closed space of the stuffy train, I was suffocating and felt uncomfortable nausea.

[...]

In front of me, a *saralyman* was sitting sandwiched between an old couple. The couple were thrusting out their faces to talk to each other, as the man was dozing, completely unaware of the situation.

I said, “Tetsu,” my lips pressed against his arm.

“What,” he answered.

“Tetsuo, why do you think our parents have come to be the way they have?” Asking such a question, I felt a burning sensation around my lips and the ending of my words melting into Tetsuo’s arm.

“I don’t know. I think they themselves don’t know *why* either,” Tetsuo answered.

The *saralyman* woke up from a doze. He realized his own interference with the couple’s conversation, switching places with the old man. I looked absent-mindedly at their movements. I got nausea. The sunlight mercilessly kept illuminating the floor I stood on. “Kill me... Go ahead and kill me if you want to...” After murmuring such a phrase, I realized that my eyes had already overflowed with tears without my knowledge.

[...]

Unable to stop my tears from relentlessly flowing, I burst into convulsive sobs—I had no control over what I was doing.

⁴⁶ *Nabi T’aryōng*, 48-50.

“What’s wrong?” Tetsuo asked in surprise. At that moment, I lost the sense of support that had barely kept me standing and crouched down. “What are you doing? Please stop.”

I heard Tetsuo’s voice in the distance. I felt the all of the passengers’ eyes resting on me suddenly.

[...]

I didn’t know why my tears kept falling so fast. Confined inside the train, each physical contact I made with the squirming mass of people and its body temperature irritated my nerves even more.

Out of nowhere, I suddenly heard a man’s voice say, “She is crazy!”

I responded to that voice by repeating the same phrase, “Kill me... Go ahead and kill me if you want to...”

I felt heavy in my head and my running nose choked me. Bitter liquids were threatening to gurgle up into my throat and spill out of my mouth. I bit my lower lip. The door was finally open. Tetsuo and I rushed out of the subway onto the platform, as if we were being pushed out by the other passengers. I knew I had a knife stabbed me in my side. I placed my hand on the wound, but there was no knife—there was no wound to be found.

In this scene, Aiko’s repressed feelings of trauma and shame over her existence as *chōsenjin* within Japanese society, which she has long kept hidden under her social mask, finally becomes known to the public through a public outburst that that express her despair and helplessness. The enigmatic soliloquy (“Kill me... Why don’t you kill me if you want to...”) that Aiko repeats twice, accompanied by the dramatic act of sobbing, breaks through the outward mask called Aiko, which she has donned all her life and through which she adjusts her inner feelings and honest opinions, in conformity with the established rule of a closed society, allowing her to be considered a “normal” Japanese girl. Being fully aware that such a performance, both verbal (soliloquy) and non-verbal (crouching down and wailing uncontrollably), makes her seem like “a crazy woman” in the public’s eyes, Aiko panics when she thinks of how her own external expressions can overwhelm her conscious control, as, all the while, she continues to suffer sudden, unexpected pain and discomfort in her body. This scene is a pivotal moment for the entire narrative, as Aiko’s recurring corporeal sensations of distress, which she has managed to keep private in previous scenes, push her to the breaking point and force her to break her silence about the psychological trauma she has endured. Despite the underlying significance of this scene, however, Lee Yang-ji’s description of the details of what happens to Aiko, both physically and psychologically, remain vague. By leaving her readers with this ambiguity, Lee invites them, not only to vicariously experience the complete confusion Aiko is thrown into in this scene, but also to turn their attention to Aiko’s feelings of helpless desperation over losing bodily control in a closed public space, from which she finds no escape. In so doing, the author represents this closed public space, dominated by the crowd’s judgmental witnessing of Aiko’s “deviant” performance, as a metaphor for the normality of the dominant culture’s unified values and identity, as perceived through Aiko’s lens. The invisible power of the collective, thus, constantly arouses an undefined fear in her body that finds no escape from the

imagined community of Japan, in which Aiko is gradually being deprived of her individual identity and dignity as a human being.

By describing how Aiko's emotional breakdown on the train establishes her as an outcast from society in this scene, the author throws into sharp relief the impact of socially-sanctioned forms of behavior on the construction of a fixed image of national, cultural and gender identity. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman uses the theatrical stage as a metaphor for the public sphere of human society, on which every individual plays a performing role before the eyes of "the others," whom s/he considers "the audience." Goffman calls this performing self one's "front," "which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance."⁴⁷ A person's "front" must manage a setting or a scene correctly in order to successfully navigate the daily drama of his or her social life. In constructing a "front," thus, each individual must interact with the audience as a performer, through which s/he gradually creates a fixed character or self-image within a certain social group. Goffman explains how the process of making a social identity through his or her own repetitive performance of the self works with the specific aim of achieving an appropriate balance between the social expectations of the group and the intent of the individual:

Knowing that the individual is likely to present himself in a light that is favorable to him, the others may divide what they witness into two parts; a part that is relatively easy for the individual to manipulate at will, being chiefly his verbal assertions, and a part in regard to which he seems to have little concern or control, being chiefly derived from the expressions he gives off. The others may then use what are considered to be the ungovernable aspects of his expressive behavior as a check upon the validity of what is conveyed by the governable aspects.⁴⁸

In this pervasive pattern of interaction between performer and audience, the performer attempts to present an idealized version of him-or-her self, mainly through "his verbal assertions," as language is the most easily manipulated technique for presenting oneself, whereas the audience routinely screens "the validity" of the statements made by the individual through the "ungovernable aspects" of his expression, that is, the speaker's non-verbal behavior. Lee Yang-ji exposes the problematic aspects of social interaction between a stigmatized individual and the dominant group in Japan by creating a scene in which a live "audience" closely scrutinizes Aiko's "ungovernable" non-verbal behavior to dismiss her in disgrace from the public stage of the train. When Aiko fails to present a desired self before her audience through controlled fluent speech in the Japanese language—which informs of her Japanese-ness/insider-ness (as a native speaker of the national/official language)—the artificiality of her "skin" which formerly allowed her to pass as Japanese becomes externalized. As soon as her outward mask is off, her Other identity that Aiko hides emerges from below the surface. Unlike an obedient, orderly and

⁴⁷ Erving Goffman. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1956), 22.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

docile Japanese mask inscribed on the surface of her body through daily experiences of performing her Japanese-ness, the Korean blood that circulates through her body under her skin materializes before the public's eyes with the implication of its "unruliness" through her disruptive non-verbal behavior. In the context of this interaction between Aiko and her Japanese audience, therefore, Lee Yang-ji emphasizes the heroine's deep feelings of pressure as a stigmatized Zainichi woman to conform to the desired "front" of the mainstream cultural image of "a normal Japanese" before others in her everyday reality.⁴⁹ The uncontrolled expression of misery and grief that suddenly bursts forth from the depths of her psyche and makes Aiko a nuisance to Japanese crowds, not only represents Aiko's deeply internalized view of herself as an ill-behaved *chōsen* woman, haunted as she is by the phantom of Japan's national identity, but also, in her own mind, becomes evidence of her inherent inferiority associated with the ancestral lineage of her Korean blood.

Lee Yang-ji uses Aiko's body as the disobedient "object" of her inner "subject," making gestures symbolic of her inner trauma, in order to expose her heroine's internalized subjective view of the Japanese "audience." In the scene above, the distress and pain Aiko feels throughout her entire body become more intense after her verbal interactions with two different men inside the train—her brother, Tetsuo, and an anonymous male passenger—signaling how these interactions further deepen her bodily-self perception as a cursed nuisance. In her brief conversation with Tetsuo, Aiko asks him a question first ("Why do you think our parents have come to be the way they have?"), to which he replies ("I don't know. I think they themselves don't know *why* either"), admitting his total lack of knowledge about the underlying causes of the destructive conflict between their parents. Shortly after hearing his answer, Aiko begins to recite the mysterious soliloquy ("Kill me... Why don't you kill me if you want to...").

As previously discussed, Aiko is intuitively aware of the roots of the conflict—that is, her father's internalization of Japanese colonial nationalism, which necessitates that he erases all ethnic contaminations—Korean traits—from his life, including his wife. Thus, her solitary cry of anguish juxtaposed with Tetsuo's response to her, which reflects his deeply internalized vision of his mother's subjective position in the family, amounts to an outburst in the collective female voice of mother and daughter, which, from the colonial male viewpoint, is the abject. Despite finding her voice, which subverts male authority and the power of imperial prejudice in this scene, Aiko's bodily pain only increases afterwards, suggesting how such verbal defiance hurts no one but herself, as it only damages her self-image under scrutiny of the dominant group. The intensity of the distress in her body reaches its climax after the man in the crowd deems her "crazy." The anonymity of this male voice produces a collective voice in Aiko's ears, unlike the single voice of her brother, thereby resonating in her mind with her father's insulting words to

⁴⁹ In *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Erving Goffman explores the normalizing power of social interaction between a stigmatized individual (e.g., people with mental illness, racial minorities, gays and lesbians, and ex-convicts), and his or her audience. Goffman emphasizes how such social interaction places a heavy burden on the person with social stigma, as he or she must carefully follow societal rules by incorporating standards from the dominant ideology in a given society and meeting others' expectations about what he or she ought to be. Consequently, the stigmatized person "must necessarily pay a great psychological price, a very high level of anxiety, in living a life that can be collapsed at any moment." Erving Goffman. *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. (London: Penguin, 1963), 87.

her mother at home and the ryokan's head clerk's slur on Chika in Kyoto, calling them "crazy" chōsen women. Through this male voice, which arouses the most intense pain in Aiko's body, the author suggests that the heroine's recurring physical distress has its roots in Aiko's paradoxical and ambivalent view of her physical self (with the dual self-perception of "always looking at one's self through the eyes of others"⁵⁰). Her continual exposure to the stigmatizing labels placed on chōsen women both in domestic and public spaces has gradually permeated her mind and body. While Aiko is deeply attached to her Zainichi female body, at the same time, she feels a strong necessity to annihilate it in order to survive within male-dominated Japan. Feeling caught between the inside and the outside of her body, she begins to suffer from an existential crisis, which manifests itself in the physical symptom of severe nausea: she is unable to either keep "bitter liquids" down completely or vomit and expel them from her body entirely. Using indirect descriptions of how and why Aiko habitually suffers from sudden physical discomfort and pain for which she finds no remedy, Lee Yang-ji places a strong emphasis on the invisible violence of Japanese nationalism and its male power as the ongoing fallout from Japan's colonial past, which endeavors to preserve the collective image of Zainichi women as the abjected member of the Japanese nation. The end of this scene, which has Aiko finally getting off the train and discovering no external wound in her side (after being certain that someone in the crowd stabbed her with a knife), the author is emphasizing the depth of Aiko's psychological wounds as a second-generation Zainichi woman. These traumas are exacerbated by the fact that there is no visible evidence of her inner experiences and no matter how hurt she is, her cries for help are largely ignored.

Immediately after this episode of Aiko's invisible stigma being exposed to the public's eyes, she begins to experience intense terror while in crowd-gathering facilities, such as train stations and movie theaters. When in contact with a swarm of strangers, she feels profound dread, which becomes visible only to her through fearful hallucinatory visions, throughout her physical body. One of these hallucinatory images includes her body being stabbed with a knife by a stranger coming out of nowhere from the crowds, and subsequently crushed under the weight of the Japanese masses remaining impervious to the wounded body they were treading upon. She says:

日本人に殺される—そんな幻覚が始まったのはあの日からだった。満員電車に乗った時は一駅ずつホームに降りて無傷を確かめ、また電車に乗った。洪水のような人の群れに押されて駅の階段を降りる。ここで殺されて私は血だらけになってのたれ死ぬのだ。どうにか無事に降り切ってもまた階段をのぼらなければならない。後ろから駆け上がってくる人の波。私は階段を一段踏み上がる瞬間、下にいる誰かが私のアキレス腱を切り裂く。私は日本人たち

⁵⁰ Within the historical context of racial hierarchy in American society, W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) coined the term "double consciousness," which refers to the psychological process of African Americans being forced to view themselves through the lens of race prejudice established by the dominant white culture and language. Regarding this term, he writes the following:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

W. E. B. Du Bois. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Originally published in 1903. (New York, Avenel, NJ: Gramercy Books, 1994), 2.

の下敷きになって息絶える。暗い映画館も恐怖だった。座席から出ている後頭部に刃物を突き刺されて頭を切り取られるのだと思いこみ、ろくに映画も見ないまま外にとび出した。

私の中にある光景が浮かび上がった。仕込みの時間になって、桂が煙草をくゆらせながら調理場に現れる。

「...」

桂は昼の休憩時間になるとアルバイトの学生相手に棒を振り回し、人間の首の切り方を教えていた。桂は中国人の首をきったあの手で米をといでいたのだ。血を浴びたあの手で炊いた飯を盛っていたのだ。⁵¹

The Japanese would kill me—the phantom of such an idea haunted me since that very day. Whenever I boarded a crowded train, I had to get off at each station in order to make sure I was unhurt, after which I'd catch the next train to continue my trip. At the destination station, I constantly imagined myself dying in a sea of blood while descending the stairs, pushed by a flood of passengers. Even when I managed to descend all the stairs safely, there were still other stairs to ascend before arriving at the ticket gate. Waves of people were moving upward right behind me. I would imagine that in an unguarded moment, when I was taking one step up, someone behind me could easily slash my Achilles heel with a knife. Then I'd fall down, crushed under the weight of a Japanese crowd, and soon expire on the spot. The inside of a dark movie theatre terrified me, as well. While sitting in my seat in the darkness, I was horrified by the idea of how, in an unpredictable moment, someone could stab the back of my neck with a knife and then cut off my head. Unable to stop myself from picturing such a fearful image, I had to leave the theatre without even watching the movie.

A vision from my days at the ryokan in Kyoto suddenly came to my mind. Around the time we began preparing meals for our guests, Katsura, an old man who was assigned to cook rice, came to the kitchen, smoking a cigarette.

[...]

At lunch breaks, Katsura always brandished a stick, while teaching students working part-time how to cut off a human head [with a Japanese sword]. Katsura was washing rice with *that* hand, the one with which he had cut off the heads of the Chinese. He was serving rice to the guests with hands that had been soaked in blood.

By portraying Aiko's body as speaking the language of pain and trauma through haunted visions and memories, Lee Yang-ji points to the historical voice of the traumatized bodies of *chōsenjin*, a voice that has remained largely disregarded in the official narratives of Japan's modern history.⁵² Here, Aiko is having a difficult time

⁵¹ *Nabi T'aryōng*, 50-1.

⁵² Michael Weiner points out that Japan's colonial-era atrocities against Koreans in Japan, such as coercive abuses of unregulated labor (including the Shinano River Incident) and the massacres of Koreans in 1923, have been rarely discussed in Japanese school textbooks in postwar Japan. Likewise, these

feeling safe and secure in cramped public places, due to the traumas she imagines, combined with a visual memory from the past in which one of her former co-workers in Kyoto, a World War II veteran named Katsura, is re-enacting the scene of cutting “off the heads of the Chinese” during the war with pride and impunity. In conveying Aiko’s internalized trauma as physiological and non-verbal, which have not yet emerged as history in postwar Japanese society, the author situates Aiko’s experience in this scene as a rupture that disputes the one-sided literary representation of modern Japan, which has been predominantly established only by the powerful male voices (e.g., *bungô* or Japan’s literary masters) and their written language.

In her reflections on the relationship between history and literature, Lee Yang-ji often explores the issues surrounding the political violence against Koreans in Japan during the colonial period in her novels, to show its relevance to contemporary Japanese society. In relation to Aiko’s living reality as seen from the inside, filled with instinctive fear towards “the Japanese,” the context of *Nabi T’aryŏng* becomes clearer when compared to Lee Yang-ji’s second work of fiction, *Kazukime* (“Diving Maiden,” 1983). In it, Lee depicts *Kazukime*’s unnamed Zainichi female protagonist, simply known as *kanojo* (“she” or “a woman”), as living in a constant fear of being judged, observed and abused by “the Japanese,” just like *Nabi T’aryŏng*’s Aiko. Having always been guarded in her everyday reality, the novella’s heroine, “she” cannot help but heighten her sense of disconnection from the society in which she lives. *Kazukime* follows the heroine’s psychological process of being gradually forced into a position where she accepts death as the only exit from the oppressive national community of “Japan,” after her cries of anguish have been repeatedly ignored by those around her—her Japanese “audience.” In the following passage, “she” is confessing to her Japanese boyfriend that she is extremely fearful of even a small earthquake, suggesting how the physical sensation of vibration evokes traumatic memory of the racial massacres after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, which caused the deaths of more than six thousand Koreans in Japan.⁵³ The victims were lynched and brutally murdered in public places—including on the trains—by “normal” Japanese civilians, policemen and soldiers. “She” speaks out on her trauma as follows:

また関東大震災のような大きな地震が起こったら、朝鮮人は虐殺されるかしら。一円五十銭、十円五十銭と言わされて竹槍で突つかれるかしら。でも今度はそんなこと起こらないと思うの。あの頃とは世の中の事情が違っているもの。それにほとんどが日本人と全く同じように発音できるもの。

textbooks seldom cover Japan’s war efforts during Japan’s fascist era (from 1930s to 1945), the time period that marked the peak of violence against Koreans in Japan. Michael Weiner. *The Origins of the Korean Community in Japan 1910-1925* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1989), 203.

⁵³ According to an investigation conducted by Japan’s Ministry of Justice immediately after the 1923 massacre, the number of Korean victims was roughly 230. Today, the general consensus among researchers and scholars is that there were more than 6000 Korean victims, including young women who were also sexually abused. Shôji Yamada demonstrates that the number reported by the Japanese government after the massacre is extremely unreliable; Yamada reported that the Ministry of Justice attempted to misrepresent the massacres of Koreans as counter terrorism by referring to “fabricated Korean riots on October 20th, 1923.” Yamada also stated that agents of the government hid the bodies of slain Koreans in order to reduce the official number of victims. See Shôji Yamada, “What happened in the area of Greater Tokyo right after the Great Kantô Earthquake?—The State, the Media and the People.” *Comparative Genocide Studies*, Volume 3 (2012/2013).

「...」
私は逃げ惑うの、その後ろを狂った日本人が竹槍や日本刀を持って追いかけてくるわ、私は逃げ切れなくて背中をぐさっと刺されて、胸も刺されて血だらけになってのたうち廻るの。⁵⁴

If another earthquake as strong as the Great Kanto Earthquake hits Japan, I wonder if chōsenjin will be slaughtered again. I wonder if we will be forced to say “one yen and fifty sen, ten yen and fifty sen” and then stabbed with bamboo spears. But I think this time that kind of thing won’t happen. Today, we can speak and pronounce the Japanese language as naturally and fluently as nihonjin.

[...]
[If there is a massacre all over again,] I will run with all the speed I can, but a frenzied Japanese mob will run after me carrying bamboo spears and Japanese swords. I will be eventually caught by my pursuers; they will stab my back, slash my chest and I will writhe about drenched in blood.

Despite her desperate attempts to appeal to him for empathy and understanding in this scene, her boyfriend does not take her story seriously, considering her to be just muttering something bizarre. Told from the perspective of her traumatic memory, the 1923 massacre is the female protagonist’s present reality contiguously connected in the colonial past. On the other hand, to the ears of her Japanese boyfriend, who is unaware of the historical impact the colonial past has had on Zainichi Koreans, her story shaped by her phantom fear toward “the Japanese” sounds paranoid and delusional. The gap between “his” official reality and “her” private memory is epitomized by one Japanese phrase “she” associates with her sense of horror in relation to the 1923 massacre: “one yen and fifty sen (100th of yen), ten yen and fifty sen” (“*ichien gojissen, jūen gojissen*” in Japanese). This expression refers to Korean immigrant workers’ difficulty in pronouncing the Japanese language.⁵⁵ It was formulated anonymously by the Japanese for a specific purpose during the 1923 massacre, which was to strip chōsenjin of their “skins” which allowed them to pass as Japanese by revealing their inferior blood/race through detecting a Korean accent. Chōsenjin were forced by mobs of people to pronounce these words and were then murdered if they failed to pronounce them in “proper” Japanese. Armed with knives, bamboo spears and other homemade weapons, “ordinary” Japanese civilians indiscriminately slaughtered chōsenjin in public places as soon as they captured them.⁵⁶ Despite an unprecedented degree of mass violence in

⁵⁴ Yang-ji Lee. “Kazukime” in *Nabi T’aryōng*, 141.

⁵⁵ First-generation Korean colonial immigrants, many of whom were low-wage workers with no formal education, could not properly pronounce the voiced characters of the Japanese language known as *dakuon* (“hardened sounds”), including “j” and “g” sounds. With Korean accents, the phrase “*ichien gojissen*” would be pronounced as “*ichien koshissen*.”

⁵⁶ As a journalist, Kato Naoki traces the history of the 1923 mass murder by visiting various sites of the Korean massacres in the Kanto area, including the train stations, in which many Koreans were slaughtered immediately after being dragged out of the trains by Japanese mobs (which largely consisted of “ordinary” Japanese passengers). He emphasizes the importance of remembering this largely forgotten part of Japanese history by pointing out that there are many parallels between the occurrences in Japan after the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923 and what is happening in Japan today after the 3/11 earthquake in 2011.

modern Japanese history against Koreans in the context of nationalist ideologies of language, these facts have been largely omitted in Japan's official records, including school textbooks.⁵⁷

However, for survivors and many Zainichi Koreans, there is a strong sense of horror experienced in response to the utterance of this phrase. The memory of these events remains primarily in the form of anecdotes among many Zainichi Koreans to this day, but have been largely forgotten in Japanese culture. Knowing that “one yen and fifty sen” might, thus, sound like empty words to many of her (Japanese) readers, Lee Yang-ji is suggesting that the same words one speaks can have different meanings, depending on the historical and social location of the speaker in a given society. In so doing, she explicitly articulates the violence that has been a part of the dominant identity and language in Japan as a modern nation-state, emphasizing how the content of the speech uttered by chōsenjin themselves, especially women, has often been misinterpreted, distorted and falsified in the realm of political representation during both the colonial and postcolonial periods.

Looking back at the passage cited from *Nabi T'aryōng*, Aiko's fear of members of the Japanese masses can be understood as a dichotomy between being silenced and the defiant speech that can arise as a result—and her anger about the deprivation of the public voice, which leads to undisciplined acts of the talking that seem “crazy.” Throughout the narrative, Aiko's unruly tongue associated with her racialized body/blood is placed in opposition to the controlled male tongue (e.g., her father, brother, and Japanese boyfriend), which symbolizes the imposition of a colonialist national language and its disciplinary authority over her existence. When she breaks her silence, sharing her inner pain and trauma with others on the train, Aiko's spoken words are immediately altered by her audience into mysterious, unintelligible soliloquies—her tongue becomes the abjected member of the Japanese society as soon as it makes a sound. With the overwhelming majority of the audiences remaining ignorant about the darker sides of Japan's modern history, it makes sense that the heroine's public voice is denounced as what bell hooks call “crazy talk, crazy speech,” a disobedient female voice that disrupts the existing social positions, roles and rules in a patriarchal national system.⁵⁸ In its

Such corresponding consequences after the two earthquakes include the rise of nationalism in a time of crisis, the role of mass media in promoting the national unity among nihonjin, and most importantly, the emergence of a frenzied Japanese mob on the streets of Tokyo both in 1923 and 2013 collectively shouting “Kill all Chōsenjin.” Naoki Kato. *Kugatsu, Tokyo no rojo de: 1923 nen kanto daishinsai jenosaido no zankyo*. [In September, on the Streets of Tokyo: Reverberation of the 1923 Genocide after the Great Kanto Earthquake] (Tokyo: Korokara, 2014).

