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Fact and Fiction in the Contemporary American Historical Novel: The Case of Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My dearest father Abdelkader, my loveliest mother Linda, and my precious siblings

My beloved grandfather

My dear cousin Mina

My classmates and friends

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful,

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Declaration

I, undersigned, do hereby declare that this dissertation has been carried out by me as a partial fulfillment for the Master's degree in English literature and civilization under the guidance and supervision of Mr. Boulegroune Adel, Faculty of Letters and Languages, English Language and Literature Department, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Algeria.

I further declare that the interpretations put forth in this thesis are based on my own readings, understanding and examination of the original texts. The reported findings that I have made use of are duly acknowledged at the respective place. Also, I declare that this work is not published anywhere in any form.

Signature

Ghanemi Maroua

Date: 04/06/2023

Abstract

This dissertation attempts to study the way in which fact and fiction converge and diverge in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* and how historical facts are represented by the author in her fictional work. This research focuses on the historical and multigenerational saga of Sunja's family and the events surrounding them in the novel. It views their historical experience from the perspective of the main characters. Hence, this study tries to trace how their perspectives of history change through the different periods of time and generations. It tries to analyse where fact and fiction meet and differ by extracting historical facts portrayed in the novel from the perspective of the characters, comparing them with real events and separating what is real and what is fictional. This could be achieved through applying the New Historicist approach which is concerned with studying a literary text with relation to its time, place, and historical circumstances in addition to Historiography as well as the postmodern concept of "Historiographic Metafiction" by Linda Hutcheon. This research reveals that historical facts in *Pachinko* are referred to without any modifications and they intersect with the personal experiences of the novel's fictional characters. This shows that the demarcation line between fact and fiction in the novel is blurred.

Key Words: Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko*, Historical Fiction, Fact, Fiction, New Historicism, Historiography, Historiographic Metafiction.

ملخص

تحاول هذه الأطروحة دراسة الطريقة التي تلتقي بها الحقيقة والخيال وتتباعد في باتشينكو لمين جين لي وكيف يتم تمثيل الحقائق التاريخية من قبل الكاتبة في عملها الخيالي. يركز هذا البحث على الملحمة التاريخية والمتعددة الأجيال لعائلة سونجا والأحداث المحيطة بها في الرواية. تعرض تجربتهم التاريخية من منظور الشخصيات الرئيسية. ومن ثم، تحاول هذه الدراسة تتبع كيفية تغير وجهات نظرهم للتاريخ عبر الفترات الزمنية والأجيال المختلفة. يحاول البحث تحليل أين تلتقي الحقائق والخيال وتختلف من خلال استخراج الحقائق التاريخية التي تم تصويرها في الرواية من منظور الشخصيات، ومقارنتها بالأحداث الحقيقية والفصل بين ما هو حقيقي وما هو خيالي. يمكن تحقيق ذلك من خلال تطبيق المنهج التاريخي الجديد الذي يهتم بدراسة النص الأدبي فيما يتعلق بزمانه ومكانه وظروفه التاريخية بالإضافة إلى علم التاريخ و ايضا باستخدام مفهوم ما بعد الحداثة "الميتافيك التاريخي" لليندا هاتشون. يكشف هذا البحث أن الحقائق التاريخية في باتشينكو يشار إليها دون أي تعديلات وتتقاطع مع التجارب الشخصية للشخصيات الخيالية للرواية مما يدل على أن خط الفصل بين الحقيقة والخيال في الرواية غير واضح.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مين جين لي، باتشينكو، الرواية التاريخية، الحقيقة، الخيال، المنهج التاريخي الجديد، علم التاريخ، الميتافيك التاريخي.

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General Introduction

Background of the research

The historical novel is a literary genre that discusses various concepts such as fact, fiction and history. The historical novel, according to George Lukcàs, is a particularly powerful genre of writing; capable of conveying the complexity of history and revealing the underlying social, economic, and political forces that define human experience. The historical novel should feature the representation of historical events in their complexity (43).

According to Jerome de Groot, the historical novel receives criticism mainly over its ability to change fact and make an audience misinformed (6). The historical novel is a genre that blends factual accuracy with literary inventiveness. It examines the deeper social and cultural forces that affect human experience through historical events, personalities, and places. Simultaneously, it employs fiction techniques like characterization, plot, and dialogue to bring these historical events to life and create an immersive and engaging reading experience. For Linda Hutcheon historical fiction should be modelled on historiography and motivated and shaped by a notion of history (113).