⁵⁷ On the issues surrounding the majority of Japanese intellectuals (such as historians and literary elites), who, after having survived the Great Kanto Earthquake, remained apathetic to the injustice and violence done to chōsenjin during the 1923 massacre, see Kūm Pyōng-dong. *Kanto daishinsai chosenjin yakusatsu mondai kankei shiryō* [Historical document related to the issue of the massacre of chōsenjin during the Kanto earthquake], vol. 1 (Tokyo: Ryokuin shobo. 1989).

⁵⁸ As a scholar, writer, social activist and a woman of color from a historically traumatized community (affected by such political violence as colonialism, slavery and war) in America, bell hooks often explores the tension that comes with having a public voice. In *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*, she shares with her readers the personal pain and adversity she experienced in the process of rising to become a public writer through overcoming “deep-seated fears and anxieties [that] characterized [her] childhood days.” Growing up in “the southern black community,” she was taught not to question social authorities (both racial and patriarchal): if she did, she would be punished by being labelled as a girl with “crazy talk, crazy speech.” She argues that the context of silence surrounding historical trauma is often multi-

emphasis on the female protagonist's inner resistance to a complete assimilation of her own voice into the dominant language in postwar Japan, *Nabi T'aryŏng* describes the paralyzing tension of a Zainichi woman's experience of finding her voice, which inevitably brings her intense pain, as it requires speaking against the will of her social authorities, including her own father. Being alienated from her ancestral home/culture and remaining a foreigner in the dominant culture of her home country, the heroine's existence is marked by her life journey transforming the pain and isolation of her in-between-ness into a positive self-affirmation through her own self-expression in language as directly connected with her female body, including her untamed tongue.

Towards the end of the story, the setting shifts from Japan to South Korea, as the heroine's growing desire to re-discover her voice in relation to the suppressed part of her Korean identity leads to her decision to "return" to and live in *uri nara*. In South Korea, she hopes to positively re-define who she is as a Korean Aeja by forming an empathetic connection with the people of *uri nara* through her mastery of traditional Korean arts. While continuing her kayagum lessons, Aeja also learns a traditional Korean performing art, "a solo oral technique" of musical storytelling known as *p'ansori*.⁵⁹ Despite her initial hopes for rescuing her sense of the connection with the world through reconnecting with her ancestral and cultural heritage, however, Aeja only relives her pain and fear all over again; in South Korea, she is viewed as a person with an imperfect national identity who speaks Korean with a Japanese accent. In the following lines, the "I" is recollecting the days during which her sense of inadequacy and isolation in South Korea was heightened—particularly when receiving *p'ansori* lessons from a master, Ms. Park, along with other pupils. Unable to pronounce "proper Korean" while singing a musical *p'ansori* narrative, her feelings of inferiority, shame and stigma as a Zainichi woman deepened:

半年近くが過ぎた今も、私は思うように歌が歌えない。パンソリ発声法の基本である喉を開くことすら人前でできないのだった。

dimensional, as it intersects in complex ways with class, gender and racial oppressions. Consequently, women who are in the vulnerable position within an oppressed group, in particular poor and working class young women of color, tend to deeply internalize their historically assigned roles as the voiceless and powerless Other. hooks writes:

Our speech [as working class African American women]...was often soliloquy, the talking into thin air, the talking to ears that do not hear you—the talk that is simply not listened to. Unlike black male preacher whose speech was to be heard, who was to be listened to, whose words were to be remembered, the voices of black women—giving orders, making threats, fussing—could be turned out, could become a kind of background music, audible but not acknowledged as significant speech ...[Unlike the direct voices of the male heroic subjects that drew praise for seeking justice, the female voices of] questioning authority...brought pain, punishments [often to the speakers themselves].

bell hooks. "talking back." in *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1989), 6-7.

⁵⁹ *P'ansori* is "a long form vocal music in which [a performer] sings a work of narrative literature with appropriate dramatic gesture." It is usually performed by a single vocalist ("*sorikkun*") accompanied by one drummer ("*gosu*") playing a barrel drum. The term *p'ansori* is derived from *p'an* meaning "site," "arena," or "stage" (a space created collectively by performers and audiences) and *sori* meaning "sound" or "song" (all the sounds produced by a singer, drummer and audiences). Marshall Phil R. *The Korean Singer of Tales*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 3.

一ヶ月程前、私が朴先生から白髪歌の稽古を受けていた時、背後で私の稽古を見ていた弟子たちが笑った。気づくと向かい合った朴先生も困った表情で笑いをこらえている。

「もう一度、歌ってごらんさい」

わけも解らず戸惑いながら朴先生に促されて歌ってみるとまた背後で笑い声。

「エジャ、滝はウリマルでポックポー（瀑布）。あなたのはこう、ポッポー、ほら違うでしょう」

だが私には発音の違いがよく掴めなかった。また歌い直してみる。

「エジャ、ポックポーは唇を強く破裂させて発音するのです。あなたのポッポーだと滝ではなくてキスするという意味になるんですよ」

くすくすと噛み殺していた笑いは爆笑となって私の背筋を締め付けた。

「日本」にも怯え、「ウリナラ」にも怯え戸惑っている私は一体どこに行けば心おきなく伽耶琴を弾き、歌を歌うことができるのだろう。一方でウリナラに近づきたい、ウリマルを上手に使いこなしたい、という思いがあるかと思えば、在日同胞であることの奇妙な自尊心が首をもたげて、真似る、近づく、上手になる、というのが何か強制的な袋小路に押しやられたようで、こちら側はいつも不利でダメ、もともと何もないという立場が腹立たしくなる。何も好きこのんでこんなおかしい発音になったのではない。二十五年間日本に生まれて育ってきたという事実にとったどうしようもない結果なのだと思巻いてみる。だがやはり私は階段に座っている。おかしい発音が顔から火が出るほど恥ずかしく、階段に座り込んだままドアを開けるのを躊躇している。

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I had spent about half a year in South Korea by then, but was still unable to sing my songs as I should. I hadn't even mastered the basic techniques for a *p'ansori* performance yet—opening my vocal chords wide—as I was too nervous to sing in front of other pupils.

One day, when I was receiving a lesson on *Paekbalga* from Ms. Park, I heard the other pupils giggling behind us. Such giggling made me realize that, in fact, Ms. Park, too, was withholding her laughter with a troubled brow. She said to me, “Sing the same part one more time.”

It puzzled me because I didn't know what was going on, but I sang it anyway. It raised their giggles again. Ms. Park said,

“Aeja, a waterfall is ‘*pok po*’ in *uri mal* [“our language” in Korean].

But you keep saying, ‘*bō bō*,’ see? Can you hear the difference?”

I couldn't recognize the difference between the two words, but I tried to sing the same part over again.

“Aeja, when saying ‘*pok po*,’ you need to build up tension around your lips and then pronounce the words with a burst of air. Your pronunciation sounds like ‘*bō bō*’ instead, which means ‘to kiss’ in *uri mal*,” said Ms. Park, and muffled giggling immediately turned into an explosion of laughter. Hearing such laughter behind me sent my back muscles into spasm.

⁶⁰ *Nabi T'aryōng*, 88-9.

Feeling frightened of staying in both Japan and *uri nara*, I didn't know where I should go to play the *kayagum* and sing songs to my heart's content. On one hand, I was desperate in my desire to get closer to *uri nara* by thoroughly mastering *uri mal*, my mother tongue. On the other, I carried in my heart a strange pride as a *Zainichi* Korean, which made me feel frustrated and angry at every turn. In *uri nara*, things were always against me, as if I were forced into a corner where I must master the Korean language by copying the speech uttered by others. Yet, in reality, I was there, alone, sitting on one of the stairs outside the door. It always made me extremely ashamed to speak Korean with incorrect pronunciations, making it very difficult for me to open the door of the lesson studio.

The above passage illustrates Aeja's feelings of "extreme shame" when she "speak[s] Korean with incorrect pronunciations," and the consequent disaffection and disdain she feels from her fellow Koreans. Just as in Japan, Aeja feels her in-betweenness. Because she must sing aloud, people are able to hear her Japanese accent and silently label her as a non-member of the united national community of South Korea, unlike when she gives a solo performance on the *kayagum*—in which she discovers a spiritual connection with her ancestors. Aeja has difficulty pronouncing the Korean word "*pok po*" ("a waterfall"), which not only makes her inferior to other pupils, but also disqualifies her from becoming a potential inheritor of the purity and authenticity: *p'ansori* performances represent the "national culture" of South Korea.⁶¹ In South Korea, too, her *Zainichi* tongue represents a transgressor of the national boundaries between purity (home) and contamination (foreign), and insider and outsider speech.

Afraid of being seen as an object of disdain and criticism because she cannot express herself in "normal" speech, Aeja gradually withdraws into her own world of isolation, public silence and invisibility, while heightening her sense of despair over finding a sense of belonging and acceptance in her motherland. The ways in which Aeja feels implicit pressure not to express her thoughts and feelings to other people symbolize her feeling of isolation from South Korea's "us-identity" as *uri nara saram*—"the people of our nation" as racially, culturally and linguistically "one people."

Faced with the impossibility of overcoming a stigmatized self-image even in her ancestral land, Aeja comes to realize that, as a *Zainichi/chôsen* woman—who is neither completely *nihon-jin* or entirely *hanguk-in* (South Korean)—the cultural rules of racial purity and national unity, which naturally silence those in the non-dominant cultures, has been imposed not just by the colonialist (Japanese) language but also by that of the South Koreans. By describing the heroine's sense of alienation in both countries, Lee Yang-ji conveys the inherent tendencies of dominant collective identities, under the name of unified national communities, to create conditions of oppression, as the maintenance of such communities promotes a strong repulsion against the ambiguous Other who does not share that national identity, including the coherence between ethnicity and language. In doing so, the author encourages her readers to pay closer attention to the power dynamics

⁶¹ In 1963, *p'ansori* was designated by the South Korean government as Intangible Cultural Asset Number 5—one of the intangible Korean national treasures. In 2003, UNESCO officially recognized *p'ansori* as an important piece of world culture.

between the marginalized individual and the dominant group in both Japanese and Korean societies. She also opens the discussion to the more general idea of “nation,” “ethnicity” and “race” as concepts, highlighting the ways in which these concepts too often give one group a license to silently abuse members of non-dominant culture and dismiss the mistreatment.

The Singing *Sori* of a Butterfly

Nabi T'aryŏng narrates the heroine's experience of the pain of stigmatization, isolation and “imperfect” personhood through the physical language of her body that speaks through the silence (hallucinations, physical discomfort and nausea) and the verbal expressions that cannot be adequately assimilated in the symbolic order of an official language (non-coherent muttering/“nonsense” soliloquy). While heightening her sense of belonging “nowhere” by repeatedly failing to establish felt-level mutuality through her communication with her fellow Koreans, Aeja begins to have the same physical symptoms of illness and pain in South Korea just as experienced in Japan. When entering such crowded public places as a market and a landmark building, she finds it hard to breathe, feeling dizzy and nauseous among the Korean masses. In addition to recurring illness, she often sees visual hallucinations in South Korea, including a white butterfly that appears more frequently than any of her other visions. Despite its repeated appearance, the author's explanation for this phantom image remains ambiguous throughout the narrative. However, Lee Yang-ji provides her readers with a non-verbal cue that suggests a shift in her protagonist's sense of who she is, which takes place along her inner journey toward fuller self-acceptance. Each time the heroine catches a sight of a white butterfly in her imagination/hallucination, the same image is paired in her mind with different meanings—at the beginning, it is a voiceless being flittering about aimlessly, and later, it is perceived as a beautiful creature with the wings of freedom—which suggests her increased capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities in life. In the novel, Aiko/Aeja sees the vision of a white butterfly in the critical scenes, including one in which her life's pain has reached its unbearable peak in Japan, which leads to her decision to “escape” to South Korea.

Just before the story shifts from Japan to South Korea, Aiko is reminiscing about the dark night into which she was crying alone at the park, a place to which she escaped from the public's eyes, which had previously discarded her emotional outburst as invalid. She began to play the kayagum in her imagination, as a way to express the non-verbalized deep inner emotions such as shame, anger and trauma. Suddenly, the non-representational elements of the sound of the kayagum she felt in her body—such as melody, beat and rhythm—elicited the vision of a white butterfly from the starless night sky:

潤んだ目を空に向ける。伽耶琴散調の旋律が蘇える。曲がった左の人差し指に力を入れて絃を押えると、界面調の微妙な音が膝の上から滲み出た。

「...」

チニャンジョ、チュンモリ、チュンジュンモリ—旋律を追っていた私の目に白い蝶が映った。闇の中に白い蝶が飛んでいる。蝶は確かに暗い断層の中を翻っていた。私は立ち上がり蝶の方に向かって歩いた。瞬く。すると蝶はす

つと闇の中に消え、また小さくその姿を現した。涙で輪郭がぼやけると蝶はゆらりと大きく舞い上がる。⁶²

I turned my tearful eyes up to the sky. The rhythm and melody of the *kayagum sanjo* sprang up within me. I imagined myself pressing a single string of the kayagum with a bent index finger on my left hand. I felt subtle and delicate sound vibrations through my lap [on which she placed the kayagum in her imagination]
[...]

Chinyangjo, Chungmori, Chungunmori—⁶³ Looking into the sky, I traced with my eyes the path of sound my kayagum takes, and then, suddenly, my eyes caught sight of a white butterfly. The white butterfly was flying alone between the layers of deep darkness in the night sky. I stood up, walking toward the butterfly. It disappeared in a blink of an eye and then reappeared in another blink. When tears began to cloud my vision, the butterfly soared high up into the sky.

By expressing her heroine's voiceless sob through the sound of her imaginal kayagum, Lee Yang-ji represents the female protagonist's enduring hope to find a place in and feel her connection to the world. As a sensitive observer of the two women she deeply cares about, Chika and her mother, whose voices remain largely absent under the controlled male voice throughout the narrative, Aiko internalizes the traditional role of a chōsen woman, which implicitly prohibits her from expressing her voice as equal among others in Japanese society. The above scene, in which Aiko hides in the dark, shielding herself from the public eye in order to express her suppressed emotions, indicates how deeply she has internalized the outsider's view of her self. However, Aiko's persistent quest for finding a safe place to express her own voice unrestricted by the language of social authorities also becomes manifest in a scene when the white butterfly is visible only to her. Here, she is imagining her body as the source of the kayagum's sound production, a sound that reverberates throughout her body and then soars high up into the unbound sky. No longer is her non-verbalized pain contained within the boundary of her own female body; it is now shared with others in the realm of sound—an amorphous realm in which it is difficult to set fixed boundaries of culture, ethnicity/race, nation and gender. Watching the butterfly flying along to the imagined sound of the kayagum, the heroine is looking at her internalized self-image as the voiceless Other, relegated exclusively to the realm of psychological reality rather than material reality, of an image seen rather than a body lived and felt. By using the hallucinatory vision of a white butterfly that embodies her heroine's double consciousness—her “self” seen through the eyes of “others”—and her inner voice expressed through the multiple “unofficial” languages, Lee Yang-ji endeavors to create a new language for her autobiographical expression, which not only highlights the ways in which racial, national, gender and class oppression intersects in the lives of chōsen/Zainichi women, but also generates an alternate vision that can defy her own self-image defined by others.

⁶² *Nabi T'aryōng*, 78-9.

⁶³ What is transcribed here is the Korean changdan rhythm.

In South Korea, the white butterfly becomes visible to Aeja, connected to her memory of a female shaman performing a *salp'uri* dance, a type of non-verbal performance closely associated with Korean shamanistic traditions. In the following passage, Aeja is retracing the memory of her first experience of a live performance of the *salp'uri* dance while in her room in Seoul. Here, she is remembering how, while attending the performance, she saw a white butterfly flying around the *sugon* scarf, a long white handkerchief carried by the dancer during her performance:

目の前でまだスゴン（手巾）が翻っている。あのスゴンの先で舞っていた白い蝶—。私は目を閉じた。
百人足らずしか入れない小さな劇場は人いきれでむんむんとしていた。隣に座っている人の溜息も聞こえてくるほどきちきちになって座った私の位置から、金先生の指先も手の甲のしみも額に光る汗も見えた。
金先生の目、視線。そして、白、白づくめのチマ・チョゴリ、スゴンも白、白のサルプリー。白の中に際立った鋭い瞳はうるんで輝いていた。息づかいも聞こえた。笑っているようで決して笑っていない。泣き出しそうにも見えた。苦しくて何かに哀願している。いや哀願ではなく諦めのような静けさだ。客席に媚びない毅然とした視線、身体中から沁み出てくる匂い、そう匂いとしかいえないもの。
恨（ハン）だ。⁶⁴

The white *sugon* scarf is still floating up in the air in front of me. Remembering how the white butterfly was flying around the tip of the white scarf, I close my eyes [to remember a time when she watched a live performance of the *salp'uri* dance].

The tiny hall with a capacity for about 100 people was packed. The seats were very tight; I could even feel the person next to me breathing a faint sigh. From where I was sitting, I could see the tips of [salp'uri master] Ms. Kim's fingers, the spots on the back of her hand, and the drops of sweat shining on her forehead. I could also see her eyes, her gaze and the color white—the traditional white Korean costume of *chima chogori* and the white *sugon* scarf in her hand—it was a white *salp'uri* dance. I could clearly hear the sound of the performer's breathing. There seemed to be a smile on her face, but she was definitely not smiling—she also looked as if she would burst out crying at any moment. I could see a pained and imploring look on her face. Yet, one couldn't call it “imploring” exactly; it was more like the silence that came from a deep sense of resignation in life. Her resolute gaze revealed no flattery toward her audience. As a member of the audience, I sensed a smell filtering out of her entire body. Yes, it was the smell—there were no other words to describe what I felt from her presence on stage—it was *han*.

Salp'uri is a non-verbal solo dance that was originally performed in Korean shamanistic rituals known as *kut*. Although shamanism has been practiced in Korea since ancient times, it was largely suppressed by the Korean imperial government during the

⁶⁴ Ibid., 97-8.

Chosŏn period (1392-1910) with Confucianism dominating as the state ideology. During the colonial period, Korean shamanistic beliefs and practices became marginalized under disdain and suppression, as the colonial government demanded that all colonized Koreans worshiped the Japanese Emperor as the ultimate patriarchal authority and the only living God of the Empire.⁶⁵ It was during the Chosŏn era—the 500-year period during which Korean patriarchal power and the oppression of women reached its height—however, that Korean shamanism flourished by developing into women’s traditions that remained outside the public realm of male power.⁶⁶ In the above passage, Aeja intuitively makes an instant, but powerful connection with a salp’uri master, Ms. Kim, through an atmosphere of acceptance and empathy created by her live performance. Aeja soon learns the profound cultural background of the salp’uri dance associated with shamanism and its historical support of the emotional side of women’s lives, a tradition that has been experienced, lived and shared by her ancestral women, despite the society’s common perception of such practices as superstitious, fictitious and bizarre. Literally meaning “to release *han*,” (the word *sal* in salp’uri means *han*, or emotional difficulty, and *p’uri* to release it) salp’uri is widely known as a dance that embodies *han*.⁶⁷ Though defined above, the term *han* is a concept that defies any fixed definition. Generally, it represents a troubled state of mind resulting from the accumulation of suppressed emotions, in particular, “negative” feelings as anger and resentment.⁶⁸ In the context of a patriarchal Korean society, this concept is closely associated with what can loosely be called the feminine mode of expression, as it has played a key role in women’s artistic practices—especially those that flourished during the Chosŏn period, such as women’s poetry⁶⁹ and shamanism.

Traditionally, Korean shamans, usually female, come from one of the classes of social outcasts that included traveling artists and courtesans. Implicit in the tradition of a salp’uri dance is thus that a performer herself becomes a living symbol of the confluence of personal and collective feelings of *han*. As an individual who, excluded from the “official” social structure, has acknowledged her own profound hardship and suffering in her own life, a shaman is believed to have a greater capacity to relate with a wide range of immeasurable *han*, which each of her clients seeks to release through a shamanistic ritual. Since the Chosŏn period, both the shamans and spectators, including the hostesses of such rituals, have mostly been women, and all the spectators are encouraged to participate actively in a ritualistic performance (such as dance), through which “they can have a moment of fun and a good cry.”⁷⁰ Such collective performances have created a spiritual community for women outside the political and patriarchal ideologies, in which

⁶⁵ Yang-ji Lee. “Mizoku dentō buyō” [Traditional Shamanistic Dance] in *Lee Yang-ji zenshu*, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 612.

⁶⁶ Michael Pettid. “From Abandoned Daughter to Shaman Matriarch,” 227.

⁶⁷ “Mizoku dentō buyō,” 610-1.

⁶⁸ Jan Hoon Lee. *The Exploration of the Inner Wounds—Han*. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 101.

⁶⁹ On Korean women’s poetry and its expression of *han* flourished during the Chosŏn period, see Young-hee Lee. “Women’s Literature in the Chosŏn period: Han and the Songs of Women.” *Korean Studies New Pacific Current*. Edited by Dae-Sook Suh. (Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawaii, 1994).

⁷⁰ Jonghyun Lee. “Shamanism and Its Emancipatory Power for Korean Women.” (*Affilia*. Feb 2009), 195.

they could share, heal, and release their suppressed feelings of han, which have mostly resulted from the social oppression of women.

In the above scene from *Nabi T'aryŏng*, Aeja feels an intimate sense of connection when attending a live performance of a shamanistic dance, which helps her release her personal feelings of han, including the sense of alienation she has accumulated living in Japan and South Korea. Here, Aeja is seeing Ms. Kim's "eyes, her gaze and the color white," hearing the rhythm of her "breathing" and smelling han "filtering out of her entire body." Through all of these sensual experiences, she feels "alive" in her own body and (re)connected to the outside world. What helps Aeja escape from the psychological prison built with a fixed identity as an in-between, abjected "Zainichi woman"—a self-image that was one-sidedly imagined, observed and categorized only in the "heads" of her distant observers—is the relational bond created between a performer (Ms. Kim) and an audience (Aeja). What Ms. Kim radiates from her entire body, the "smell" of han, elicits a strong response from Aeja, and this smell becomes visible to Aeja through the dancer's non-verbal public performance. Ms. Kim's han—her inner trauma and pain—speaks itself through the silence and her bodily expression. In her performance, the unfathomable depth of her han manifests itself in ambiguous external expressions, for example, a facial expression that makes it difficult for an audience to fully understand if she is either smiling or crying. Just like Chika's ambiguous responses that make her the object of the ryokan community, the enigmatic look on Ms. Kim's face reflects a deeply internalized view of herself as an abjected being/a social outcast—a female shaman.⁷¹ Unlike Chika's (and Aeja's mother's) utter helplessness over social conditions, however, Ms. Kim's live performance implies that she has made a conscious decision to remain in the space of abjection as a shaman/storyteller/healer, a decision that bespeaks "her resolute gaze," which shows "no flattery toward her audience." While participating in Ms. Kim's live performance, Aeja is experiencing an epiphany, a spiritual flash that changes the way she sees her self in relation to others, by discovering an ancestral woman of experience who can positively impact her life. Through the spiritual connection she builds with Ms. Kim's physical being—dancing in a white costume, with a long, billowing skirt called *chima*—deeply imprinted on Aeja's memory as the vision of a white butterfly, Aeja begins to transform her self-image from a phantom object of observation into a body that lives and dances by her own free choice.

Toward the end of the story, Aeja receives a phone call from her sister in Japan, notifying her of their second brother's death. Having suddenly lost her oldest brother, Tetsuo, several months ago, Aeja faces a time of great sorrow and loss over her two brothers who have died young. *Nabi T'aryŏng* ends with an implication of the heroine's conscious decision to actively participating in her life by accepting the life events before her in a receptive manner, including the ultimate unknown for humans—death—as an inseparable part of her being:

哲ちゃんも死んだ。和男兄も死んだ。大きな風を感じた。その風の磁力が私の身体を掴み上げる。私も死んでこの大きな風の中に入っていくのだ。

⁷¹ Lee Yang-ji's real-life salp'uri teacher, Kim Suk-cha (1927-1991), on whom Ms. Kim is modeled in the novel, came from a hereditary shaman household. Her ancestors have been outcasts in a trans-generational inherited social class, and due to this family background, Kim went through a series of adversity such as discrimination (from both Koreans and the Japanese), stigmatization and poverty in her life during the colonial period.

明け方近くになった。私は窓を開け、部屋を丹念にそうじした。そして身体を拭きサルプリの衣装をとり出した。純白のチマ・チョゴリ、洗ったばかりのポソン（足袋）、着替えた私は長いスゴンを手にして下宿の屋上にのぼった。ぼっとした紫色の乳皮に覆われた空の裳裾に、ソウル市街が朝の予感をひめてひっそりとひろがっていた。点在している星のすき間から刃物のような冷気が私の身体を切りつけてくる。

「...」

1年前と変わらない風景、いや変わっているのに私が気づかないだけだ。十年後、二十年後、それは溜息がでるほど変わっていくに違いない。ウリナラは生きている。風景は移りゆく。私はその中で伽耶琴を弾き、パンソリを歌い、そしてサルプリを踊っていく。私はそのあり様のまま生きていくしかない。生きていくことはどこにあっても変わらない。伽耶琴が旋律を奏で始めた。白い蝶が飛び始める。蝶を目で追いかけながら私はサルプリを踊った。間断なく伽耶琴は律動し、吹きつける風の中にスゴンが翻った。⁷²

Tetsuo had died and then Kazuo died. I felt a powerful wind rising up around me and its magnetic force lifting my body up. I, too, would die someday, joining this flow of wind energy.

Dawn was approaching. I opened the window and cleaned my room. I towelled myself carefully and took a white *salp'uri* costume out of my bag. I dressed myself in the white *chima chogori* costume and a pair of clean, white *poson* socks. With a white *sugon* scarf in my hand, I went up to the rooftop. Under a milky purple sky, the city view of Seoul stretched out among the sound of silent anticipation in the morning air. Between the stars that remained visible in the sky, a chilly breeze came down, cutting through my body like a sharp knife.

[...]

This same scenery had remained unchanged throughout the past year. No, it changed through time; only it was imperceptible to the human eye. Ten or even twenty years from then on, it would endlessly undergo a breathtaking transformation.

Uri nara was alive. The landscape transformed itself over the course of time. In the space and movement of time, I'd play the kayagum, sing the p'ansori, and perform the salp'uri dance. I'd always remain receptive to the passing of time. To live every moment of life is inalterable, no matter where I go.

The kayagum began its melodious sound in my ears. The white butterfly flew high up in the air. Following the movement of the butterfly, I took my first steps to my solo performance in the salp'uri dance. Accompanied by the endless rhythm of the kayagum sound, the white sugon scarf was floating and streaming gently in the morning wind.

This ending scene directly parallels the opening scene: in both scenes, the heroine is standing alone in a landscape at dusk/dawn, during which the world is neither

⁷² *Nabi T'aryŏng*, 102-3.

completely lit nor entirely dark, and such an outside scene is integrated into her inner experience of being in ambiguous identity. Unlike the opening scene in which the city view at dusk fading into the darkness of night represents her deploring sense of not belonging at “home,” however, the last scene, in which she looks at the sun rising, indicates that she realizes that she has gained a new way of seeing the external reality laid before her eyes. She is no longer a helpless young woman who escaped her home; while looking at the vision of a white butterfly with new eyes, she has increased her inner strength to accept her “in-between” identity as Aiko/Aeja in relation to her diasporic existence in postcolonial Korea and Japan. In this last scene, the “I” is standing alone on the roof of her lodging in a cold morning air; the icy wind cuts through her body dressed only in the thin fabric of chima chogori. While engaging in a ritual dance of salp’uri in a personal manner of both remembering and releasing strong attachment bonds she has built with her two brothers in this life, she is also performing her identity as a link to her female ancestors—Korean shamans. The vision of a white butterfly dancing in the air along with her thus indicates a shamanistic identity of her own choosing, through which to communicate with both the living and the dead, the visible and the invisible, as well as past memories and potential future experiences, in order to overcome the tradition of silence as well as pain—both her own and that of many others who desire to escape from the psychological constraints of imposed social conditions as stigmatized personhood. Unlike the function of the dominant culture’s language as a collective performance that defines the fixed boundaries of identity, the heroine’s discovery of a collective performance in Korean shamanism helps her transcend such fixed boundaries, through which to open a mutual dialogue with others, constantly leading her to a place of a new light and of a new self in the endless rhythmic cycle of life.

CHAPTER TWO

Presenting Autobiographical Theater as Ritual of Healing

“All biographies like all autobiographies like all narratives tell one story in place of another story.”

Hélène Cixous

“[T]hey straightened out the Mississippi River in places, to make room for houses and livable acreage. Occasionally the river floods these places. “Floods” is the word they use, but in fact it is not flooding; it is remembering. Remembering where it used to be. All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was. Writers are like that: remembering where we were, what valley we ran through, what the banks were like, the light that was there and the route back to our original place. It is emotional memory—what the nerves and the skin remember as well as how it appeared. And a rush of imagination is our “flooding.”

Toni Morrison

One of the most widely known writers in contemporary Japan, Yu Miri (1968-) became a major figure in Japanese literature during the 1990s. Yu received literary acclaim when she became the third non-ethnic Japanese winner of the prestigious Akutagawa Prize for her literary fiction piece with autobiographical elements, *Kazoku Cinema* (“Family Cinema”) in 1997. Although she has gained popularity and thus is known mostly as a novelist, Yu originally started her writing career as a playwright. She escaped from an abusive home at the age of 15, soon after which she joined the Tokyo Kid Brothers, a theatrical company created and directed by Higashi Yutaka (1945-2000), as a theater actress. It was this early acting career that eventually led her to become a professional writer; Higashi Yutaka discovered Yu’s artistic talent for autobiographical storytelling, encouraging her to develop it through writing rather than acting. At the age of 20, she made her literary debut as a playwright with her first work, *Mizu no naka no Tomo e* (*To Friend in Water*, 1988), and four years afterwards, she became the youngest recipient to date of the annual Kunio Kishida Prize for Drama—the most famous dramatics award in Japan—for her play, *Sakana no Matsuri* (“Festival for the Fish,” 1992).

Yu’s early works, both plays and novels, often include the motif of a young woman’s despair over a feeling of disconnection from others in the communities to which she belongs, and in particular, from her own parents.⁷³ Most of these early works repeat

⁷³ Yu’s stories often personify the systematic discrimination against Zainichi Koreans in postwar Japan, as well as the ways in which such discrimination affects the level of child maltreatment in Zainichi families. Having traditionally barred from all public and private sector employment, the majority of Zainichi Koreans during the 1970s (Yu’s childhood years) engaged in marginal economic activities such as working in *pachinko* (gambling) parlors and *mizushōbai*, the night-time entertainment business. Yu’s family was no exception: Her father worked in a pachinko parlor, and her mother was a cabaret hostess. While absent from home most of the time, her parents emotionally and physically abused her during her childhood. Yu produced her early works largely based on such childhood memories of shame, pain and secrecy surrounding domestic violence. The titles of many of these autobiographical works include the word “fish,” through which Yu metaphorically refers to her (protagonist’s) inner feelings of isolation and disconnection: like a nameless and voiceless fish swimming alone in the wide open ocean, her young female protagonists are often depicted as drifting aimlessly through Japanese society with no permanent “home,” unable to establish their sense of identity and belonging.

the same motifs that appeared in *Mizube no Yurikago* (“The Cradle by the Waterside,” 1997), her first autobiographical novel narrated by the protagonist named “Yu Miri.” In *Mizube no Yurikago*, while sharing with her readers the intense feelings of inadequacy and isolation that gradually deepened as she grew up in postwar Japan, in her postscript, Yu points out that the literary world she creates in the pages of her narrative is fictional.⁷⁴ In so doing, she emphasizes the subjective nature of writing, in which an author depicts reality through her own eyes, which is always different from others’ views on the same life events, thereby making it “fictional” in its subjectivity. It is through this perception that Yu seeks escape from reality in her fictions, which allow her a certain distance from the personal emotions attached to them—such as fear, frustration and anger—enabling her to transform her own self-image from a mere speaker of personal pain into a shaman-storyteller, whose voice transcends the boundaries between the public and private spheres, engaging her audiences beyond her own subjective emotional view of life. As a writer, Yu perceives her own living/lived female body as a space of ambiguity filled with the memories of the past, in which she can let her narrative voices freely travel between two worlds: the realm of the written and that of the unwritten.

Subverting Discourses of Otherness: Performing a Shamanistic Self in In-between Spaces

Over the course of her literary career, Yu came to be known as an autobiographical writer. During her early professional life as a writer, having written almost exclusively about motifs involving a young female protagonist’s sense of isolation and disconnection, she has placed a strong emphasis on the theme of shame felt by those who carry scars from past trauma. Among the explicit depictions of her own personal memories embedded in her fiction is the sexual abuse of a young girl by adult men, both strangers and acquaintances, as a consequence of parental neglect—a deeply damaging trauma that frequently appears in her autobiographical works. In creating such a literary space, which is private but public and fictional but true at the same time, Yu seeks a way to utilize the art of fiction to bring a long-neglected voice from the past to the surface, including that of her own personal truth as a young Zainichi girl previously submerged under the darkness of secrecy.

Despite her frequent literary use of the interplay between her private life and her public persona, Yu’s early works do not include any discussion of the collective Zainichi identity. By carefully evading the establishment of a link between her personal pain, as depicted in her fictions, and the shared racial oppression of the Zainichi community, she has sought venues beyond the space categorized as Zainichi literature, shifting away from the race-centered stance found in the literary works of the dominant male Zainichi writers. It was not until she began to write *Hachigatsu no Hate* (*The Bounds of August*) in 2002, which became the first fiction novel serialized simultaneously in both Japanese and South Korean national daily newspapers,⁷⁵ that she revealed her hidden aspirations to explore

⁷⁴ Miri Yu. *Mizube no Yurikago*. (Tokyo: Kadokawashoten, 1997), 270.

⁷⁵ *Hachigatsu no Hate* was serialized simultaneously in the *Asahi Shimbun* (one of Japan’s major daily newspapers), and the *Dong-a ilbo* (the leading daily newspaper in Korea since 1920). It was Yu Miri herself, who, considering that her autobiographical fiction would mostly take place in the Japanese Empire during the colonial era—the most controversial period of Japanese-Korean relations in a modern context—insisted that *Hachigatsu no Hate* be serialized in both Japanese and Korean national daily newspapers

the writing voice central to her Zainichi existence that pertained to her Korean ancestral roots. *Hachigatsu no Hate* centers on the personal histories of her maternal grandfather and the people in his life, many of whom died in solitude without sharing their brutally violent experiences of diaspora related to colonialism and war—and its aftermath. Having migrated alone from colonized Korea to Japan, her grandfather left his family behind in Korea, including his young daughter—Yu Miri’s mother. Later, toward the end of his life, he left Japan for South Korea, once again abandoning everything he had built, except this time, in Japan. He died alone in his motherland, Miryan, located in the southern part of the Korean peninsula. Yu Miri always identified her grandfather as an odd, irresponsible and selfish man. After his death, however, she discovered a different identity concealed in his past: he was one of the top marathon runners in Korea under Japanese rule, but left Korea for Japan after the 1940 Tokyo Olympic Games were cancelled, due to Japan’s wartime aggression in Asia. These were the Olympics he had aimed at participating in, as a member of the Japanese delegation. It was Yu’s accidental discovery of her grandfather’s colonial experiences shrouded in secrecy and non-verbalized pain that inspired her to break her own silence about her identity and voice in relation to the Korean diaspora during the colonial period (1910-1945). She was able to do so, through writing *Hachigatsu no Hate*, by retracing them back to her maternal ancestral land, Miryan.

Unlike the character “Yu Miri” that appears in *Mizube no Yurikago*, an autobiographical story told entirely in the form of a monologue (in the single voice of *watashi* or “I”), the “Yu Miri” in *Hachigatsu no Hate* appears only in the first and last two chapters. The narrators of the remaining twenty-six chapters consist of the polyphonic voices of more than forty characters from the past (as spoken by the multiple “I”s), most of whom are the author’s ancestors who were born in Miryan but forced into exile during the colonial period. Among all the characters in *Hachigatsu no Hate*, a novel that consists of thirty chapters with more than eight hundred pages, Yu Miri devotes a considerable amount of pages to narrating the life story of a young Korean girl called Kim Yong-fui. The longest chapter of *Hachigatsu no Hate*, *Ame ame fure fure* (“Rain, rain, let it rain”), and the following three chapters narrate the imagined life story of Yong-fui, who was forced to become a comfort woman (*Ianfu*) while confined inside a “comfort station”—a Japanese military-run brothel—during the early 1940s.⁷⁶ Yu

concurrently. By exposing her work to a “live” reading audience divided by ethnicity, different historical memories, perspectives and insights, Yu commits herself as a public figure to speaking out on highly-sensitive issues surrounding the Japan-Korea conflict. On Yu Miri’s aspiration to write this novel for both Japanese and South Korean reading audiences, see *Shisha=rekishi no koe ni mimi o sumasu hachigatsu no hate o hashiri nukete*. [“Lending an ear to the voices of the dead/history: A reflection on running and completing my journey of *Hachigatsu no hate*”]. *Shinchō* [Monthly literary magazine], Tokyo: Shinchō-sha, no. 101 (Sep. 2004), pp. 232-245.

⁷⁶ The term “comfort women” refers to the girls and women who were forced to provide sexual services to officers and soldiers in the Japanese Imperial Army before and during World War II. The Japanese military set up comfort stations (慰安所) for their soldiers beginning around the early 1930s and the comfort stations continued to operate in the areas the Japanese troops occupied until the end of the Second World War. The word “comfort” (慰安) was deployed by Japanese military leaders as a euphemism for what historian Yoshimi Yoshiaki calls “the sexual slavery system,” in order to obscure the forced nature of prostitution committed by Imperial Japanese soldiers. See Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II*. Trans. Suzanne O’Brien. (New York: Columbia Press, 2000).

developed this fictional character based on the name of a young girl from Miryan she had accidentally discovered while doing archival research on colonial Korea for this novel: a name enlisted as one of the comfort women during World War II. With no other trace of her but the name left behind in a written record that reduced her lived experience of pain and suffering to the “factual” number of victims among an estimated 50,000 to 200,000 women from throughout Asia,⁷⁷ Yu relies on this name as the only access for imagining the life story of this young woman from her ancestral hometown.

Yu Miri’s attempts to bring to light the individual stories of her Korean ancestors—which had remained submerged under layers of Japanese official historiography—provoked a sharp response from Japanese reading audiences. While writing *Hachigatsu no Hate*, and in particular, the chapters about the life story of former comfort woman, Kim Yong-fui, she received a large number of anonymous letters from Japanese readers making strong objections to her content.⁷⁸ Ultimately, the Asahi newspaper ceased publication of the novel (though its publication continued in the literary magazine *Shinchō*), due to the controversy over her representation of comfort women. The negative and often violent reactions from Japanese people toward Yu’s endeavor to expose her ancestors’ colonial lives in fiction reflected the social reality in Japan in the 1990s and the early 2000s, an era that saw a rise in neo-nationalism.⁷⁹ It was also during this period that several former comfort women from Korea came forward to testify about Japanese war atrocities by overcoming the silent shame of their traumatic pasts—a silence that had lasted for about half a century after the end of WW II.⁸⁰

The era thus marked an important turning point in the public discourse of Japan’s postwar memories of World War II: Almost for the first time, Japan faced the living bodies of its wartime victims—not the culturally-constructed image of the faceless Other—speaking in their own voices, publicly—and internationally—naming Japan as a brutal aggressor in the war.

The series of historical testimonies that were being given at the same time that Japanese nationalism was growing further provoked anti-Korean sentiment in Japan.⁸¹ In this political climate, Yu Miri, being the most outspoken Zainichi woman writer as well as the first widely popular Zainichi woman novelist, often was the target of death threats

⁷⁷ As a result of intentional destructions of official records by the Japanese government and military officials at the end of WW II, the exact total number of the victims remains unknown today. Most historians estimate the number at between 50,000 and 200,000. For a discussion of the estimated total number of comfort women, see Chang-hee Sarah Soh. “Teikoku nihon no ‘jūgun ianfu seido’ ron: Rekishi to kioku no seijiteki katto.” In Kurasawa Aiko et al eds. *Iwanami kōza: Ajia taiheiyō sensō*. Vol. 2. (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2005).

⁷⁸ Minato Kawamura. “Yonhi no tameni: hachigatsu no hate to iu jiken” in Ed. Hara Hitoshi. *Yu Miri: 1991-2010*. (Tokyo: Kanrin Shobō, 2011), 199.

⁷⁹ After the collapse of the “bubble economy” in 1991, Japan experienced a long-lasting recession. In the midst of economic anxiety, nationalistic language and ideas became increasingly popular, in particular among youth, as they widely permeated through such popular media as manga (comics) and internet bulletin boards. For example, during the 1990s, Kobayashi Yoshinori’s *gōmanizumu sengen*—a controversial series of manga with xenophobic and ultra-nationalist content—became a long-term bestseller in Japan in the context of the rising nationalism of the post-bubble era.

⁸⁰ Speakers included Kim Hak-soon (1924-1997), the first woman to ever testify in public about her experiences as a comfort woman. Kim came forward to sue the Japanese government for a formal apology and individual compensation in 1991.

⁸¹ For example, *Kenkanryū* (Hating ‘The Korean Wave’), a manga published in 2005 became a bestseller (sold more than 650,000 copies) in Japan.

from Japanese ethno-nationalists. Consequently, the literary production of *Hachigatsu no Hate* represents the author's gesture of resistance to imposed silence in the nationalistic environment of the 2000s Japan. As a writer, she committed herself to maintaining the right to artistic freedom of expression, in search of an alternative way to solve and heal the ongoing postcolonial conflict between Japan and South Korea.

This chapter explores *Hachigatsu no Hate* in the context of what Toni Morrison calls "literary archeology:" a narrative journey that any writer "who is black, or who belongs to any marginalized category,"⁸² might need to take when writing autobiographical narratives. Morrison argues that literary archeology is an author's use of both information—such as word fragments, images and memories—and imagination, through which the author reconstructs the unwritten history of her or his ancestors who were once seen as dehumanized objects by their oppressors/colonizers. She argues that the black male autobiographers who came before her, particularly those who wrote slave narratives, often tended to conceal the more terrible details of their experiences in order to make them "appear as objective as possible—not to offend the (predominantly white) reader by being too angry, or by showing too much outrage, or by calling the reader names."⁸³ Her task as a writer, as she defines it, is thus to rip this "veil," beneath which lies "the unwritten interior life" of her ancestors.⁸⁴ In other words, such an event in the past, usually kept inside the private sphere of the individual's body, is associated with a feeling of deep horror that has not been fully expressed in the public sphere or in the linear narrative of official history and historical facts, because of both public outcry and personal shame and fear. Morrison calls such indefinable lived experiences of her ancestors "emotional memory"—a memory that "the nerves and the skin remember"⁸⁵—remained stored nonlinearly inside the different parts of one's lived/living body.

This chapter will pay special attention to Yu Miri's attempts, in *Hachigatsu no Hate*, to understand the Korean diaspora—her ancestry—by partaking of its "emotional memory" through using both imagination and a plethora of fragmented information, such as the residual image of her grandfather, the testimonies of former comfort women and conversations with her ancestors in a shamanistic ritual. Doing so will show how Yu utilizes her writing/performing body as a medium/shaman that serves the function of opening a new literary space of deep listening, both on the part of the storyteller and the audience. As an ethnic Korean woman writer of the Japanese language, she represents her autobiographical narrative as a critical revival of her Korean ancestral traditions: the ritual healing practices of shamanism. A highly collaborative experience, the shamanistic ritual has played a crucial role in Korea in bringing peace in the local community and connecting with profound ancestral wisdom. The practice of concentrated listening in a shamanistic ritual context allows both the shaman and the audience to re-connect themselves with previously unheard voices—including their own and those of others (including the deceased)—which remain submerged under a "veil" of silence and unknown to the public. In her identity as a shaman in *Hachigatsu no Hate*, therefore, Yu Miri seeks to build new community and audiences based on compassion for others

⁸² Toni Morrison. "The Site of Memory" in Ed., Russell Ferguson; et al. *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*. (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, MIT Press, 1990), 302.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 302.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 302.

beyond national, cultural and linguistic boundaries. Using her artistic creativity, she hopes to collectively produce new narratives to fill the rifts in historical consciousness and memory pertaining to World War II and Japanese colonialism for both Japanese people and South Koreans.