The concepts of history and fiction are critical in the dispute about the function of historical fiction in communicating history to the public. Some historical novels prefer a different form of authenticity than historians do. That is, the author's and reader's relationship with the past is more real than factual accuracy. The link between history and fiction, in particular, has been a contentious problem in the writing of the historical novel. As a result, regardless of how objective it is, any historical reconstruction is inevitably dependent on a specific historical backdrop and is thus portrayed as a work of fiction (Carroll 251).

Accordingly, contemporary American historical fiction is intended to suit the specific requirements of scholarly study in order to reinterpret and rediscover new truths about the

period in which it is situated. Contemporary American writers call into question the historical narrative. There is some disagreement about whether to classify current American historical fiction as "historiographic metafiction" or the "neo-historical novel" (Maxey 210).

Contemporary American historical fiction examines racism, war, and trauma in American and transnational contexts through fictional depictions of world conflicts in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam written by American authors. It alludes to the years of America's continuous foreign wars. Furthermore, its authors must return to the nineteenth century to trace the origins of racial diversity in America today (Maxey 210).

As a result, many American writers have embraced inherited conceptions of national identity, embracing minorities' and marginalized people' perspectives, and revealing hidden truths through fiction. Many critical insights have been drawn to contemporary American historical fiction. They attempt to analyse a variety of examples from recent well-known American authors, questioning how they conduct historical research and why they select these specific historical periods (Maxey 212).

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee is a contemporary American historical novel that covers twentieth-century Korean history, providing a stunningly realistic portrayal of Korean society. Lee's *Pachinko* is a historical saga about a family's experiences as "forever foreigners" in Japan. Furthermore, *Pachinko* occurs during a rich time of East Asian history that includes colonial Korea, World War II, Japan's Allied Occupation, the Korean War, and Japan's rapid expansion and "bubble economy" periods. Lee is a Korean-American author whose work explores Diaspora Korean identity issues. *Pachinko* was released in 2017 and was a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction. The novel is regarded as the first novel published in English about Korean history and culture (Singh 82, Munson 54).

Unlike many historical novels, *Pachinko* does not have an omniscient narrator who explains the larger historical context; instead, we see events through the eyes of the characters, who are ordinary individuals with a very limited grasp of the world outside of their personal experience. Lee feels that we have frequently depended on typical historical narratives while dismissing ordinary yet outstanding people who lived on the margin of their civilizations (Munson 54).

While the novel is predominantly set in Korea and Japan, it also explores topics and experiences that are familiar to American readers, such as immigration, identity, and belonging. The exploration of such historical events in the novel is also of interest to present American audiences. These events have had a long-term impact on the geopolitical landscape of East Asia, as well as on US-regional relations.

Literature Review

Pachinko has found a great critical interest from academic scholars and analysts since its publication. A number of scholars approached this historical novel from different perspectives. Dev Singh Mali in his thesis entitled *Immigrants' Sense of Dislocation and Identity Crisis in Min Jin Lee's Pachinko* explores the struggle of Korean immigrants to adjust to a new cultural context in *Pachinko* .His research was conducted under the theories of Salman Rushdie's notion of "sense of belongingness" and "past memory", Straut Halls' concept of "cultural identity", Homi K Bhabha's notion of "mimicry", "ambivalence" and "hybridity", and Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin's idea of "hybridity" (1).

In due course, the historical novel in particular and the binaries of fact and fiction as well as history and fiction has also been approached by many critics. In his article entitled "Fiction or History? A Brief Theoretical Elaboration on Historical Fiction and Fictional History", Beyazıt Akman defines historical fiction through a comparison of historical and

fictional narratives. He proposes a set of guidelines to understand the genre of historical fiction. (1).

Moreover, Brian Hamnett's article entitled "Fictitious Histories: The Dilemma of Fact and Imagination in the Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel", Mary investigates how the relationship between history and fiction was problematic from the start since it created a dilemma about the relative responsibilities of imagination and historical fact. His research investigates the shifting nature of this dilemma and tries to resolve it. (31).