Colonized Others, Fettered Words and Identity: Opening Ears to Voices on the Other Side

The first half of *Hachigatsu no Hate* takes place in Yu Miri's maternal ancestral land, Miryan, where her grandfather became a promising young marathon runner. The story begins with the character Yu Miri visiting present-day Miryan with the specific aim of talking to her deceased grandfather through the living body of a human medium: a female Korean shaman. The following scene takes place during a shamanistic ritual performed by three Korean female shamans and one male shaman, who simultaneously sing and dance to invite the spirit of her grandfather to enter into the body of a female shaman, who then acts as the mouthpiece for his spirit. In her conversation with her grandfather's spirit through the shaman, Yu Miri hears a regular panting sound (*suk-huh suk-huh*), which interferes with the speech of the spirit. Here, the sound exposes the memories of her grandfather's physical living/lived body as a professional marathon runner, memories that are deeply inscribed upon his spirit. It also symbolizes the non-verbalized pain and existential suffering he experienced as a refugee who, after having run away from home, became an in-between, socially-excluded (non-)being that did not completely belong to any stable position in society under any formal categorization of human groups, such as family, nation and culture:

巫女3 おれは墓などで眠らない すっすっはっはっ 走る すっすっはっ
はっ すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ

柳美里 どこを走っているんですか？

巫女3 ひと気のない夜道を すっすっはっはっ 数千里も夜を走り 数
万里も夜を走り すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ 風が夜明けを吹き
飛ばし すっすっはっはっ 朝は祈りのなかで閉じられた すっすっは
っはっ だれに耐えることができるか 永遠の夜を走ることが すっすっ
はっはっ おれは悔いている

柳美里 なにを悔いているんですか？

巫女3 なにを？ なにもかもだ（怒りを目尻とともに吊り上げて）おれに
なにを語らせる気だ！

柳美里 わたしは知りたいんです。なぜあなたが走るのをやめたのか、なぜ
自分の国と家族を棄ててひとりで日本に渡ったのか、なぜパチンコ屋を経営
したのか、なぜ五十八歳になってふたたび走り始めたのか、なぜふたたびす
べてを棄ててひとりで帰国したのか、なぜひとりぼっちで死ななければなら
なかったのか.....。

巫女3 すっすっはっはっ 疵は闇に口をひらく [...] すっすっはっはっ
闇にこだまする声を書き留めなさい 声が風を食らって消えうせないうち
に すっすっはっはっ 書き留めなさい

柳美里 なぜ書かなければならないんですか？

巫女3 すっすっはっはっ なぜ書くのか？ すっすっはっはっ それは
おまえが決めることではない おまえは書かなければならないのだ⁸⁶

Shaman 3: I never rest inside a grave *suk-huh suk-huh* I run *suk-huh
suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh*

Yu Miri: Where are you running?

Shaman 3: Night passes with no one around me *suk-huh suk-huh* I
have run several thousand *li* or even several hundred thousand *li*
throughout the nights *suk-huh suk-huh* The wind blows away the light
of daybreak; the morning has been shut down inside the prayers *suk-
huh suk-huh* Who could bear such pain of running through the eternal
darkness of night? *suk-huh suk-huh* How bitterly I repent!

Yu Miri: What are you repenting?

Shaman 3: What do I repent? Everything! (His anger rises in the outer
corner of his eyes.) What do you want me to tell you!

Yu Miri: I just want to know: Why did you stop running as a
professional marathon runner? Why did you immigrate to Japan alone,
having abandoned your family and homeland? Why did you open a
pachinko business in Japan and then, suddenly, begin to run a marathon
again at the age of fifty-eight? Why did you go back to Korea toward
the end of your life, alone, running away from everything you had built
in Japan? Why did you have to die alone?

Shaman 3: *suk-huh suk-huh* The wound opens itself to the darkness
[...] *suk-huh suk-huh* All at once, the pain turns into the sound of a
voice as it searches for a way out *suk-huh suk-huh* Write down the
voice echoing through the darkness *suk-huh suk-huh* before the voice
disappears in the blowing wind.

Yu Miri: Why do I have to write?

Shaman 3: *suk-huh suk-huh* Why do you have to write? *suk-huh suk-
huh* It is not your decision You must write

In this scene, Yu asks a series of questions to her grandfather's spirit about his secret past and his abandonment of everything he had in his life: his career as one of the top marathon runners in the Japanese Empire, his family, and his permanent home. However, because the spirit refuses to answer any of her questions, she fails to ascertain the "truth" behind his deep feeling of solitude. It is important to note how the inclusion of a shamanistic ritual in this opening scene sets the tone of the entire narrative: Yu's

⁸⁶ Miri Yu. *Hachigatsu no Hate*. (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 2004), 17-8.

goal is not to prove or fight for “the historical facts” of her ancestors’ side of story about their colonial pasts, but to create a safe space in which she can “write down” the personal questions that have brought pain into her life and share them with her readers in both Japan and South Korea. The painful feeling of disconnection the author explores in many of her autobiographical narratives is, in fact, inseparable from what lies at the heart of her family’s diasporic existence in postwar Japan—a strong sense of loss over and disconnection from their roots and communities of ancestral origin. As a second-generation Zainichi woman who, having inherited a deep feeling of rootlessness from the emotional memories of her parents—in particular those of her mother as an abandoned daughter—Yu has always aspired to explore the experience of her maternal grandfather’s migration, through which she hopes to repair a void in her life and reconnect with her ancestral heritage. Although she has often asked her mother since childhood the reasons for and the manner in which her maternal family came to live in Japan during the colonial period, her mother avoided clear answers by providing her with multiple versions of the story of her family’s emigration with differing embellishment.⁸⁷ In Yu’s household, questions surrounding their ancestral roots and diaspora experiences were often discouraged. Through the above opening scene, in which Yu Miri finally asks her deceased grandfather several of the questions that had plagued her for many years concerning his abandonment of the family, the author brings to light that which was hidden under patriarchal authority in the family as the collective “dark” emotions of mother and daughter, such as fear and anger. By releasing her personal bitterness toward her grandfather, she can finally begin the narrative that acts as the means through which to open the path of communication with her Korean ancestors, a path that has been previously blocked by unspoken family rules, shame and secrets.

By constructing the first chapter of *Hachigatsu no Hate* through forms of theatrical play and shamanistic ritual, Yu represents her own physical writing body as a medium/shaman who, in performing the voices of both “I” (Yu Miri) and spirits/characters, creates an interactive space between herself and her ancestors, and between each of these and her reading audiences in Japan and South Korea. In this section of the novel, Yu Miri appears as one of the central characters who participate in a shamanistic ritual, in which all the characters, both the living (Yu Miri) and the dead (her ancestors), vent their suppressed feelings in order to renew, reexamine and transform their own self-images and life stories, which have gone unheard in public for decades. In the pages of the opening chapter, the writing/speaking/narrating “I” named Yu Miri consciously shifts roles between narrator (herself) and character (her deceased ancestor) in a manner similar to that of a Korean female shaman (called *mudang* in Korea) performing a shamanic ritual called *kut*.⁸⁸ In Korea, the *mudang* has traditionally acted as a mediator in her local

⁸⁷ Miri Yu. “Kankoku maboroshi no gorin o hashitta sofue no tabi” in *Sekai no Hibiware to Tamashii no Kûhaku o*. (Tokyo: Daishindô., 2001), 29-30.

⁸⁸ Traditionally, most shamans in Korea are women, and *kut* is a type of Korean ritual performed by *mudang*.

The “*mu*” (shaman) in *mudang* is written with the Chinese character [巫] formed by two horizontal lines (at the top and bottom, symbolizing heaven and earth), with a central vertical line uniting them; on either side is a human being [人人] [... which] describes a *mudang* as one whose dance links the material and spiritual realms.
[...]

community, communicating with both the living and the dead, in order to reduce hostility—including such violent feelings as anger and resentment—and bring peace to both the community and an immediate audience of *kut*. In the context of Korean shamanism, the mudang's ability to heal is based on the connection she forges between two worlds, such as private and public, life and death. During specific moments of the *kut*, the audience is expected to gain a felt sense of the connection that is normally imperceptible to the human eye. In a ritual, the mudang's physical performing body symbolizes a living bridge between such two worlds, as her body acts as a medium through which the audience can feel and “hear” the presence of the spirit in the material world, i.e., when the mudang speaks in the voice of the dead spirit. Along with the verbal communication they have with the spirit-character during the *kut*, all the audience members are also encouraged to experience a felt involvement with non-verbal interaction with the spirit, in particular, through mimicking the mudang's “spirit-possession dance.”

During a shamanic trance dance, the audience can share a moment of pure “fun” by dancing together with the mudang, their fellow audience members, and the deceased, while moving their own physical body rhythmically to the sound and music without translating their felt-experiences into any fixed meaning. Such ritual dancing allows an individual's creative expression while, at the same time, encourages a sense of the collective in the circle. In enhancing an individual's creativity, joy and ability to connect with the others beyond the boundaries that divide us from them, speech from silence, as well as life from death, the mudang provides her audience with a sense of balance, peace and harmony within one's living body, among people, and in the world. The essence of a healing process in a *kut*, therefore, lies in the mudang's ability to create an alternative discourse of (an imagined) community that challenges official versions of human spaces and hierarchies, such as the family and the nation, helping her audience transform the personal inner wounds and pain that have developed in the society's official structures and rules.

Like a mudang who has traditionally played a culturally performative role as a producer of interactive spaces between two worlds, so, too, does Yu Miri perform her own physical writing body as an in-between entity or medium that lies somewhere between the two modes of writing (history and fiction) and the two modern nations (Japan and South Korea). By opening up a narrative space in which Yu Miri engages in both imaginary (with her dead ancestors) and real (with her living audience) dialogues with others beyond the artificial boundaries of nationhood and ethnicity, the author encourages her reading audience to subvert their own preconceived ideas about the borders between reality and imagination, right (truth) and wrong (lies), as well as the national memories of Japan and Korea. Through the construction of an autobiographical narrative voice with its capacity to link to the multiple interpretations of a colonial past, including one that is not yet accepted as “fact” in the official history, Yu represents

Kut may be performed to let the dead vent anger, regrets, or desires in order to rest in peace [...] A *kut* can last for several days. It may include [...] playing music, singing, reciting long tales [...] performing spirit-possession dances [by the *mudang* along with her audience/participants who collectively mimic the *mudang*'s movement], and performing dances purely for fun.

Theatre Histories: An Introduction. Edited and written by Phillip B. Zarrilli; et al. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 48.

Hachigatsu no Hate as a kind of shamanistic performance that invites audience response and breathing space for the freedom to communicate with others.

Women's Physical Writing Bodies as Trans-generational Mediums

The chapter immediately following the opening scene narrates the physical and emotional experiences of the character, Yu Miri, while running a full marathon of 43.195km, a marathon she completes at the Olympic Main Stadium in Seoul, South Korea.⁸⁹ This part of the narrative is based on the author's own experience of having run in Seoul's International Marathon, the first full marathon she had ever participated in, before she began writing this novel. In recounting her real life experience on the pages of her story, the author attempts to find the right words to describe the tremendous bodily pain she felt while running such a long distance on her own two feet—a pain unlike anything she had ever known before:

すっすっはっはっ 痛い すっすっはっはっ 痛い すっすっはっはっ 痛い！
痛みから逃げられないなら痛みに向き直るしかない すっすっはっはっ
痛み集中して すっすっはっはっ 痛み驚いて高鳴っている心臓を鎮め
なければ すっすっはっはっ 痛い！ すっすっはっはっ 痛い！ すっすっ
はっはっ でもなんとかこの痛み慣れないと脈拍が「…」なんだろう この
痛みは すっすっはっはっ 餅つきの杵で膝をつかれてるようなと形容し
ても伝わらないか⁹⁰

suk-huh suk-huh It hurts *suk-huh suk-huh* It hurts *suk-huh suk-huh*
It hurts! If I could never escape such pain, all I could do was return to
the pain and face it over and over again while running this marathon.
suk-huh suk-huh Let me turn all my attention to the bodily pain *suk-*
huh suk-huh Accustom myself to such a high degree of pain so that I
can begin to calm myself down before my heart pounds too fast *suk-*
huh suk-huh It hurts! *suk-huh suk-huh* It hurts, but I must become
accustomed to such pain, or otherwise my heart will pound so fast that
it'll kill me [...] *suk-huh suk-huh* How can I describe this pain? *suk-*
huh suk-huh It's like my knees are being constantly beaten by a huge
and heavy wooden mallet—No, that doesn't fully convey what I am
feeling at this moment.

While enduring the indescribable physical pain that accompanies her first marathon, Yu Miri constantly fights against the strong temptation to give up the race, the experience of which is forcing her to face the vulnerability of her mind and body as a human being in constant pain. However, the thing that keeps pushing her body to take one more step forward at every moment, is the rhythmic panting sound (*suk-huh suk-huh*) of her own labored breath, which provides her with positive proof of her physical survival, even in such agonizing pain. In the narrative, this sound also serves the

⁸⁹ In 1988, the Seoul Olympics were held in South Korea. They were the second summer Olympics to be held in Asia; the first was Tokyo Olympics which took place in Japan in 1964.

⁹⁰ *Hachigatsu no Hate*, 55.

important function of acting as a bridge between the life of Yu Miri and that of her grandfather, as the rhythm of her labored respiration in this chapter blends with the regular panting sound she hears in her conversation with his spirit through the mouth of a shaman in the previous chapter. In becoming a marathoner herself so as to bring an image of her grandfather back into her bodily memory, Yu represents her writing as a means of moving away from the existing Zainichi history and writing for its own sake and toward individual human experience and empathy for her ancestors.

Yu's endeavor to unearth her ancestral roots as a fiction writer resembles Toni Morrison's aspirations for her literary work. Strongly motivated by "the wish to extend, fill in and complement slave autobiographical narratives," Morrison's literary production centers around her imaginative recovery of the past associated with the diasporic roots of her African American ancestry.⁹¹ Morrison claims that a considerable part of her ancestral heritage and memory is lost in the American historian's move from the text—such as written records and slave autobiography—to narrative history. Since the overwhelming majority of African slaves in America were illiterate, the inner experiences of these people have largely remained hidden beneath the Euro-centered American historical writing. This necessitated her to begin the process of her writing with an imaginative act of "the recollection that moves from the image to the text. Not from the text to the image."⁹² In this context, she describes her writing as "a kind of literary archeology,"⁹³ which involves the writer's act of unearthing the other histories that run beneath the official/national history, presenting the world of the past surrounding her ancestry as a new present.

Having been born and raised in postwar Japan, Yu Miri can't tell her readers what her grandfather's life was like during the colonial period. She can only imagine, by following the vestiges of his life left behind after his death, as to the extreme oppression *chōsenjin* must have endured at that time. Like Morrison's ancestors, the majority of the first-generation Zainichi Koreans belonged to a poverty-stricken population that received

⁹¹ "The Site of Memory," 305.

⁹² As a writer, Morrison has often aspired to use her work as access to her ancestral roots by bringing the residual "remains" together in the centerpiece of her narrative. For her, such "remains" are made of the images of her direct ancestors and the emotions attached to them. She writes:

I can't tell you how I felt when my father died. But I was able to write *Song of Solomon* and imagine, not him and not his specific interior life, but the world that he inhabited and the private or interior life of the people in it. And I can't tell you how I felt reading to my grandmother while she was turning over and over in her bed (because she was dying, and she was not comfortable), but I could try to reconstruct the world that she lived in. And I have suspected, more often than not, that I *know* more than she did, that I *know* more than my grandfather and my great-grandmother did, but I also know that I'm no wiser than they were. [...] These people are my access to me; they are my entrance into my own interior life. This is why the images that float around them—the remains, so to speak, at the archeological site—surface first, and they surface so vividly and so compellingly that I acknowledge them as my route to a reconstruction of a world, to an exploration of an interior life that was not written and to the revelation of a kind of truth.

Ibid., 303-4.

⁹³ Ibid., 303.

no formal education and could not write.⁹⁴ Yu's challenge as an autobiographical writer is therefore to unlearn her personal history in relation to the Korean diaspora constructed through the gaze of others. Lacking a discourse of her own, she must transform the residual traces of her ancestors into a historical discourse shaped by her own literary imagination.

By using her own physical living body to experience the mental stress that accompanies the unspeakable bodily pain caused by running a full marathon, Yu motivates herself to gain an access to an internal life of her grandfather, in order to give new meaning to the image of him remained within her memory, an image she had previously perceived as that of an odd and selfish man. As a young *chōsenjin*, Yu's grandfather must have had a limited degree of freedom of both social mobility and personal expression in public. In this world of the past, her grandfather's action of refusing to continue to run as a professional "Japanese" marathoner represents a transgressor whose private desires disrupted the social order and rules of the Japanese Empire. By leaving imperial Japan's elite running world, therefore, he must have tried to restore the right to decide how to run the race of his life: he deliberately rejected the past with its colonial oppression, choosing instead a new path to human freedom and equality. In reimagining the past in the literary art, the author transforms her grandfather's personal identity as a man of cowardice and irresponsibility into that of a man of integrity, who, in establishing himself as an accomplished professional marathoner who can endure excruciating mind and body pain with dignity, shows himself to be a strong character who never gives in.

Throughout the second chapter, the panting sound and monologues of "Yu Miri" become harmonized with those of different individuals, both dead and living, such as her grandfather and his old friend and rival in the selection races for the Olympics, Sohn Kee-Chung (1914-2002). Sohn appears in the narrative as an important living witness to the unofficial story of her grandfather's life as a marathoner, as his name remains in the written history—Sohn Kee-Chung became the first Asian marathoner who won the gold medal at the Olympics. Today, Sohn's name as the first "Japanese" Olympic gold medalist in the marathon has been largely forgotten in Japanese culture, whereas he remains one of the most famous "Korean" athletes and national heroes in South Korea. In the following lines, the author transcribes what she heard from Sohn in her real-life conversation with him when she met him at the Olympic Stadium in Seoul, South Korea in 1996.⁹⁵ Here, the author reproduces a dialogue between herself and Sohn in the form of a monologue in Yu Miri's head, which she hears while embracing the challenge of running a full marathon. The author highlights Sohn's comments in bold type:

すっすっはっはっ 祖父はほんとうにマラソンランナーだったんでしょうか？ いっしょに走ったんだよ お祖父さんは国体の代表だったんだ
五千 一万メートルのナンバーワンだったんだよ すっすっはっはっ
祖父のことでなにか憶えてることはありますか？ 六十年だよ 六十年 みんな忘れたよ いらんことは忘れた方がいい 忘れたいことが多いという意味ですか？ 日本のみなさんのお耳に障ることをいう必要はない 年

⁹⁴ Yu's father was also illiterate in both Japanese and Korean. *Pyonyan no Natsuyasumi: Watashi ga mita kitachōsen*. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2011), 168.

⁹⁵ Miri Yu. "Watashi no ketsumyaku" [My Lineage] in *Sekai no Hibiware to Tamashii no Kūhaku o*. (Tokyo: Daishindō, 2001), 13-4.

寄りには朝鮮が日本の植民地だったことを忘れたろ？ 若者は植民地なんて知らんだろ？ すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ マラソンの金メダルをとったなかでは世界でいちばん苦勞した男だよ 長生きしたから友人の孫と話せる でもいつになったら在日の二世と自分の国の言葉で話し合えるのか すっすっはっはっ 祖父のことを問いながら すっすっはっはっ 鋭く問い返された気がした なぜこの国を訪れたのか？ なぜオリンピックスタジアムにいるのか？ おまえはなにものなのか！⁹⁶

suk-huh suk-huh Was my grandfather really a marathon runner? **We used to run side by side. Your grandfather was a national champion of 5km and 10km races in imperial Japan.** *suk-huh suk-huh* Is there anything else you still remember about him? **Sixty years have passed. Sixty years. I have forgotten everything. You'd better forget the memories of the past that could be a burden in your present.** Do you mean that there are more things you want to forget than to remember in your life? **It is unnecessary to say things that would bother the ears of the Japanese people. Haven't the old folks forgotten that Korea was once a colony of Japan? The young ones don't even know what colonization means, right?** *suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh* **I was subjected to the greatest hardships among all the marathon runners who won gold medals in the Olympics. I lived long enough to be able to talk to a grandchild of my old friend, but I wonder if I will live longer enough, someday, to talk to second-generation Zainichi Koreans in our mother tongue.** *suk-huh suk-huh* While I was asking Mr. Sohn a series of questions about my grandfather *suk-huh suk-huh* I felt like I was being asked another series of questions in response to mine: Why did *you* visit this country? Why are *you* at the Olympic Stadium? Who are *you*?

After attesting that her grandfather was truly one of the top runners of his day, Sohn does not answer the rest of her questions and carefully evades revealing his essentially private (and hidden) inner feelings about his colonial past. By satirically saying that he has “forgotten everything,” just like anyone else who no longer pays heed to what happened “sixty years” ago, Sohn implies the pain he once felt and has tried to forget in the merciless passing of time. Through his hesitation to open his heart completely to Yu Miri, the author emphasizes how, in the eyes of Sohn, is a conflicting reminder of his colonial past. On the one hand, she is “the granddaughter of his old friend,” a friend with whom he shared the same physical and psychological pain during the long distance he had run behind the artificial mask of a Japanese marathoner under Japan’s colonial rule of Korea. On the other, she represents a vestige of the repressive power of the Japanese Empire, because, as a Japanese-born second generation Zainichi woman, she cannot speak “their mother tongue” of Korean, thereby forcing him to talk about the colonial past to her in Japanese—his former oppressor’s language. Thus, her

⁹⁶ *Hachigatsu no Hate*, 65.

presence re-opens old wounds caused by Japan's imperialization (*kôminka*) policies under the banner of *naisen ittai* (lit. "Japan and Korea as one body"),⁹⁷ which included the prohibition of Koreans' native tongue from official use and *sôshi kaimei*, a policy that pressured the colonized Koreans to surrender their Korean names and adopt Japanese family and given names.

Sohn Kee-Chung was one of the first Koreans forced to relinquish his Korean name and identity under the colonial regime. It was three years before the official enactment of *sôshi kaimei* when he was forced to use the "Japanese" name of Son Kitei—which was his name (孫基禎) transcribed into a Japanese pronunciation—in order to participate in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. As a *chôsenjin* who had participated in the Olympics as a member of the Japanese delegation, Sohn needed to overcome a series of unfair and unequal treatments as compared to the racially-Japanese athletes, including those incorporated into the selection process for the Olympic Games.⁹⁸ Sohn's professional life as the top marathoner in imperial Japan led him to a deep realization of the wide gap between national propaganda and social reality in 1930s Japan, or more specifically, between Japan's claim that its regime was a racially harmonious community and what it actually created—an oppressive and segregated nation.⁹⁹ Although highly

⁹⁷ The *naisen ittai* ideology was officially implemented in colonial Korea by Minami Jirô (1874-1955), who was appointed as the Governor General of the Korean colonial government in the summer of 1936. Under the slogan of *naisen ittai*, the Japanese government promoted the idea that both Japanese and Koreans were equal members of the Empire, serving the Japanese Emperor as loyal imperial subjects. Having virtually no legal protection in imperial Japan during the late 1930s and early 1940s, every able-bodied Korean was employed in the collective war effort and forced to engage in frequently dangerous support roles for the "master" Japanese. The *naisen ittai* slogan was thus part of a larger propaganda campaign promoting a national policy to strengthen the Japanese race by increasing productivity in the collective national body named "modern Japan," in which the individual bodies of *chôsenjin* were reduced to sub-human existences. On the *naisen ittai* ideology and how Minami Jirô pursued more active colonial policy toward coercive assimilation, see Mark E. Caprio. *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2009).

⁹⁸ Sohn's personal achievement of winning the gold medal in the 1936 Olympics brought a lofty moment of nationalist pride to Imperial Japan, and all its major national newspapers praised his accomplishment as evidence of the superiority of the Japanese race.

The victory of [*Son Kitei*] in the marathon was given headline treatment in the press when it was announced August 10: "Japanese Marathoner Finally Wins the Race" (*Houchi* newspaper) [...] "Japanese Marathoner Conquers the World" (*Yomiuri* newspaper). [The newspapers] made no distinction between Son's victory and those of the Japanese. Since [Japan had] sent marathon runners to the Fifth Olympics at Helsinki in 1912, the Japanese had been very enthusiastic about the marathon. [...] So when a Korean marathoner won the race at Berlin, it was seen as Japan's greatest sporting triumph since entering the Olympics in 1912. [The irony of Son's victory at Berlin was that, in fact,] Japan discriminated against Korean players in many ways, such as in [the selection process]. Korean players were fully aware of the contradictions in taking part in tournaments as Japanese [athletes], with the national anthem of Japan, "*Kimigayo*," [playing and the] national flag of Japan, the Rising Sun, hoisted when they won a victory. However, as far as the Japanese media were concerned, the Korean and Japanese players were the same.

Tetsuo Nakamura. "Japan: The Future in the Past." Ed., Arnd Krüger and William Murray. *The Nazi Olympics: Sport, Politics, and Appeasement in the 1930s*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 134.

⁹⁹ It was only after Japan's colonial rule of Korea had ended that Sohn Kee-Chung could publicly begin to express his inner feelings about the painful "truth" of his Olympic experience. In his autobiography, *My*

praised as a great “Japanese” athlete in the national propaganda effort, aimed largely at an international audience, Sohn was well aware that he would forever remain an inferior *chōsenjin* unfit to become a respected member of the Japanese nation in the context of the true nature of colonial rule.

Consequently, the dialogue between Sohn and “Yu Miri” in the Japanese language in the second chapter represents the legacy of colonial nationalism and its power dynamics between the Japanese and Koreans, a power manipulated through the official language of Japanese, which not only assimilated ethnic Koreans into the dominant culture’s collective values and identity, but also kept them under the shame of being inherently inferior to the Japanese. Sohn’s indirect refusal to reveal his inner feelings about colonial life to Yu Miri by saying, “It is unnecessary to say things that would bother the ears of the Japanese people,” reveals not only his awareness of the Japanese readers exposed to her work as a *Zainichi* writer of Japanese literature, but also his reluctance to share the secrets of the most intimate details of his personal life with these readers. Clearly, he wants to avoid being represented as a *chōsenjin*—an inferior, colonized Korean—all over again through a public confession to a Japanese audience, by having his personal voice translated into the language of his former oppressors. Through his own lived experience of pain under colonial rule, he has become well-aware of the violence inherent in translating the voices of the Other into another language, in particular the hegemonic language spoken by those in power, and the stereotyping and distortion this entails.

According to Michele Foucault, the act of eliciting the true inner feelings of the oppressed is, in fact, closely linked with the artful schemes of social authorities through which they establish their superior positions over their subjects. He states that, far from the pervasive perception that this exertion of authority is oppressive or prohibitive, the authoritative power is often exercised through a hypocritical show of real sympathy with the plights of its subjects. In the following passage, he gives a specific example of how the moral authorities, such as the Christian church, (over its believers) or parents (over their children), offer their subjects relief and salvation from the anguish of their sexual

Homeland, My Marathon (1983), Sohn shares with his readers the inner experience of pain he had previously suppressed during the colonial period, in particular, when he was exposed to public curiosity immediately after he won the gold medal in 1936. Sohn says:

Once the initial excitement [over his victory in the marathon at the Olympics] died down, I felt a shift in the way the Japanese public cast its collective gaze upon me. [...] What the Japanese public had truly wished to see was not a Korean Sohn Kee-Chung, but the perfect picture of a Japanese marathoner being the first to cross the finish line, with *hinomaru* [the national flag of Japan; the nation’s symbol of the Rising Sun] on his uniform. And the fact that one Korean athlete brought the glory of the Olympic gold medal to the nation did not change the way they see us as the inferior race. After the 1936 Berlin Olympics were over, I was soon placed under close surveillance by the Japanese authorities. [...] They prohibited me from speaking publicly, in particular with the foreign press. The Japanese media kept praising the gold medalists as star athletes after a while, but only those who were racially Japanese, such a swimmer as Maehata Hideko [the first Japanese woman to earn a gold medal at the Olympics]. [...] [This was when I became fully aware that] I would never be able to become one of them—*ilbon saram* [a Japanese person]—no matter what.

Sohn, Kee-Chung. *Na-ui Joguk na-ui marathon*. [My Homeland, My Marathon]. (Seoul: Hanguk Ilbo-sa., 1983), 143-4.

misery and repression, through confession, a tactic that functions as a way to keep the subjects under control and surveillance:

What [the moral authorities] are saying, roughly, is this: “You have sexuality; this sexuality is both frustrated and mute; hypocritical prohibitions are repressing it. So come to us, tell us, show us all that, confide in us your unhappy secrets.” [...] This type of discourse is, indeed, a formidable tool of control and power. As always, it uses what people say, feel, and hope for. [...] It ends up repressing and dispersing movements of revolt and liberation.¹⁰⁰

Foucault explains how the discourse of the “truth” about sexuality begins by situating one’s sexual desires as the site of one’s misery and repression. After formulating and dispensing the truth about repressed sexual desires, the moral authority incites its subjects to confess their “unhappy secrets” in order to exploit these confessions to regulate people’s behavior and encourage them to keep their inner feelings under control. Foucault not only shows how the historical discourse about the truth of sexuality acts as a metaphor for the relational power structure in society, but also reveals how the schemes that establish the relations between dominant and submissive, function as “tool[s] of control and power” to quash people’s spirit of “revolt” and revolution. In the context of Foucault’s theory, Sohn Kee-Chung, by not sharing his “unhappy secrets” with the Japanese reading audience and hiding them behind an outside mask of forgetfulness, secretly maintains his spirit of resistance as a silent accuser of the cruelty of the Japanese colonial system that abused him, a cruelty that is selectively forgotten by most of that audience today.

Through an inclusion of Sohn’s comments in the form of Yu Miri’s soliloquy, which is accompanied by the panting sound (*suk-huh suk-huh*) of her own labored breath that constantly hinders the smooth flow of the narrator’s voice, the author addresses her own personal identity and voice, which still remains largely excluded from the shared communal experience of postcolonial South Korea, while refusing to become a passive observer of the emotional experiences of her Korean ancestors, which are largely hidden and suppressed under a veil of forgetfulness. Through the painful awareness of her inability to ever truly converse with him—as she cannot speak their shared-native tongue of Korean—the author arrives at a deeper level of insight into the impossibility of truly sharing the inner experiences of others, especially pain, and the violence inherent in eliciting painful stories from others. Knowing that no pain can be testified to except by the possessor of such pain, Yu cannot fully affirm the “truth” about the colonial experiences of her grandfather and Sohn. Deeply touched by Sohn’s effort to communicate with her as a granddaughter of his old friend, even by speaking in Japanese,¹⁰¹ however, the author is inspired to maintain hope, the hope that she will someday find a “home” in the world, which is not naturally given (e.g., native language and nationality) but can be created by making spiritual and emotional connections, both

¹⁰⁰ “Power and Sex” (1977) in *Michele Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture*. Ed., Kritzman, L.D. (New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, Inc., 1988), 114.

¹⁰¹ Miri Yu. “My Lineage,” 14.

to “the other” in this life (marginalized people) and to those on the “other” side (her ancestors).

In filling a considerable part of the second chapter with the collective panting sounds of Yu Miri, her grandfather and Sohn Kee-Chung, the author symbolizes not only her own personal struggle over not understanding the feelings of her Korean ancestors, and attempting to fit these emotions into “mere” language—as language is often not sufficient enough to capture an experience—but also the universal human experiences of shared pain as well as the strong desires to connect and communicate with others. Toward the end of the second chapter and her marathon race, as Yu Miri is running through the dark tunnel, she suddenly vents her accumulated frustration by desperately asking her deceased grandfather for help:

ハルベ！聞いてください すっすっはっはっ このトンネルを抜けるあい
だだけでいいですから すっすっはっはっ わたし話を聞いてください
すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ わたしは小さいころからよく迷子に
なりました [...] すっすっはっはっ 生まれながらにして迷子だったからで
す すっすっはっはっ すっすっはっはっ 父と母の背後には長いトンネルが
あって すっすっはっはっ ふたりはその入口と出口を沈黙と嘘で塗り固
めて [...] すっすっはっはっ いつか沈黙の壁が崩れるようなことがあつた
ら そのトンネルを潜り抜けたいと思っていました [...] すっすっはっはっ
ハルベ！ わたしは捜すことができるんでしょうか？ [...] すっすっはっはっ
っ わたしは聞き取ることができるんでしょうか？ [...]

おれのかわいい名づけ子よ 自分の名を声にしなさい すっすっはっ
はっ すっすっはっはっ

柳美里

道を迷ったら何度も唱えなさい 自分の名を すっすっはっはっ
すっすっはっはっ

柳美里

物語は不用意にはじめなさい すっすっはっはっ なにかの間違
いのように さあトンネルを抜けるぞ！ 光に顔を向けて ハナトウ
ル ハナトウル！¹⁰²

Grandpa! Please listen to me, at least while I am running through this tunnel *suk-huh suk-huh* Please listen to my story *suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh* I have often gotten lost, ever since I was a little girl [...] *suk-huh suk-huh* I have been lost since I was born into this world *suk-huh suk-huh* There was a dark and long tunnel of secret pasts lying behind my parents *suk-huh suk-huh* They shut both the entrances and exits of the tunnel by blocking them with the barriers named lies and silence [...] *suk-huh suk-huh* I always hoped, someday, that the wall of silence would collapse *suk-huh suk-huh* so that I would be able to run back through the dark tunnel of the past [...] *suk-*

¹⁰² *Hachigatsu no Hate*, 72-3.

huh suk-huh Grandpa! Can I possibly restore my broken connections with the past memories of my ancestral roots? Will I be able to hear the voices on the other side?

My dearest grandchild, to whom I gave your name Vocalize the sound of your name *suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh*

Yu Miri

Whenever you get lost on the road, vocalize the sound of your name over and over again *suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh suk-huh*

Yu Miri

Begin your autobiographical storytelling without any advance preparation *suk-huh suk-huh* Start your story as if it just slipped out of your mouth Look, we are approaching the end of the tunnel! Don't look down; turn your face toward the light *Hana, tul, Hana, tul!* [one, two, one, two]

As in her previous conversation with him in a shamanic ritual, her grandfather does not answer any of her questions. He gives her one piece of advice, however: to recite her own name whenever she begins to doubt the purpose for continuing the race of her life as an author who writes about her own personal history. In the chapters subsequent to this second chapter, which center on the narratives of her grandfather's home life in Miryan from childhood to adulthood, the author devotes a considerable number of pages to depicting scenes in which her ancestors, including her grandfather, name their newborn offspring. By using her literary imagination to reconstruct a moment of each of her ancestors being born and given a name in this world, Yu Miri emphasizes the centrality of names and naming for human beings in constructing and retaining one's identity and memory in relation to ancestral heritage and connection.

For Yu Miri, continuing her literary career and writing under her Korean name is a way to speak to the memories of her dead ancestors and keep them alive in postwar Japanese society. By appearing as one of the central characters as Yu Miri in *Hachigatsu no Hate*, she reclaims her Korean name and identity as related to her ancestors' legacy, rooted in survival under brutal conditions such as colonial rule, war and the separation from families and homeland caused by colonialism and the national division. After WWII and the liberation of Korea from Japanese rule, the majority of ethnic Koreans who continued to live in post-war Japan (Zainichi Koreans) have retained their Japanese names to avoid racial discrimination—even in the present day. The author's family is no exception: they use the family name of Yanagi, which is the Japanese pronunciation of its Chinese character (柳). However, her grandfather named the author 美里, the Chinese characters that sound like "Miri" in either Japanese or Korean. The inalterable sound of her name in both languages indicates her grandfather's unspoken hope for his granddaughter to maintain her identity in relation to her ancestral connections while living in postwar Japan as an ethnic minority. The name Miri also suggests her

grandfather's envisaged future in which his descendants would never need to relive the painful memories of colonial nationalism. By reciting her name and using the sound of its utterance as a starting point at which to begin her journey of retracing the untold part of her family history, the spirit of resistance against enforced colonialist ideologies is apparent throughout her writing, a spirit inherited from previous generations of her ancestors.¹⁰³ To her, writing under the name of Yu Miri—not Yanagi Miri—is about empowerment. With the ancestral legacy of resistance deeply inscribed in her name, she can continue her trans-generational storytelling, in which each of her Korean ancestors takes an active part as a protagonist in his or her own colonial life.

Women's Collective Storytelling Voice of *Han* as a Space of Healing

In the literary world of *Hachigatsu no Hate*, which is the author's imaginative recovery of a world of the past in which her maternal grandfather lived, most of the principal characters are women. Based on the fact that her grandfather had three wives (his second wife was Yu's grandmother) and one mistress, Yu Miri had to transform the residual traces of her extended family members—most of whom she had never met in person—into her written narrative in order to revision her maternal family's past. Transcending her personal observations of them as the “other” women—as inherited from the perspectives of her own grandmother and mother—Yu Miri performs her role as a medium through which to bring each of these women's voices into a historical discourse shaped by her own written language. As working-class women living in Miryan, Yu's grandfather's Korean wives were all left in extremely vulnerable positions after being abandoned by their husband. In the novel, each woman narrates her personal life story, a life filled with *han*—the feelings of pain and hardship accumulated while living as *chôsen* (colonized Korean) women under the multiple, intersecting oppressions within Korean patriarchy under Japanese colonial rule. *Han*, as discussed in Chapter 1, is a Korean term that defies any fixed meaning. The term indicates a state of mental and emotional suffering resulting from the accumulation of suppressed emotions, in particular

¹⁰³ The American writer, Gloria Jean Watkins, who is better-known by her pen name bell hooks (her maternal great-grandmother's name) also underlines the importance of restoring and retaining one's ancestral name in the formation of identity for people who belong to historically-marginalized groups:

Naming is a serious process. It has been of crucial concern for many individuals within oppressed groups who struggle for self-recovery, for self-determination. It has been important for black people in the United States. Think of many African-American slaves who renamed themselves after emancipation or the use of nicknames in traditional folk communities, where such names act to tell something specific about the bearer. Within many folk traditions globally, among the Inuit, the Australian Aborigines, naming is a source of empowerment, an important gesture that deeply shapes and influences the social construction of a self. As in southern African American folk traditions, a name is perceived as a force that has the power to determine whether or not an individual will be fully realized, whether she or he will be able to fulfill their destiny, find their place in the world. To me naming is about empowerment... Talking with an elderly black man about names, he reminded me that in our southern black folk tradition we have the belief that a person never dies as long as their name is remembered, called. When the name bell hook is called, the spirit of my great-grandmother rises.

bell hooks. “to gloria, who is she: on using a pseudonym.” In *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1989), 166.

the emotions that are deemed negative in Korea's patriarchal society, i.e., a woman's anger toward the head of the family, such as her father and husband. Although the concept of *han* is capable of shifting its meaning depending on its bearer's specific social situations, such as rootlessness, resentment and shame, it has often played a key role in bringing Korean women together to build a culture of empathy and healing, such as in shamanic traditions. In portraying stories of Miryan women linked by their common experiences of oppression under male power and authority, Yu Miri attempts to not only partake in her female ancestors' emotions submerged under the violence and power of masculine institutions, such as patriarchy and colonialism, but also release her own feelings of *han* she has accumulated as a Zainichi woman. By doing so within a Korean tradition that was typically led by and provided emotional support primarily to women, the author embraces a new identification with her identity beyond the boundaries of nation, language and race/ethnicity. By shaping spiritual and emotional connections with her female ancestors, she gains enough emotional stability and sense of belonging to challenge modern Japan's and South Korea's national histories that have often repressed the voices and experiences of *chōsen* women in exile.

Among all of the Miryan women depicted in the narrative, the most prominent female character is constructed by Yu Miri based on the name the author accidentally discovered while doing research on Korean comfort women. The longest chapter of *Hachigatsu no Hate, Ame ame fure fure* ("Rain, rain, let it rain"), centers on a long, diasporic journey taken by a thirteen-year-old Korean girl named Kim Yong-fui, from her hometown of Miryan to Manchuria—the northeastern part of China ruled by Japanese Empire. *Ame ame fure fure* and the following three chapters narrate the imagined life story of Yong-fui, and these chapters end with the heroine's death: at the end of WWII, she commits suicide, overwhelmed by her own memories of the past too terrible and shameful to bear, after being abandoned by the retreating Japanese army at a comfort station.¹⁰⁴ Yong-fui first appears in the story as Kanayama Eiko, the Japanese name she was forced to use after *sōshi kaimei*, but later reappears as a young girl called Namiko, the pseudonym imposed upon her as a comfort woman by Japan's wartime military comfort system.¹⁰⁵ Aware that there might be former comfort women and Japanese

¹⁰⁴ At the end of the war, Japanese soldiers informed Japanese comfort women that the war was over and fled with them, whereas Korean comfort women were simply abandoned at the comfort facilities. Sarah Soh. *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 141.

¹⁰⁵ In *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*, Sarah Soh demonstrates how Korean women became dehumanized beings under the wartime military comfort woman system. By forcing each woman to adopt a Japanese-style nickname, for example, the Japanese imperial army uprooted each Korean woman's unique name and individual human identity from her Korean ancestral roots, imposing a new social role upon her as a functional object. By depersonalizing women, the Japanese soldiers could more easily justify their exploitation, abuse or even destruction by virtue of their power. In the context of the totalitarian nature of Japanese imperialism and particularly its attempts to control every aspect of the individual lives of the imperial subjects during the late 1930s and the early 1940s, the individual identities of Korean comfort women were subsumed under a collective image as, according to Sarah Soh, "a vessel for the management of lust: a 'toilet.'" Soh writes:

[During the early 1940s], comfort women and condoms came to be seen as essential supplies for the imperial troops. In fact, when the military transported comfort women, the paperwork listed them simply as military material (*heitai busshi*), with no record of their personal identities. Upon their arrival at comfort stations, non-Japanese comfort women typically were given a Japanese first name. [...] Forcing

WWII veterans among her readers, as *Hachigatsu no Hate* was serialized in a daily national newspaper both in Japan and South Korea, Yu Miri paid the utmost attention in not distorting written history while writing these chapters.¹⁰⁶ In the process of doing further research—reading historical documents and interviewing former comfort women—Yu Miri discovered that the most painful memories of former comfort women included the details of certain everyday chores. Yu says:

One of the most intense controversies concerning the system of comfort women has been a dispute over whether it was a forcible recruitment of young Korean women. Whether they were recruited against their will or not, my thoughts are always pulled toward the inner feelings of the women; for example, how painful it must have been for a thirteen-year-old girl who, having never left her hometown of Miryan, to travel all the way across the Korean peninsula and arrive in Manchuria. How overwhelmingly far and distant such a journey must have been for her. [...] When talking with former comfort women in person, I have often heard them speak about the details of their daily lives as experienced at the comfort stations—in particular, how painful it was to do certain everyday chores like washing *eisei sakku* [condoms, literally meaning “hygienic rubber”]. People tend to disregard such details narrated by the individual woman [and instead choose to talk about “big” issues]. I wonder if one can ever truly discuss the issues of comfort women without extending his or her thoughts to the details of the inner lives experienced by each woman.¹⁰⁷

Here, Yu suggests that the unwritten history of the internal life of former comfort women has remained largely unknown due to a focus on other issues, such as the ongoing disagreement over whether Korean women were forced into recruitment or whether they willingly made this choice. She criticizes many historians and activists for their tendency to overlook the individual experiences of former comfort women, in order to create a homogeneous view of women as either sexual objects (whore) or desexualized objects of pure victimhood (virgin). This binary perspective can be seen today in the racial strife between the two opposing political parties in and outside Japan: one group accentuating Japan’s coercion of “innocent” young Korean girls into sexual slavery, while the other

non-Japanese women to adopt new Japanese-style feminine personal names was an expression of fascistic paternalism, putting the psycho-linguistic comfort of Japanese soldiers above the integrity of the personhood of the women. [...] [The soldiers called comfort women only as *pi* or “cunt,” and this term was] coined by the Japanese soldiers stationed in China. Conscious of their ethnic differences, the soldiers would identify the ethnicity of comfort women by referring to them, for example, as Korean *pi* and Chinese *pi*. The soldiers also used the graphically objectifying term “public toilet” (*kyôdô benjo*). [...] The toilet as a Japanese sexual metaphor has, in fact, a long cultural history. It reflects a generalized male contempt for prostitutes, rooted in the conventional attitude of male superiority and the right of men to public sex.

Ibid., 39.

¹⁰⁶ Miri Yu. “Lending an ear to the voices of the dead/history,” 241.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 241.

(mostly conservative Japanese men) denying the coercive recruitment of former comfort women, who, they have repeatedly claimed, were voluntary prostitutes.¹⁰⁸

This complicated viewpoint seems to have led to blind spots in the public memory of the wartime military comfort woman system, in which women experienced pain differently (not more or less) depending upon their class, age, marital status and occupation. Today, the historical representation of comfort women still remains one of the most controversial subjects among scholars in Japan. This seems partially due to the difficulties in putting accurate details into the official historical record. Even when former comfort women testify about their past experiences, these are often selectively narrated without detail by these women, echoing their profound feelings of agony and shame, which are then perceived as a lack of reliable hard evidence by conservative Japanese historians and activists.¹⁰⁹ The inscription of Yong-fui chapters in Yu Miri's book—which contains the graphic descriptions of the heroine's everyday experiences as a comfort woman—thus reflects the author's attempts to transform the established linear narrative about comfort women, particularly that produced by contemporary Japanese nationalists, who, by disregarding Korean comfort women's emotional and mental lives, maintain the Japanese colonialist view of these women as mere bodies for colonial exploitation and conquest.

Just as Yu Miri used a residual image of her grandfather as the central organizing principle for re-membering her own personal history, her primary inspiration for the Yong-fui chapters was the desire to tell a story of her ancestral woman obscured by Japanese imperial records. With the specific aim of deconstructing official versions of history, the author aligns herself and her female protagonists with a history of resistance via autobiographical storytelling, attempting to displace nationalistic patriarchal texts that shame women who deviate from the culturally idealized form of femininity. This dissertation also has a similar aim, and thus will include the uncomfortable and radical voice of Yu Miri as she relays the detailed experiences of comfort women, in order to re-humanize their experiences and their personhood. The following lines depict a scene, in which Yong-fui has just arrived at a comfort station, where she is given the new name “Namiko” and is forced to serve as a comfort woman. Here, while teaching Namiko some of the everyday tasks at a comfort station, her fellow young Korean women attempt to console her by sharing their own personal stories with her:

¹⁰⁸ In postwar Japan, the conservative Japanese press, politicians, historians and activists have had a long-running campaign against the term “sex slaves” (性奴隷), maintaining the masculinist view that the women were not forced, but instead, voluntarily chose to “work” as professional prostitutes. This view of Korean comfort women as prostitute indicates how the legacy of racist and sexist colonial practices deeply permeates contemporary Japan: During World War II, the Japanese authorities divided women into binary categories of “proper women/superior Japanese” ([the future] mothers) and “whores/inferior colonized others.” Any young, unmarried Japanese women would never be suitable as comfort women because they were the future mothers of the pure Japanese race. See Yeong-ae Yamashita. *Nashonarizumu no hazamakara ianfu mondai e no mōhitotsu no shiza*. [Transcending Narrow Nationalism: Toward a Different Perspective on the Issue of Comfort Women] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2008), 111-2.

¹⁰⁹ For example, Japanese historian and Nihon University Professor Ikuhiko Hata claims that all comfort women were voluntary prostitutes. Hata's view of comfort women as “whore/prostitute” is common among Japanese conservatives, who use this construct as a means to bolster their arguments that accounts of former comfort women are invalid and unreliable. See Ikuhiko Hata, *Ianfu to senjo no sei* [Comfort women and sex in the battlefield] (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1999).

「どうしてもえらいときは、箸で子宮をついて血い出して、メンスたといって休むしかあらせんよ」

「ても、内の木戸に赤い札かけて、外の木戸に「休暇」の貼り紙してもらたって、兵隊は入ってくるぢやないか。血でよこれるとぶたれるから、綿を奥のほうに突っ込むんたけど、ちゅうにんも、にちゅうにんもやられると、子宮のなかにまで入ってまうたんよ。[...] 痛かったよ」

[...]

「うちはメンスがちゅっとなかたから、「...」妊娠しているといわれたけど、もう遅かった。ても、客はとらなければならなかった。ある日、朝からさんちゅうにん相手してとえりゃあ腹が痛くなって、子供がなかれたよ。」

[...]

「そうだ、あんたにサユリの服をあげるわ。いちばん仲よかったから形見にもらたんたけど、サユリはからだが小さかたから、うちは着ることかてきせん。あんたたったらびったりよ。」

[...]

ナミコは[...] 壁にかかっている死んだ慰安婦のチマチョゴリを見あげた。¹¹⁰

“If you cannot get up in the morning, extremely exhausted and unwell, you can thrust a chopstick deeply into your uterus. You can then tell them that you have just started menstruating and need to take a day off.”

“No, that will never work, because even when you hang a sign that says ‘AWAY’ on the door, the soldiers will still dash in. The soldiers will beat you up if you leave any blood on them accidentally, so when you are having your period, you have to use sponges to stop from menstrual bleeding, but after ten or twenty soldiers, sponges will be gone deeply in your uterus. [...] It was very painful.”

[...]

“One day my period was late. [...] I was pregnant, but I still had to work. One morning, after thirty soldiers or so, I had an extremely sharp stomach ache after which a deformed fetus came out of my uterus.”

[...]

“Namiko, take Sayuri’s dress. I got it after she died because I was her best friend, but it is too small for me. I think it will suit you perfectly.”

[...]

[Inside a room assigned to her in a comfort station,] Namiko [...] looks up at the *chima chogori* given to her, a traditional Korean cloth once belonged to the dead woman known as the Japanese name “Sayuri.”

This passage is part of an account of Yong-fui’s entry into daily life of Korean comfort woman as Namiko, a life kept under constant surveillance by the Japanese military officers. In this scene, Namiko learns that a private conversation between women, with a neutral tone of voice that functions to conceal emotions, is an important part of their daily lives. By expressing some of the most harrowing experiences in a

¹¹⁰ *Hachigatsu no Hate*, 564-8.

“casual” conversation, they seem to be trying to find even a moment of consolation by sharing their suppressed emotions with each other, such as the unspeakable sorrow, shame, pain and fear, while being careful not to lose control of their voices. Just like the young woman known only by her Japanese-style name Sayuri, who was beaten to death by the Japanese military officer after repeatedly breaking down into tears, these women are implicitly warning Namiko that they are all on the verge of death. By creating this scene, which ends with Namiko silently looking at Sayuri’s *chima chogori*, the author establishes *Hachigatsu no Hate* as a symbolic metaphor that stands for all of the lives lost as a result of the comfort women system. This scene also allows the author to explore the emotional dimensions of women who survived the cruelty of this system, by adding difficult details of everyday life, thereby encouraging the readers to reanimate and re-humanize the images of the individual comfort women.

Toward the end of the novel, the author re-appears as one of the central characters who participate in a shamanistic ritual; “Yu Miri” and Korean shamans send the soul of the dead Yong-fui to the next world. In this scene, the spirit of Yong-fui accidentally enters into the body of “Yu Miri,” instead of one of the shamans—the bodies that would normally act as mouthpieces for the spirit of Yong-fui. Yong-fui vents her feeling of han, the unspeakable emotional pain:

柳美里：（ブクと倒れて、床に爪をたて、嘔吐するように言葉を吐く）アイ
 ゴー アアイゴ エーゴー ケロプタ ケロプタ [...] だれがわたしの
 魂を海の底から引きあげたのおおお アアイゴ

巫女1：ワッタ！ようこそいらっしやいました。

[...]

巫女2：（両目から涙を流す）涙の川ができるほど涙を流し、血の海ができるほど血を流し、エーゴーエーエー アイゴオーオー....。

[...]

巫女3：（袖で顔を覆ってむせび泣いて）アイグ哀れだ [...]

[...]

巫女2：どうして極楽へ行かずに[...]彷徨っておるのか？服がなくて行けぬのか？靴がなくて行けぬのか？ [...]

[...]

柳美里：アアイゴオオオオ 処女のまま密陽にいたら [...] 縁談も降るよう
 にあったのに エーゴーエーエー 騙されて連れ去られた 連れ去
 られたことをだれも知らない 海に飛び込んだ 飛び込んだことをだれもし
 らない オーイーオオオオ¹¹¹

Yu Miri: (She suddenly falls to the ground, scratches on the ground with her nails, and speaks as if spitting out her words) Aigo! Aigo! Ehhh Ohhh It hurts It hurts! [...] Who pulled up my sunken soul from the bottom of the ocean? Aigo!

Shaman 1: She’s with us! Welcome!

[...]

¹¹¹ Ibid., 812-3.

Shaman 2: (While shedding tears, she speaks to the spirit.) You must have been shedding tears until they became a river of tears. You must be shedding blood until it turned into a sea of blood. Ehhh Ohhh Aigo Ohhh!

[...]

Shaman 3: (Covering her face with her sleeves, she keeps sobbing.)

Aigo! How painful! [...]

[...]

Shaman 2: Why are you still hovering in this world [...] without heading towards heaven? You cannot go to heaven because you do not have any clothes to wear? You cannot depart this world because you do not have any shoes? [...]

[...]

Yu Miri: Ahhh Aigo! I would have had lots of suitors in my homeland, Miryan, [...] if I had maintained my chastity before marriage. Ehhh Ohh I was deceived and kidnapped I threw myself into the ocean No one knows that I threw myself into the ocean Ohhhhh

During certain moments of Korean shamanistic rituals, the boundaries between reality and imagination, observer and observed, speaker and listener, dead and living, become blurred and insignificant. Here, the autobiographical voice of Yong-fui from the past is brought into the present moment through the mouth of the living body of “Yu Miri,” to be shared with others. Within the performative space of the ritual, Yong-fui’s han is mostly expressed through non-verbal and discursive language—visual, auditory and kinesthetic modes of self-expression such as gestures of mourning, tears and screaming (including *Aigo*, a Korean expression roughly the same as “oh my god”). This indicates that, like “the emotional memory” of slavery discussed by Morrison, Yong-fui’s han is profoundly unfathomable and defies any attempt at definition or translation into an official language by the hands of others.

With the specific aim of partaking of her han, all the participants—Yu Miri and three female shamans—place their focus solely upon listening to and understanding the inner life of Yong-fui, their deceased ancestral woman. By creating a space where they can acknowledge and attend to Yong-fui’s inner life, which has long remained unvoiced and unheard in the public sphere, the women collectively take off the “veil” drawn over her wounded psyche, that is, the veil of shame and social stigma associated with deviation from normative womanhood in traditional Korean patriarchal culture.

Today, many scholars have reached the consensus that nearly fifty years of official silence held by former Korean comfort women can mostly be attributed to the patriarchal structure of postcolonial Korean society. Until the early 1990s, the history of comfort women was virtually unknown, as the women who survived the atrocities at comfort stations had long been marginalized in Korea since the war’s end.¹¹² While suffering from the long-term effects of the sexual violence on their psyches and physical bodies, these women had to live in a society in which traditional patriarchal values continued to

¹¹² Ustinia Dolgopol and Snehal Paranjape. *Comfort Women: An Unfinished Ordeal: Report of a Mission*. (Geneva, Switzerland: International Commission of Jurists, 1994), 16.

shame those who deviated from the normative discourse of female chastity (e.g., premarital sexual “purity”).¹¹³ Within the context of traditional family values and masculinist, ethno-nationalist discourses, their existence had long been a national shame, leading to their further marginalization and silence.¹¹⁴

In the above passage, Yong-fui’s spirit breaks her silence through the mouth of Yu Miri, as to why she chose to commit suicide by throwing herself into the ocean—a sea passage between Japan and Korea—on the way back to her hometown Miryang at the end of the war. For her, the loss of her “chastity before marriage” meant she lost her place of belonging as a respected member of both postwar Korean and Japanese national communities. Having been once treated as a dehumanized object in the Japanese Empire, also known as “the gift of the Emperor to all soldiers,”¹¹⁵ she despaired about ever restoring her human dignity and individual autonomy, even in her hometown. Hence, her spirit still continued to hover in this world with no place to belong.

By participating in the ritual, all the women with their ancestral roots in Miryang—Yu Miri and three female shamans—aim to re-member, accept and welcome Yong-fui in a women-centered community, where they can feel secure and comfortable enough to share with each other what they feel cannot be said or acted out before a judgmental (e.g., male or nationalist) audience. This collective sense of trust, openness and freedom are epitomized when all the women participate in an intensely emotional expression of empathy for Yong-fui, a behavior that is typically thought, in both Japanese and Korean cultures, to deviate from a socially “attractive” feminine voice, which is generally associated with modesty and decorum. In creating a scene in which “Yu Miri” turns into a medium/shaman through which she shares a woman’s story—a story born out of the lived body experience of pain under the masculine culture of violence in both Japan and Korea—with other women, the author represents her identity as an artist/writer as a link to her female ancestors and their legacy of resistance to the power of dehumanizing institutions such as militarism, patriarchy, colonialism and ethno-nationalism.

Like the author Yu Miri herself, the principal characters in *Hachigatsu no Hate* struggle with a diasporic past that was part of an authoritative, patriarchal national system that has largely been forgotten in Japan and/or South Korea during the setting of the novel. In the narrative, Yu uses a plethora of discursive language—most notably the collective rhythmic panting sound (*suk-huh suk-huh*) of her own labored breath and that of her ancestors—in order to establish her own will, not only to take over from her ancestors to run a trans-generational marathon named life, but also to represent her artistry as a literary invitation to the invisible dimensions and depth of repressed personal life within a manifestly political discourse between postwar Japanese and South Korean

¹¹³ Sarah Soh suggests that it was Korea’s traditional patriarchal values, which enforced the norm of women’s chastity, that unwittingly contributed to young, poor Korean female bodies as targets of sexual exploitation by the Japanese imperial army. Many comfort women belonged to the most vulnerable and powerless strata of the Japanese Empire: they were young and Korean and from destitute families. During the early 1940s, unmarried Korean women, who typically maintained chastity under the strict patriarchal Korean family system, became more desirable recruits than Japanese professional prostitutes in the eyes of the Japanese authorities—which perceived young Korean women’s bodies as more hygienic for the Japanese soldiers’ recreational sex. Sarah Soh. *The Comfort Women*, 38.

¹¹⁴ Yamashita Yeong-ae. *Nashonarizumu no hazamakara*, 244.

¹¹⁵ Sonia Ryang. *Love in Modern Japan: Its Estrangement from Self, Sex and Society* (London: Routledge, 2006), 53.

societies. Having started her career as a theater actress, Yu also utilizes theatrical dialogues that attempt to alter the boundaries between language (voice) and body, written documents and spoken testimony, as well as public and private speech. In doing so, she encourages us to engage in face-to face interactions with those formerly known only by imagination, expand our own zones of compassion for others and overcome the legacy of human rights atrocities.

CHAPTER THREE

Unearthing Autobiographical Memory of Bodies

“For me the most effective political statement I could make is in my art work. I believe in subversion rather than straight-out confrontation.”—Leslie Marmon Silko

“As a *mestizo* I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman’s sister or potential lover.” —Gloria E. Anzaldúa

In 1983, Kim Manri (1953-) formed the physical-theater troupe *Taihen* (劇団態変) in her hometown, Osaka. As Japan’s first performance troupe consisting solely of dancers with polio, cerebral palsy and other severe physical conditions, the *Taihen* has been active on the artistic stage over the more than three decades. Kim, as stage producer, director and performer, and a person living with disability herself, has created a choreographical series of live dance performances designed to present the expressive power of “disabled” physical bodies. By staging the subjective experience of these bodies, which had previously been relegated to the private sphere due to strong social stigma in Japan, she weaves a tapestry of distinct self-expression on stage, arising from each performer’s unique, individual bodily reality. Using body language, including gesture, movement and gaze, *Taihen* performers collectively create a new public space where the usual social dominance of verbal interaction becomes insignificant. Instead, bodies that have historically been marginalized take the center of attention. In creating a theater troupe that allows the performers’ own unique identities and voices to emerge outside the norms of the mainstream Japanese society, *Taihen*’s live performances are a nonviolent gesture of resistance to the objectifying eyes of “normative” majority in Japan, with their pre-established values and language.¹¹⁶

For Kim Manri, engaging in artistic creativity is never far-removed from her personal history and daily existence in Japan. Central to her artistic vision is the notion that it is not the physical reality of her own body that makes her “the disabled Other,” but it is the dominant culture of modern Japan—deeply inscribed with the values of the able-bodied majority—that imposes such a fixed, stigmatized identity onto her. Throughout her career as the director of the *Taihen*, she has challenged the binary division between private bodies (hidden due to social stigma) and public bodies (displayed as the ideal stereotype) by creating a live theatrical stage, from which she and her fellow dancers can return and subvert the audience’s gaze. As the stage producer, Kim always uses leotards as the troupe’s only costume, a skin-tight garment that intends to throw into sharp relief

* I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Ms. Kim Manri, a true inspiration in both my personal and academic life. I warmly appreciate her generosity in sharing her time, life experiences and words of wisdom with me.

¹¹⁶ The concept of nonviolent resistance is euphemistically expressed in the troupe’s name “tai-hen” (態変), an anagram of “hen-tai” (変態) that literally means “freak” or “perverse.” By deconstructing the order of the two Chinese characters to emphasize the meaning of each character—態 stands for “a figure” and 変 “to change”—Kim highlights *Taihen*’s aim to transform negative representations of physical disabilities in Japan. She believes that such transformation can be elicited most effectively by artistic creativity and innovation, rather than explicit political protest. Over the last thirty years, Kim and her fellow *Taihen* performers have continually showed new aspects of themselves through theatrical live performances, defying any fixed categorization and simple verbal description by others, including scholars in academia. See *Imaju*, art magazines periodically published by *Taihen*.

each performer's body shape. Steering the audience's gaze to the specificity of each performer's outer appearance, Kim invites the viewers to see what is usually discouraged in public: a disabled body's "startling" movement patterns ("ギョツとする動き"),¹¹⁷ which deviate from the society's cultural and behavioral norms. Within a creative space where she and her troupe allow the spectators to look at their flesh—but to look on their own terms—Kim blurs the lines between improvised movement and choreographed dance, between a fixed (natural) identity and a performed identity. By presenting bodies in diversity of movements that subvert the stereotypical image of "the disabled" as weak, unruly and tragic, Kim engages the self-representation of a socially "othered" body as a means to reveal the oppressive nature of values and worldviews shaped by an assumed "normative" Japanese identity.

Body as a Site of Transformation: Performing a Borderland, In-Between, and Shamanistic Identity

This chapter explores the artist Kim Manri's endeavor to develop creative self-representation as transformative act in everyday life, an act that reinforces positive social change through expanding the boundaries of preconceived notions of "normal" Japanese citizens—*nihonjin*.¹¹⁸ In addition to directing Taihen, she is also the author of several books and articles, as well as a solo dance performer with an extensive background in an avant-garde performing art known as *butoh*.¹¹⁹ Throughout her career as a theater director/artist-performer/writer, she has engaged in complex representations of her identity as a Zainichi woman with a physical disability, an identity that operates across many different forms of Otherness in post-imperial Japan.¹²⁰

Through an analysis of her first and only memoir, *Ikirukoto no Hajimari (The Beginning of Living a Life, 1996)*, this chapter examines the ways in which Kim performs her personal identity—*watashi* (the "I")—as a way to subvert inequitable power relations in the production of historical knowledge about the internal Other in Japan. Kim Manri retraces her autobiographical memory in relation to the historical body of those deemed

¹¹⁷ "Simupoziumu: Maharaba densetsu ga katari kakeru mono." [What the Maharaba Legend Speaks to Audiences] In *Imaju*. Vol. 46 (2009, Fall), 24.

¹¹⁸ Since modern Japan often views itself as a mono-ethnic and mono-linguistic nation, "the Japanese people" (*nihonjin*) are also often referred to as *kokumin* (literally "people of the nation"). The term *nihonjin* therefore has a very narrow meaning: ethnic Japanese person with Japanese nationality, who is a native speaker of the Japanese language.

¹¹⁹ *Butoh* is a dance form that originated in Japan during the 1960s that continues to be practiced worldwide today. *Butoh* emerged concurrently with Japan's avant-garde theater known as *Angura* (underground), which had developed during the 1960s as a counter-culture movement against the dominance of the existing modern (Western) theater. The leaders of the *Angura* theater movement were predominantly Japanese male directors, such as Terayama Shuji (1936-1983) and Kara Juro (1940-). Likewise, *Butoh* artists of the 1960s and the 1970s Japan gathered around the two charismatic Japanese male figures, Ohno Kazuo (1906-2010) and Hijikata Tatsumi (1928-1986). As a dance performer, Kim Manri has often collaborated with Ohno Kazuo and his son, Ohno Yoshito (1938-). On Ohno Kazuo and his theory on *butoh*, see *Ohno Kazuo: Keiko no kotoba*. (Tokyo: firumu a-to sha, 1997).

¹²⁰ Here I am using the phrase "post-imperial" Japan (1945-), in place of the most common term "post-war" Japan. In the context of the country's historical representations and memories about the self-image of "modern Japan," the term post-war Japan has too often obscured the continuing legacy of imperial Japan's violent past, including institutionalized racism toward the (former) colonized people in the post-1945 period.

biologically inferior and unfit for full participation in modern Japanese public life, most notably Zainichi Koreans (also known as *chōsenjin*, “ethnic Koreans in Japan”)¹²¹ and children with mental and physical disabilities. Looking at the past and present of Japan’s modern history from the viewpoint of its marginalized Other, she performs her narrative voice that serves the function of bringing to light the hidden, “dark” side of modern Japan’s public culture. Just as she utilizes Taihen performances as a way to subvert the violent history of the *ableist* ideal in Japanese society,¹²² Kim uses her written life narrative as a medium to uncover the ongoing legacy of Japanese colonialism (1910–1945). She particularly focuses on the ideological agenda of imperial Japan surrounding the “science of superior birth”—Japanese eugenics and race hygiene (*minzoku eisei*).¹²³ The concepts of eugenics and race hygiene have deep roots in imperial Japan, in which the bodies of the colonized Other had been constantly rendered as undesirable, impure and unruly, and purged from its national community in order to produce and maintain the myth of the Japanese race as one biological body under one ruler of the ultimate paternal authority—the Emperor. In *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, Kim positively claims her identity by separating her own body from its meaning as “the unfit and unruly Other” imposed on her by Japan’s racist ideology. Resisting any fixed categorization of her lived/living female body, Kim emphasizes her in-between existence in Japan, in which she is regarded as neither fully “Japanese” nor purely “Korean,” and also as neither completely “able-bodied” nor entirely “bed-ridden.” In performing the “I” behind the mask of ambiguous identity and voice, she promotes the existential situation of being in-between in order to subvert the violence brought on by Japanese imperialism and colonialism.

To cultivate an understanding of the connection between Kim’s accounts of her own speaking/writing/performing body as something “in-between” with its intended connotation of illocutionary—nonviolent resistance to the masculine institutions that

¹²¹ More on the term *chōsenjin*; see the introduction to chapter one.

¹²² The term ableism refers to a form of discrimination against persons with disabilities in society, in which able-bodied individuals are viewed as the norm. Kim Manri calls ableism as able-bodied civilization (健全者中心の文明). Manri Kim. *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 1996), 98.

¹²³ According to Jennifer Robertson, the idea of eugenics was accepted in Japan as “a fact” proven by modern (Western) science by the 1920s. Originally brought to Japan by Japanese male elites who had studied in Nazi Germany, the concept of eugenics played a major role in constructing the myth of ethnically pure nation as “Japan.” Robertson demonstrates that the idea was widely disseminated throughout the country in the form of mass circulation (e.g., daily newspapers) and deeply embedded in Japanese society as “the well-born science” through academic authorities, such as scholarly journals. Many of these journals were launched during the late 1920s and the early 1930s, which included “Yūseigaku” (Eugenics, 1924), “Yūsei Undo” (Eugenic Movement, 1926) and, the most influential of all, *Minzoku Eisei* (Race Hygiene, 1931), which continues to be published today. Robertson writes:

Coined by Francis Galton (1822–1911) in 1883, the term eugenics quickly entered the Japanese vocabulary as the romanticized *yuzenikkusu* and as the neologisms *yūseigaku* (science of superior birth) and *jinshu kaizengaku* (science of race betterment). These terms were used synonymously with two terms coined earlier: “race betterment” (*minzoku/jinshu kairyō*) and “race hygiene” (*minzoku/jinshu eisei*). [...] When prefixed with names, such as Nippon and Yamato, *minzoku* signifies the conflation of phenotype, geography, culture, spirit, history, and nationhood. These semantic and semiotic inventions were part of the ideological agenda of the Meiji state and were incorporated into the postwar constitution of 1947, which retained the definition of nationality and citizenship as a right of blood [*jus sanguinis*].

Jennifer Robertson. “Hemato-nationalism: The Past, Present, and Future of ‘Japanese Blood.’” (Medical Anthropology, 31: 93–112), 99.

abuse her, such as patriarchy and colonialism—, this chapter will analyze Kim’s autobiographical voice within the context of Gloria Anzaldúa’s theory of *borderlands*. In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), Anzaldúa defines the concept of borderlands as a space that represents both the physical and the mental state of being in ambiguous identity, an identity that does not belong completely to either part of such binary oppositions as those between inside(er) and outside(er) in the contexts of culture, race, nation and gender. As one of the pioneers of lesbian Chicana literature, Anzaldúa’s concept—shaped by her own lived experiences residing on the physical, cultural, racial and linguistic borders between Mexico and the United States—as a medium to express resistance to assimilation into “the dominant [white] culture’s views and beliefs” in America.¹²⁴ When viewed from the perspectives of the dominant culture’s collective identity and its accepted rules, the space of the borderlands often represents a lawless zone filled with “Los atravesados,” that is, the unruly and deviant Other, such as the undocumented immigrant, “the perverse, the queer, the troublesome [...] in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the ‘normal’.”¹²⁵ This chapter will examine how Kim Manri uses her autobiographical artistry in relation to this in-between/borderland identity in an attempt to transform her self-image as “Los atravesados”: from a descendant of unwelcome colonial immigrants to that of survivors who overcame barriers of inequality; from a woman’s unruly tongue to a creative voice that transcends the oppressive constructions of idealized femininity. Kim challenges the ideas of fixed boundaries and identities while playing the role of a shaman-storyteller while building bridges between people both in Japan and across national boundaries in ways that may not be accessible through official historical narrative. By presenting the self that identifies national, racial and gender borders as ever-changing, fluid spaces that anyone can occupy if they want to share their own voices relegated to the margins of society, she performs a shamanistic identity that serves as a medium of communication between two worlds—this world and that of the “Other.” In doing so, Kim invites her reading audience’s participation in promoting a more inclusive community in contemporary Japan, while fostering the practice of art as a medium with a bright potential for healing the wounds of a violent and unresolved past in Japan’s modern history.

¹²⁴ Gloria E. Anzaldúa. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books Company, 1987), 100.

¹²⁵ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 25.

Postcolonial Childhood in the Borderlands

Kim Manri's autobiographical text, *Ikirukoto no Hajimari* is an exuberant account of her rise from childhood struggles to social prominence as one of the most innovative artists in contemporary Japan. The author-narrator tells the story of finding her own multiple marginalized identities in Japan: first, as a young girl raised by a Zainichi single mother, and then as an adolescent woman who finds it difficult to feel that she completely belongs to either an able-bodied, "healthy" group of people or to a group of young women with severe disabilities. As a woman afflicted with polio at the age of three, she became mostly paralyzed from the neck down and was forced to spend her entire youth under the care of a staff at a health-care facility. While kept in close confinement at the facility, she had to conceal her Korean roots from others, by using her Japanese-style name, Harada Mariko, in order to avoid racial discrimination. Having been labelled as biologically inferior on multiple levels, e.g. race, gender, sexuality and physical ability, Kim re-stories her identity positively in terms of its uniqueness rather than its deviance from modern Japan's social norms.

Based on her life growing up in Osaka during the 1950s and 60s, the first few chapters narrate Kim's childhood and adolescent years, during which she had learned the pain associated with attempting to pass as a "normal" Japanese girl in post-imperial Japan. At a very young age, Kim became acutely aware of the stigma that accompanied her "abnormal" female body as a Zainichi woman with physical disability, while gradually developing the inner strength to maintain her self-esteem despite the judgmental society by which she was surrounded.¹²⁶ The first chapter, "Mother and My Childhood," focuses on the memory of her mother as a positive role model in her early life, an uplifting force that encouraged her to embrace her full potential against the odds. One of ten children, Kim Manri was the youngest child of Kim Hong-ju (1911-1998), who had immigrated from colonial Korea to Japan, where she became a renowned singer and performer of the traditional Korean music and dance.¹²⁷ Like most children of first-generation Zainichi Koreans, Kim Manri learned about her personal and family history through the oral narratives of her elder relatives, given that the majority of Korean colonial immigrants were illiterate and their written histories were by and large Japanese imperial records. Growing up in a single-parent household with her mother, the foundation of her cultural identity as a Zainichi Korean developed mainly through hearing the stories of her mother's life in colonial Korea, the subsequent diaspora that occurred, and the impact of both on their lives. Despite the dark subject matter of her mother's history—including her girlhood days in Korea characterized by a total lack of freedom under her father's authority, an early family-arranged marriage, and her

¹²⁶ Kim sets the tone of the entire narrative—a strongly optimistic attitude toward embracing her multiple Otherness—by opening the first chapter as follows: "There is nothing "normal" about me. I have always occupied a peculiar position in Japanese society. [...] Fortunately, however, my otherness, being different, has often led me to very positive and meaningful experiences in life." *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 10-11.

¹²⁷ Kim Hong-ju was particularly active in her performance career during World War II in Japan. There are virtually no written records for Kim Hong-ju's cultural and artistic activities as a professional performer, with the exception of her name on a letter of commendation written by Tojo Hideki, a military general of the Japanese imperial army. She received the letter for her contribution to the imperial army by entertaining the troops through art during the World War II. *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 16.

struggles as a single, illiterate immigrant mother in the foreign land of Japan—Kim remembers her mother’s oral tales with feelings of joy and triumph, because of the way her mother told them—using a cheerful voice, intonation and mood.¹²⁸

As an inheritor of the female inter-island legacy handed down through her mother’s oral storytelling, the narrator “I” deliberately chooses to share her life stories with Japanese-reading audiences in a positive way, including her own birth story. Kim Manri was born in 1953 as a result of an extramarital relationship Kim Hong-ju had with a married Zainichi man after her first Korean husband died in immediate postwar Japan. Kim Hong-ju’s determination to bear a child once she got pregnant—despite it being out of wedlock—was extremely rare in both Japanese and Korean societies, where traditional family values have often been against unwed and single motherhood throughout the postwar years.¹²⁹ In the first chapter, Kim celebrates her own birth and life with a great sense of gratitude, a life given to her through “her mother’s great will power” and personal courage.¹³⁰ Thus, she transforms the negative stigma attached to single motherhood into a narrative of a woman’s newly found freedom to have power over her own life. The “I” says:

母はこの時、初めてまともに自分の意志で、自分の人生を積極的に選んだのではないだろうか。夫は祖父が選んだ相手だったし、いくら天才と言われても、芸の道もまた、祖父が決めたものだったのだから。¹³¹

When my mother gave birth to me, she must have made a conscious choice about her own life for the first time in her lifetime. [At an early age,] she had to marry the man her father chose for her [because a daughter couldn’t marry without her father’s permission]. Although she had always been known from a very young age for her precocious abilities in dance and music [and later built a great career as a performing artist], it was her father’s choice to make her pursue a career in the traditional Korean dance and music in the first place.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 14.

¹²⁹ Even today, unwed motherhood is not yet an accepted social norm in both Japan and South Korea. In both societies, single motherhood is considered a great threat to the traditional family structure with a male house head. The discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate children still exists—children born out of wedlock are discriminated against both legally and socially—unmarried women who decide to give birth to and raise their children risk a life with poverty and social stigma. In 2008-9, about 2% of all births in Japan and South Korea were to unmarried women, compared with 40.7 % of all U.S. births to single mothers. Korean single mothers within the structure of a patriarchal society have historically felt pressure to abort or give away their babies for adoption due to strong social stigma, making the country one of the top sending countries of children for international adoption during the post-war periods. On the social stigma regarding single motherhood in Japan and South Korea, see Ekaterina Hertog. *Tough Choices: Bearing an Illegitimate Child in Contemporary Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. Arissa Oh. *To Save the Children of Korea: The Cold War Origins of International Adoption*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015.

¹³⁰ *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 214.

¹³¹ Ibid., 18. I find it important to include the original Japanese text along with the English translation, in order to keep Kim Manri’s writing style here, which is marked by her choice of a casual and colloquial use of language. Her narrative voice has a very personal, friendly tone, which is inevitably lost in the translation into another language.

In her search to break through patriarchal narratives that shame women who deviate from traditional gender role expectations, Kim's voice emphasizes the positive transformation of her mother's racialized feminine body that was located in (imperial) Japan. What the narrator suggests in the above lines is her mother's recovery of her own body from patriarchal control in the context of colonial Korea. Since Kim Hong-ju was born in 1911 in Korea under Japanese rule, her body had been subject to total control at the hands of multiple male authorities—her father, her first husband (with whom she had nine children), and Japanese colonizers with the Emperor at the top of a colonial hierarchy. In other words, as a young Korean woman, she occupied the lower stratum of imperial Japan, in which both a female and a colonized identity was shaped by male power through control of the weaker and inferior Other in need of guidance and protection. When she made an individual decision about bringing her tenth child into the household without a male authority figure in the early 1950s Japan, she transformed her social body from an object of male control on multiple levels (as daughter/wife/the colonized Koreans) into a liberated subject. By revealing her mother's inner struggle in claiming her own sexual and reproductive body in a culture that negates self-generating female subjectivity, Kim Manri opens a new perspective for honoring the lived experiences of the first-generation Zainichi women. By depicting her mother as audacious enough to make decisions about her own life by rejecting the traditional roles of obedience and weakness imposed on her by her racial, cultural and patriarchal authorities, Kim Manri remembers her mother as the source of her own female sense of self—a self strong enough to survive in an ableist, racist and sexist society.

In the first chapter, Kim Manri uses her birth narrative as a link to the spirit and inner strength of her female ancestor Kim Hong-ju. In particular, she identifies with her mother in that they both are what Anzaldúa calls “border women,”¹³² those who reside in a place of ambiguity across the boundaries between two cultures, two races and two gender roles, as a gesture of refusal to be trapped on one inferior side of the border. Incorporating her mother's voice of resistance to the confines of normative womanhood into her own autobiographical narrative, Kim Manri seeks a new path to reconstruct who she is as an individual human being.

In the context of post-imperial Japan, Kim Manri's birth into a fatherless Zainichi household was associated with a series of stigmatized and marginalized identities. She was born stateless in 1953, as all Zainichi Koreans lost their Japanese nationality and civil rights in 1952.¹³³ Since the constitution of the Empire of Japan, the country has a system of *jus sanguinis* (Latin: right of blood) nationality law, by which citizenship is granted through the Japanese patrilineal bloodline.¹³⁴ The making of citizens in relation to the “pure” patrilineal bloodline started in imperial Japan as part of the government's

¹³² Anzaldúa claims herself to be “a border woman,” an in-between identity that prevents her complete assimilation into the Chicano patriarchal culture, as well as the mainstream (white) feminist community in America. *Borderlands*, 19.

¹³³ In 1952, Zainichi Koreans became stateless with no legal protection in Japanese society while unable to return to their ancestral land of Korea, a land that had been turned into a brutal battlefield for the Korean War (1950-1953). For more details, see the introduction to chapter one.

¹³⁴ In 1984, the Japanese government amended the nationality law and citizenship was now given to those born to an ethnic Japanese mother or father. More on Japanese nationality law, see Takeyuki Tsuda, “Localities and the Struggle for Immigrant Rights.” *Local Citizenship in Recent Countries of Immigration: Japan in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Takeyuki Tsuda. (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006).

efforts to construct a strong modern nation, its national identity and cultural/racial uniqueness by molding the Japanese people into one nation-family with the Emperor at its head as the father figure. When the Korean peninsula became Japan's new colony in 1910, the Japanese government further utilized this concept of the nation-family to create a new hierarchical system in imperial Japan. In this new family structure, the Japanese, as its leading race under the authority of the Emperor, were entitled to guide, control and discipline the uncivilized bodies of the colonized Koreans (i.e., by "correcting" their untamed tongues/accents in the national language of Japanese), the new backward members of the empire. In order to define and maintain the binary hierarchical systems between "us" (the Japanese race) and "them" (the colonized Other), the Japanese government created two types of Japanese subjects by establishing two family registration systems (*koseki seido*) in 1923 in the empire, which legally distinguished ethnic Japanese (*naichijin*, or "insiders") from the colonized people (*gaichijin*, or "outsiders").¹³⁵ During the colonial period, this national registration system played a central role in legally including Koreans as imperial subjects, eligible for military draft and forced labor¹³⁶ while excluding them from the attainment of equal civil rights and statuses, making them unalterably alien and biologically inferior and incapable of independent choice in civic life. Right after the war ended, this registration system practically served to divide the "pure-blooded" Japanese people from the "impure" formerly-colonized Koreans, which later allowed for the legal denial of Japanese citizenship for Zainichi Koreans in 1952.

Consequently, the ideas of "blood" and "shared ancestry/heredity" related to modern Japanese citizenry developed at that time still continue to be legally binding, along with the eugenic aim of improving racial homogeneity through producing the biologically "pure" citizens. The masculinist nature of this paradigm has, to this day, led to imposed values and expectations of the notion of idealized femininity pertaining to

¹³⁵ On modern Japan's national project of creating racial hierarchies and order in the empire through the family registration system, see *Japan's Household Registration System and Citizenship. Koseki, Identification and Documentation*, eds. David Chapman and Karl Jakob Krogness. (New York: Routledge, 2014).

¹³⁶ During the last half of the 1930s and the early 1940s, Koreans were mobilized to work in Japanese factories and coal mines and in heavy construction. Not only were they forced to work under appalling and dangerous conditions, but they also received much lower wages than ethnic Japanese and congregated in Korean ghettos because of abject poverty and racial discrimination. Young Korean men and women were also forced to serve the Japanese imperial military, and they were often sent to the most dangerous military areas:

Imperial Japan in fact used the Korean peninsula as its supply base for human and material resources throughout the war. Japanese mobilization of Korean labor was carried out in three stages: recruitment (1939-1941), government-led arrangements (1942-1943), and forced labor drafts (1944-1945). By the end of the war, Koreans made up a third of Japan's industrial labor force. It was predominantly farmers and resident Koreans in Japan who were forced to work under conditions of near slavery in constructing airfields, harbors, mines, roads, and large civilian projects for such well-known companies as Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, and Suzuki. Indeed, Japan's war machine rested squarely on the contributions of Korean migrant workers overseas; this took various forms, such as conscripted troops, forced labor, civilian and military employment, and sex slavery abroad.

Sarah C. Soh. *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 17-8.

women's social, sexual, and reproductive roles in maintaining the healthy national body called "Japan."

Under the eugenic surveillance of the colonial period, Korean women were deemed "unfit" to produce the proper offspring and were considered to be inherently inferior. This way of thinking resulted in a persistent categorical and discriminatory discourse that was reflected in the hierarchical systems of the Japanese Empire—and that continues to be so in the structure of post-imperial Japan, in which the normative practices and legacy of colonialism largely remain unexplored and unquestioned. Positioned at the lower strata of postwar Japanese society, Zainichi women continue to be viewed as having little value, as they are incapable of reproducing the future generation of children for the Emperor.

Ideologies of Blood and Body: Modern Japan's Eugenic Violence toward the Unfit Other

Throughout *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, Kim Manri's focus on the importance of her connection to her mother in the narrative allows her to inscribe her existence in the official realm from which she has already been excluded as a stateless person, while challenging conventional wisdom about the bodily norms for an "ideal woman" in modern Japan. Kim's emphasis on her matrilineal legacy also provides her with the life-long inspiration to explore her "disabled" body's expressive capacity—not its limits—in order to produce a new form of aesthetic beauty in bodily expressions (*shintai hyôgen* 身体表現), a beauty untrodden by any leading (able-bodied) performing artists in Japan.

Surrounded by Korean traditional dance and music in her childhood, Kim Manri often mimicked the artistic performances of her mother from a young age. Recognizing her precocious talents in music and dance, her mother was determined to raise her as her successor in the traditional Korean performing arts—until she contracted polio at the age of three, leaving her entire body paralyzed from the neck down. The young Manri was then sent to a residential facility at seven, which provided 24-hour medical care for physically disabled children under the age of eighteen. Kim stayed there for ten years, and felt confined against her will, which had a profound effect on her as a young girl and continues to impact her life as an artist. While forcefully segregated from a public life during her entire youth, she developed a critical lens through which to look deeply into the "shadow" of Japanese society associated with the ideologies of eugenics and race hygiene. In *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, she explains how her childhood experiences brought her agonizing pain, as she was always feeling trapped in her female body under the Japanese eugenic gaze, which sought to exclude her from the official social structures built within the combined discourses of idealized femininity (physical beauty and obedience) and motherhood (ability to reproduce "normal" offspring), as well as the racial and cultural "purity" of the modern Japanese subjectivity.

In the second chapter, "To the Facility for Disabled Children," Kim Manri begins to retrace her childhood memories of a life under medical care by describing her vivid impressions of the day she entered her new "home." Carried in her sister's arms, "I" crossed the threshold of the front door on one spring day in 1961. This act embodied the ominous metaphors of her border crossing from childhood into the adult world—from the private sphere of natality and intimacy into the public sphere of competition promoting

survival of the fittest. Her violent entry into the harsh realities of the grown-up world is symbolized in the narrative when she was abruptly forced to use a Japanese name, Harada Mariko. As soon as her sister checked her into the facility by writing down the unfamiliar name, she intuitively realized that, “This is what a Zainichi Korean means in Japan.”¹³⁷ As was typical of Zainichi children born into post-imperial Japan, Kim Manri would constantly feel the unexplainable inadequacy and profound humiliation that she must embrace an identity other than her own—speaking and acting Japanese with her Japanese name—yet deeply aware that she was not accepted as a respected member of the Japanese society due to her “impure” ancestral lineage and blood heritage.¹³⁸

Upon her arrival, “I” soon realized that the facility that was supposed to “cure” children’s physical disabilities was a prison-like community, where children were forced to “eliminate” their undesirable traits and unruly physical movements that deviated from the norms of the able-bodied. Staying in a room all day that she shared with other five children, she frequently witnessed the merciless reality her fellow young girls faced there. Severely disabled, they all remained completely powerless over their plights under the “care” of the authoritative doctors, nurses and professional helpers. While needing help with everyday activities, such as getting dressed and using the toilet, the girls were not allowed to voice their own desires, which was considered disobedient and unruly. In the following passage, the narrator shares with readers one of the most horrifying scenes she witnessed shortly after her arrival: the staff was inhumanly treating a young girl with a combination of severe mental and physical disabilities as if she were merely an “empty” body without any human emotions and feelings, such as fear, shame and pain. As a newcomer who knew nothing of the life there, “I” was so shocked at the sight that it was deeply inscribed into her memory:

私にとって十年の施設生活を思うとき、やはり語らなければならないのは、当時の施設の不備のため、はじめはそう重度でもなかった子が、みるみる寝たきりになっていたり、死んでいたりする、そういう友達を目の当たりにしたことだ。私が、一番最初にそういう人に会ったのは、入院まもない頃だった。私より年上のその人は[...]「あぼたか」という愛称でよばれていたように思う。

[...]

その人は寝たきりで、細く、針金のようにまっすぐ伸びて曲がらない体を持ち、いつもベッドの上に寝かされたままで、子どもながらに、あれでは放置されているのと同じだと思った。そればかりかおしこのときなどは、職員が片足の足をヒョイと掴まむように持ち上げると身体全体が持ち上がるのでそこに便器を差し込む、といった具合で、とても人間を扱っているとは思えなかった。彼女に対しては万事がそうで、寝たきりだということで風呂にも入れてもらえず、頭だけたまに洗われるのだ。寝たきりのため床ずれができ、傷口の処置を医者と看護婦でするのが、彼女に対する日課になっていた。そうしたある日、私は職員が、耳を疑うようなことばを発するのを聞いた。

‘蛆がわいた’ 確かにそう聞こえた。

[...]

¹³⁷ *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 32.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 160.

施設という、寝食を共にする集団生活の中で、みんな逃げられない子どもたちだった。ある日、そこにいた子が忽然と消える。それに対して大人たちは何もなかったかのように口をつぐむ。¹³⁹

When talking about the ten years I spent there, I must first mention how my roommates, who were relatively mildly disabled in the first place, deteriorated so badly under degrading conditions that they eventually became bed-ridden or died. I encountered such a case as soon as I entered there. If I remember correctly, [...] the young girl was only known by her nickname, “Abotaka.”

[...]

She was already bed-ridden, with her whole body surprisingly thin and unbendable. She was always left lying in bed, while being completely neglected by the very staff meant to care for her. Even as a young girl, I could tell that it was utter negligence. When she had to use the toilet, the helper would just pick up one of her legs in order to lift up her entire body, so a bedpan could be placed under her. She was treated with no respect for her human dignity. Because she was completely bed-ridden, she never had the chance to bathe. No one helped her with bathing needs and hygiene care; the helper occasionally came to wash her face only. Her immobile state caused her to have bedsores, and the doctor and the nurses routinely exchanged the sponges inside her bedsores everyday. One day, I heard something and I couldn’t believe my ears—“Her bedsores are infested with maggots!”—a nurse shouted.

[...]

Living under the same roof at the group home, all the children suffered the same fate—No one was allowed out. Even when a child suddenly disappeared from the room we shared together, no one was allowed to ask questions. Everyone would pretend like nothing had ever happened.

Throughout chapter two, Kim Manri tells about the childhood trauma associated with seeing her friends kept unnecessarily bedridden under close confinement in the facility or finding out that they had “suddenly disappeared” from the world. In the above paragraph, the narrator remembers how the seven-year-old “I” fearfully watched the way the facility staff were treating the young girl without any compassion or respect for her human dignity. Upon seeing such a shocking scene, she instantly came to the realization that, under the guise of guardianship, the staff was allowed to abuse their power over any disabled child. In particular, the girl who was severely slow mentally and had little physical control of her body had remained completely helpless in raising her voice against her abusers. This was because she was unable to not only move her body without the help of others, but also to communicate her voice in a sufficiently pleasing manner, pattern and tone that was proper and respectful towards the staff. Here, the utter helplessness of the young, bedridden girl juxtaposed with the staff’s blatant exertion of power manifested itself in her physical body “infested with maggots” as a result of being

¹³⁹ Ibid., 43-51.

neglected and unwashed for too long. Everyone in the room heard the nurse's cry of disgust at the maggots found in a human body, while the girl's inner cry of pain, suffering and anger was completely disregarded. Clearly, her "disability" to conform to communicative norms in Japanese society gave the staff enough justification to erase her voice in this closed community, treat her like an object of disgust and dehumanize her as having no value or name.

After having spent a short while in the nursing home, "I" began to see clearly why such cruel treatments of the most defenseless girls were accepted as the customary practice there. She noticed that the root cause of such normalized violence was not the evil individuals that were the doctors, nurses and helpers, but a collective evil of Japanese society that socialized them into not recognizing the structural violence of its ableist culture. In this culture, even today, able-bodied people are considered the norm for the human condition, a norm that puts "disabled people" on the other side of a binary between the abled self and the disabled Other, making them an undesirable obstacle that needs to be segregated from mainstream society. With able-bodied privilege so pervasive across all facets of society, the narrator believes, disabled children's parents often play the role of perpetrator of abuse themselves—all her roommates were, in greater or lesser degrees, forced into the home by their parents who wished their children to be "cured" and become "normal," instead of accepting who they were. She further observes that the parents' attitudes toward their disabled children had some of the greatest impact on how the staff treated them: a total lack of parental visitation made any child extremely vulnerable to violence behind institutional walls. Some children were more likely to be targeted than others, and it depended on a combination of a number of factors, such as gender, age and the degree of severity of disability. Those who were the most dependent on help for both mobility and communication, and thus the most vulnerable, were often left completely neglected by the facility staff until they "naturally" died. Such children occupied the lowest stratum of this community hierarchy: they were mostly young girls with a combination of severe mental and physical handicaps with little or no parental support. Consequently, "I" saw the power relations in this closed society as a microcosm of the larger society—the cruelty of the facility staff reflected the Japanese public's implicit perceptions of disabled children as unwanted burdens that disturb the normal rhythm of life within an efficiently-functioning capitalist society.

Trapped in a cycle of fear without the means to get out of the prison-like home she was forced into, the young Manri felt completely powerless over her plight under the care of the authoritative doctors, nurses and helpers. While living in the borderlands between life and death during all the years she spent there, she always remained unable to take either side in the power conflict between the facility staff and the physically abused child. Because she was "abled" enough to act in accordance with the established rules of the closed community, such as properly responding to the orders and implicit demands of the staff, she could survive the harsh conditions.

While remaining a helpless observer of such a collective evil—the systemic brutality of disabled children—she gradually became aware of the presence of a personal evil within her own mind. In the lines below, the "I" recalls the days when she began to look deeply into the human evil eternally present in her own psyche and in all humanity. As a young girl, she always felt angry at the adult authorities' attitudes and expressions of heartlessness toward her fellow children. At the same time, however, she often

unwittingly sided with the very perpetrators that abused her, by looking down upon the most defenseless and voiceless girls as feeble-minded, thereby contributing to the normalization of the staff's cruel behavior toward them:

施設のこうした状況のまっただなかにおいて私が感じていたのは、「私は今、極限状態で人間のエゴという、人間の本質を見ているのだ」ということだった。そしてその本質は、自分の中にもあると思った。自分の中にもいつのまにか職員の片棒をかついで、いちばん排除されるものにたいして侮蔑心を持ってしまっている自分がいたのだ。

[...]

当時は、職員の機嫌しだいでその日の自分の処遇が変わるとというのが現実であり、障害が重度であればあるほど、職員の顔色を見るのが習い性になっていく生活であった。施設というのはけっして楽園ではありえず、結局は一般社会にある差別の縮図が、より生なかたちで当事者につきつけられる場ではないのだ。わたしはそういう環境のなかで、自分も含めて人間の心理というものを考えるようになった。それは、善も悪も別々に存在するのではなく、ひとり人間のの中に同時にあるのだ、ということだった。[...] たまたまその時にどちらかが出るだけで、絶対的に善い人なんていない。特に極限状態では、悪の部分が出る方が自然であり、本音なのだ。¹⁴⁰

While living in the midst of such violent environments, I often thought, “I am now penetrating deeper into a human nature that is fundamentally and cruelly egoistic.” I also became keenly aware of such self-centered tendencies in my own psyche—especially when I found myself taking the staff's side by beginning to look down on the most defenseless girl with disdain.

[...]

All the children were living from day to day at the mercy of the facility staff, and the more severely disabled you were, the more deeply you would become accustomed to trying to correctly read the staff's facial expressions, thereby not disturbing their moods. The nursing home was certainly not a utopia for disabled children; it was a miniature of the larger society in terms of social discrimination, only its interpersonal aggression was more directly visible to everyone involved. Such first-hand experience of the social authority's excessive cruelty toward disabled children provided me with a means of consciously reflecting on the reality of the human psyche—We all have both good and evil in our minds. [...] Depending on the situation, a person can appear to be either good or evil, but there exists no human being who is absolutely good. Especially under an extreme state of distress, one's evil part would easily take over one's entire identity—it is, after all, an essential part of the human psyche.

In this passage, the “I” reflects upon the moral vulnerability of herself as a human being, which she first found in her own feelings of resentment and disdain toward her peers. Here, she uses the word egoism (*ego* in Japanese) to attribute this moral

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 48-51.

vulnerability to one's own self-centeredness. She remembers that her mind was encumbered with self-centeredness when looking at the voiceless girls as objects of contempt, which resulted from partially assimilating herself into her perpetrator's worldview and adopting their normalizing gaze. From this personal experience, she concludes that human evil—human beings' cruelty toward one another—will most likely emerge in our minds when we have become unaware of what Peggy McIntosh would call certain “unearned” privileges,¹⁴¹ by which we have benefited from birth, in terms of race, nationality, native language, gender, mental and physical abilities.

Kim Manri believes that the eugenic thought (*yūsei shisō*) associated with normative discourse about Japanese citizenry can best describe how privilege is inherently self-centered and tends to cultivate indifference toward unprivileged individuals. In her book, Kim states that the standards of “normal” activities and movements shaped by able-bodied Japanese citizens are overwhelmingly oppressive because they force her to perform and present her self/identity other than her own in everyday life.¹⁴² From her perspective, privileged individuals are “meant” to remain unaware of the need to accommodate the Other, even to the point of having little or no regard for the interests, beliefs and feelings of the most oppressed people in society. In this climate, Kim often faces her fear of potentially becoming an object of social exclusion (“いつ闇から闇へ葬られるかわからない立場”)—the one deemed to be a potential threat to the conformity and racial homogeneity of the Japanese national body.¹⁴³ After spending ten years in the medical facility for disabled children, she gained the perspective that her body would be always seen as the inferior and deviant Other in a closed national community called Japan, as long as dominant group privilege continues to operate as an unconscious and unquestioned norm.

Toward Greater Acceptance of Body and Flesh

In the fourth chapter, “Movement,” Kim Manri narrates how she, as she was approaching adulthood, sought ways to occupy the world as an independent human being.

¹⁴¹ In her 1988 essay, “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” Peggy McIntosh provides a definition of the concept of privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets.” She writes:

I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets, which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks. [...] My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. At school, we were not taught about slavery in any depth; we were not taught to see slaveholders as damaged people. Slaves were seen as the only group at risk of being dehumanized. My schooling followed the pattern which Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow “them” to be more like “us.”

Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies.” Working Paper 189, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.

¹⁴² *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 98.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 151.

Upon her return from the facility to the family home at the age of seventeen, she began to have an unbearable fear that she would be forever trapped inside closed confinement at home. She even, for a time, considered death as an antidote to a life filled with uncertainty, pain and agony.¹⁴⁴ In her attempts to escape a situation in which she felt captive inside her own destructive view of herself as the unwanted Other—life not worth living—she started to participate in various community activities surrounding the disability rights movement. In 1973, when she turned twenty, she joined Japan’s most influential disability rights community, known as *Aoi Shiba no Kai* (“Association of Green Grass”).¹⁴⁵ It was also this year when she began to publically use her “real” name—Kim Manri—for the first time in her life. In this way, Kim Manri took the first step in her quest for claiming her right to public space and connecting with others in the outside world.

Aoi Shiba no Kai initiated and pioneered most of the disability activism in Japan, including what came to be referred to as the independent living movement (*jiritsu seikatsu undo*) during the later part of the 1970s.¹⁴⁶ The leaders of *Aoi Shiba no Kai* called for the deinstitutionalization of people with disabilities by encouraging them to leave their family environment and live independently through community-based home-helper services, thereby creating a new helper/helped relationship beyond the traditional model of family members as sole caregivers. Deeply inspired by its underlying message of empowerment and self-respect for persons with disabilities, Kim Manri took the action of using her own living body as an agent of change for society, by committing herself to this new, revolutionary movement. At the age of twenty-one, she became the first disabled person in Osaka to officially establish a life of independence, in which she lived alone while receiving daily assistance and companionship from social workers and volunteers.¹⁴⁷ In the following passage, she is looking back on the days during which she paved a new path for her to live independently—with virtually no precedent on which to rely. In her attempts to break away from the traditional lifestyle of a *Zainichi* woman/a person with disability—a life of isolation and alienation living under the “protection” of her family—she faced a series of barriers and obstacles. One of these barriers included the opinions of the general public that favored the preconceived notions surrounding the myth of the importance of a family, its generic bond and shared destiny, and in particular the powerful paradigm of family responsibility and parental love. She says:

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁴⁵ *Aoi Shiba no Kai* (青い芝の会, established in 1957) is a disability rights community that mainly consists of people with cerebral palsy. In 1962, this organization became the first group of disability rights activists to directly negotiate with the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Japan on the behalf of the disability community. Since then, much of their efforts are directed at improving basic human rights for people with disabilities, including promoting the independence, productivity and full participation of people with disabilities in contemporary Japanese society. For more on the disability rights movement initiated by *Aoi Shiba no Kai*, see Hiroshi Yokota, *Shōgaisha goroshi no shisō*. (Tokyo: JCA shuppan, 1979.)

¹⁴⁶ On the development of the independent living movement in 1970s Japan, see Shinya Tateiwa, “Jiko kettei suru jiritsu.” In Ed., Ishikawa Jun and Nagase Osamu. *Shōgaigaku e no shōtai: shakai, bunka, disabiriti*. (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1999), 79-90.

¹⁴⁷ Osamu Mori. “Shōgaisha toshite ikiru toiu koto.” in Ed., Zenkoku jiritsu seikatsu sentā kyōgikai. *Jiritsu seikatsu undō to shōgai bunka*. (Tokyo: Gendaishokan, 2001), 322-3.

障害者はだいたい、健常者の家族の中で自分だけが障害者である場合が多い。そして親兄弟は良くも悪くも家族の中に障害者がいることに「責任」を感じていて、心配のあまり、あるいは“身内の恥”意識から[...] 障害者を家から一歩も出さず、その存在をひた隠しにする家庭が多かった。その場合、一番の差別者は親だということになる。

[...]

青い芝の会は「障害者は親から離れて家出しよう」と自立の勧めをしていて、障害者の親の会などからは、不穏な思想をふりまくとして要チェックの団体だった。¹⁴⁸

We are often the only disabled persons in our own families. Our parents and siblings believe that it is the responsibility of the family to take care of us. [...] By convention, Japanese families tend to hide the existence of disabled children from the outside world, close them off within the domain of the families—due either to their sense of over-protectiveness or “shame for the family.” In this family system paradigm, the most oppressive people toward persons with disabilities are the parents.

[...]

Aoi Shiba no Kai was an organization that advocated and promoted independent living for people with disabilities by encouraging us to leave the custody of our parents. Because of this very slogan, Aoi Shiba no Kai was often seen as an organization with radical and dangerous ideologies by [powerful community organizations such as] associations of parents of disabled children.

Here, she suggests how the negative stigma attached to disability in Japan has historically created a prison-like environment for persons with disabilities within the domain of the families. In a cultural context in which disability is considered both a “shame” for the whole family and a “failure” for the mother unable to give birth to a “normal” child, persons with disabilities have often been pushed into hiding within the domestic sphere, hidden from public eyes. Under the custody/protection/care of the family members, the bodies of persons with disabilities have historically been placed under the total control of their parents. As a result, a parent (especially a mother) can sometimes play, even unknowingly, the role of oppressor who, having the sole authority to “possess” the body of her child, holds a position of dominance as the speaking subject for the family, while the child is relegated to the status of a voiceless object. During the 1970s, Aoi Shiba no Kai became the first organization in Japan to publically criticize parents for depriving disabled children of their individual voices regarding lifestyle choices and agency/ownership over their own bodies. Like Kim Manri, the leaders of Aoi Shiba no Kai positioned themselves against egoism and eugenic thought.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 104.

¹⁴⁹ Aoi Shiba no Kai has constantly opposed Japanese mothers’ legal rights to “kill” an unwanted baby with a disability, born or unborn. In 1970, the leaders of Aoi Shiba no Kai harshly criticized a mother who killed a two-year-old child with severe disability. The general public was extremely sympathetic toward the mother, and such public sympathy was later reflected in the court’s decision—she was only sentenced to two years in prison, with the sentence suspended for three years. Aoi Shiba no Kai accused the mother of “murdering a human being,” refusing to call her “a victim of family tragedy.” Such an accusation was

Inevitably, however, Aoi Shiba no Kai's call for progressive change and a paradigm shift in the naturalized ideal of mutual love in a parent-child relationship gained negative attention from the general public in the 1970s Japan, in particular from the parents of persons with disabilities.

When Kim Manri broke the news to her mother that she would move away from home to live independently, her mother strongly opposed the decision, just as most parents of young persons with disabilities had done in 1970s Japan. The basis for her disapproval, first and foremost, was her belief that a young Zainichi woman with a disability would never survive without parental protection, without which she would be even more defenseless against the judgmental society.¹⁵⁰ Her mother's initial response reflected her deep internalization of modern Japan's eugenic ideas about race and disability—her daughter's body was too weak/unfit (physically) and too disadvantageous (racially) to make an individual decision about how to live in post-imperial Japan. As an ethnic Korean woman in (imperial) Japan, her mother, too, had always been exposed to and scrutinized under the Japanese eugenic gaze that defined her female body as the inferior Other, a body not worthy of belonging to or living as a free citizen in the national community. The mother's denial of her daughter's decision about seeking individuated freedom in the outside world seemed to stem from a deeply internalized social role imposed upon her own body by Japan's public culture as a passive and domestic object, a body that should remain hidden in secrecy and shame.

Aware that she would always be trapped in the single, fixed and marginalized identity as a “dependent child with a disability” as long as she lived in her mother's home,¹⁵¹ Kim Manri was firmly determined to overcome one of the most difficult barriers she possessed within her own mind—the strong emotional attachment she had developed toward her mother. Despite her mother's attempts to dissuade her in every way possible, such as menacing her with a kitchen knife and shutting her in a room,¹⁵² her determination remained strong, and her mother eventually agreed to let her go. Kim Manri remembers one day, just before she left home, her mother shared her innermost feelings with her, which have been deeply engraved in the author's mind:

家を出る日も間近になったある日、母が急にトツトツと話した。「おまえのやろうとしていることは、朝鮮が日本から独立しようとして、独立運動をしたのと同じ意味がある。」「おまえがおまえとして生きるために、親も捨てていこうとするのは、おまえの立場とすれば当然のことだ。しかし、親がそれを止めたいというのも、また当然のことだ。」「生きていくのはおまえ自身だから、結局はおまえの思うようにするしかないのだ。」自分自身に言い聞かせるかのように話す母の言葉には、さすがにわたしも胸がつまった。やはり母親にはかなわない、と思った。なんだかんだといっても、私のやろうとしていることを一番理解しているすごさには恐れ入る。そして、私が家

considered too radical and harsh by the public in 1970s Japan, because disabled children were commonly considered an emotional and economic burden for their family members and the larger society at that time. See Koichi Yokozuka. *Hahayo! korosuna*. (Tokyo: Seikatsushoin, 2007), 94-105.

¹⁵⁰ *Ikirukoto no Hajimari*, 108.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 109-10.

を出てもやりたいと思っている障害者運動と、朝鮮独立運動とを同等にならべてくれたことが、内心、涙がでるほど嬉しかった。¹⁵³

It was approaching the day of my leaving home, and my mother suddenly started to talk to me. “What you are trying to achieve through your social action has the same significance as when we embraced the Korean independence movement in the past to end Japan’s colonial rule in Korea.” “It’s natural for you to leave your mother behind in order to find your own life. But it’s also natural for me to want to convince you to stay.” “After all it is your life, so you must follow your heart’s desire.” Hearing my mother speaking, as if trying to convince herself, I was overwhelmed with emotion.

I would never get the better of my mother, I thought. No matter what, she always understood and respected the deepest part of me. And most of all, I nearly wept for gratitude when I heard my mother acknowledging the significance of my action for the disability rights movement—even by leaving the comfort of home—by likening it to the historical significance of the Korean independence movement.

Here, the “I” recalls the moments of past in which she finally realized that her decision to embark upon a new, untrodden path put her mother in the contradictory position of feeling both admiration and fear toward her daughter’s bold action in life. Her mother candidly expressed her own personal fear of being left behind and forgotten, admitting her egoistic “love” as a mother—a self-centered desire to control and “possess” her child. At the same time, she also revealed her inner struggles to try to understand her daughter’s side of the story, particularly her deep desire to change the status-quo norms in order to make Japan a more inclusive society. Faced between two contradictory emotions present in her psyche—self-centered love and selfless love for others—the mother eventually chose to respect her daughter’s desire over her own, as well as a shared aspiration about the future over the personal fear about it. By moving beyond the traditional family relationship that would rely heavily on the binary roles, such as mother and child, the two women found a new way to connect to each other at a deeper level. In spite of physically moving away from each other, they would be always connected beyond time and space through shared desire for social transformation, a desire to deconstruct the fixed, colonialist image of their own female bodies and bring to light the multiple identities of women’s lives in modern Japanese society.

In transcribing her mother’s spoken voice into her own personal narrative, Kim Manri constructs an autobiographical voice that designates the presence of her own writing/performing/living body as a transnational and transgenerational medium. This is best epitomized in the above passage, in which the “I” includes the mother’s statement establishing a new historical connection between the two non-violent, human rights movements in Japan’s modern history—the disability rights and independent living movement of the 1970s and the Korean independence movement of 1919.¹⁵⁴ By

¹⁵³ Ibid., 113-4.

¹⁵⁴ During the colonial period, anti-colonial movements had continuously occurred in imperial Japan. One of the most notable was the Korean Independence Movement of 1919. This refers to a series of non-violent demonstrations which took place across the Korean peninsula rallying for Korea’s independence

juxtaposing the two movements as equally significant in terms of bringing a vague but powerful idea of respect for human dignity into real-life collective action, the mother broke down the dichotomy between prewar and postwar Japan, through which to encourage her daughter to always imagine her social action and identity beyond the historical and geographical boundaries. Although the young Manri was about to move forward into the unknown all by herself—armed only with the hope for a better future—her mother’s words provided her with an emotional connection to her Korean ancestors, to whom she could return anytime when faced with social rejection and isolation in her struggle for human equality in Japan. By retracing her personal history and memory in relation to her Korean ancestors, consequently, Kim Manri’s autobiographical voice is a confluence of personal and collective consciousness that moves toward a humane desire for individual autonomy, as well as nonviolent resistance to any us/other binary oppositions. In doing so, she uses her autobiographical body as an amorphous agent of change, with the power to subvert Japan’s cultural ideals of the “normal” or “homogenous” body, reconnecting and healing the split between the Japanese self and Japan’s internal Other.

Resisting Total Control: Body in Balancing Acts, Self in Living between Two Worlds

Both as a writer and a performance artist, Kim Manri’s voice often emerges from what Anzaldúa calls a “shamanic state,”¹⁵⁵ a metaphorical space between the different cultures, races and bodily realities she inhabits. It is through choosing to remain in such an in-between space, however, that she is able to frequently produce new stories that can “transform the storyteller and the listener into something or someone else,”¹⁵⁶ moving toward healing humanity’s damaging history of colonialism, oppression and violence. By narrating her own story in which the “I” constantly transforms from the Other to the Self—from a voiceless, “disabled” child into a social activist, from the sedentary role of a Zainichi woman into the role of dancer—she places a strong emphasis on the potential to transform oneself into a powerful agent for social change. She also highlights that all humans exist in a borderlands/to varying degrees in terms of race, gender, culture and mental and physical abilities—just as our physical bodies move divergently through the gradual aging process during every minute of our lives. As indicated in the title of her troupe, the Taihen’s thirtieth anniversary performance, *Niji no Kanata ni: Over the Rainbow* (2014), Kim Manri engages in the artistic endeavour of seeking new colors, images, knowledge and experience beyond the spectrum of human variations in the world around us as we presently know it. As an artist, this is how she continues to promote the notion of positive difference and diversity, which, she believes, is a core part of our being and our existence as human beings.

from Japanese colonial rule. Korean participants in this movement opposed the Japanese government’s attempts to suppress their freedom of maintaining their own (Korean) culture and identity. In order to suppress the movement, the Japanese government used brutal force against the Korean demonstrators, who included young women and children.

¹⁵⁵ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 91.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

Conclusion

The Performance of Ambiguous Belonging, Transformative Self: Toward A New Metaphor for the Borders of Human Culture

Today, many Japanese politicians, prominent journalists and social critics argue that Korean comfort women were nothing more than commercial prostitutes, and such a statement is not uncommon among the people of contemporary Japan. Modern Japan has the history of limiting its circle of compassion and loyalty for others beyond the racial/ethnic boundary imagined as *nihonjin*—the Japanese. The Emperor system and its patriarchal values have traditionally played a central role in creating an enclosed space of national belonging and identity, a collective identity based on what Alan Tansman calls “the myth of a nation unified by the natural bonds of its blood and spirit.”¹⁵⁷ For decades after 1945, many Japanese artists, such as filmmakers and literary writers, have exposed the pain of Japanese victims after World War II, but postwar discourse on war crimes against Japan’s (formerly-) colonized Others has been largely neglected. The international representation of Japan’s role in the war gradually changed in the 1990s, however, with the rise of new global concerns about historical injustice committed against humanity worldwide during World War II. The comfort women issue, which burst into international attention in the 1990s, leading to Japanese nationalist efforts to suppress the voices of *halmoni* (the term for grandmother or grandma in Korean, used to refer to former comfort women) and their supporters, symbolizes the ongoing legacy of Japanese colonial racism and its power dynamics between the Japanese (*nihonjin*) and Koreans (*chôsenjin*), friend and foe, and Self and Other—the binary oppositions that played an integral part in building an oppressive and segregated Japanese Empire.

Through a close analysis of the autobiographical works of Lee Yang-ji, Yu Miri, and Kim Manri, this dissertation examined how these women empower themselves not only by reinterpreting their social situations, but also through the collective power of women, a power that transcends historical changes and ethnic and cultural differences. In search for a way to advocate for a new historical narrative surrounding the representation of Korean women in (imperial) Japan, they place a strong emphasis on respect for the self as multiplicitous and always in the process of changing. For these women, retracing their personal histories in relation to the lives of their female ancestors, represents an amorphous human experience, where a legacy of resistance is inherited beyond the differences in their cultural, linguistic and historical backgrounds. Deeply aware that human beings overcome modern segregation, conflict and alienation only by sharing emotions, engaging in dialogue and building interpersonal relationships, they use their artistry as mediums through which to write connections across difference, widen their circles of compassion for others, and re-connect themselves with those who remain the most vulnerable, the most voiceless and the most disadvantaged in the postcolonial world they live in.

In the process of sharing their personal (hi)stories with audiences and emerging as autobiographical storytellers, Lee, Yu and Kim acknowledge the boundaries they are establishing around themselves, boundaries that hold a multiple spectrum of belonging.

¹⁵⁷ Alan Tansman. *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 3.

In speaking their personal voices as part of their families, their cultures, and other marginalized people in both Japan and South Korea, these women embrace the acceptance of interactions between people beyond the border—and its limits of traditional theories of genre—such as Japanese national language and literature, modern Korean history, Japanese dance theater, and Korean shamanism. In this respect, they all perceive the borders of human culture as a complex web of interdependence that characterizes the nature we live in, where all the parts—including sun and moon, female and male, birth and death, old and new, traditional and contemporary—are equally necessary and interlinked together.

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