Furthermore, in his thesis entitled *Except in the case of historical fact': History and the historical novel,* Paul Wake interprets the relationship between history and historical fiction through the notion of hospitality, connecting the works of Gerard Genette and Jacques Derrida in order to outline a model of generic intersection in which historical fiction appears as the malignant guest of historiography, for whom the hospitality of historical writing entails hostility at the threshold. He contends that it is this hostility that ensures the integrity of the dividing line between history and fiction, while also putting into question the assumptions underlying the status of fiction as guest and history as host. (2). Moreover, Richard Carroll's thesis *Representing the Past: Authenticity and the Historical Novel: A novel and exegesis*, investigates the historical novel in order to better grasp the genre's nature and how this knowledge might inform creative activity. Through its analysis of authenticity as a common thread, his research pulls together many components of creating a historical fiction in an innovative way (4).

Statement of the Problem

As far as the above review is concerned, we can see that the historical novel *Pachinko* and the concepts of fact and fiction in the historical novel could be analysed from multiple viewpoints and perspectives. However, to our knowledge and as far as we are informed, no

previous works focused on the connectivity of these two concepts in the aforementioned novel. *Pachinko* has never been tackled from a New Historical perspective whereas Lee in her novel portrays a number of historical facts that are worth highlighting and examining. New Historicism emphasizes the interconnected relationship between history and fiction. It examines how the literary text with its fictional elements represents history. Accordingly, the new historicist concept of "the textuality of history and the historicity of the text" asserts that any literary piece is embedded in a social, political, historical, and cultural context. Also, it shows how the textuality of history attempts to provide a representation of history in order to reflect that particular context. The novel *Pachinko* is lacking the New Historicist interpretation of its events, setting, and ideas. This thesis attempts to study the way in which fact and fiction converge and diverge in the novel and how those historical facts are represented by the author in her fictional work.

Major Research Question

In due course, the current study will try to answer the following major research question: In what way do fact and fiction converge and diverge in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*?

Subsidiary Questions

In order to investigate the major research question, it will be divided into the following subsidiary questions:

1. What are the elements of historical fiction in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*?
2. How does Min Jin Lee historicize fiction in *Pachinko*?
3. How does the author fictionalize historical facts in *Pachinko*?

Research Objectives

This research aims at:

1. Re-defining the genre of the historical novel.

2. Clarifying the relationship between fact and fiction in the historical novel.
3. Examining how real historical facts are represented in *Pachinko.*
4. Studying the way in which fact and fiction converge and diverge in *Pachinko.*

Scope of Research

This research focuses on the historical and multigenerational saga of Sunja's family and the events surrounding them in the novel. It will view their historical experience from the perspective of the main characters: Sunja, Ko Hansu and Baek Isaac as well as their grandsons. They are ordinary people with a very little awareness of the world beyond their experience. Hence, this study will try to trace how their perspectives of history change through the different periods of time and generations. It will try to analyse where fact and fiction meet and differ by extracting historical facts portrayed in the novel from the perspective of the characters, comparing them with real events and separating what is real and what is fictional. This could be achieved through applying the New Historicist approach.

Methodology

This research intends to adopt a descriptive and analytical research paradigm and a qualitative research method. The Data collection process would be conducted through library research including books, articles, and academic research. Data is going to be sampled through a bibliographical method, in which the sources will go through a thorough reading, deep understanding, analysing, note-taking, and synthesizing. Since Lee used history in her novel, we are going to use a descriptive, analytical, qualitative approach through data sampling by extracting samples from the novel, then analysing them to explain the relationship between fact and fiction in *Pachinko.*

This research is structured by following the New Historicist approach which is concerned with studying a literary text with relation to its time, place, and historical circumstances in addition to Historiography as well as the postmodern concept of

"Historiographic Metafiction" which Linda Hutcheon uses in her work *A Poetics of Postmodernism* to distinguish a particular kind of postmodern work.

Structure of Research

The dissertation will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter will consist of the theoretical background of the study including The New Historicist literary theory with its major concepts and Historiography as well as the postmodern concept of "Historiographic Metafiction". Also, it will contain the historical context and setting of the novel. The second chapter will explore how the historical facts are fictionalized in *Pachinko* by extracting samples from the novel and analysing them. The third chapter will explore the multi-facets of the historicization of fiction in *Pachinko* and the motives behind it. Eventually, the final findings would be included in the general conclusion.

Significance of the Study

This study will be of great importance to the field of literature; the gap which will be filled in this research would contribute to a better understanding of the genre of the historical novel. It would clarify the relationship between fiction and history as the major components of this genre. It would provide us with new insights about the interrelated history of both Japan and Korea. It would also draw our attention to other perspectives of history and to a certain undiscovered truths.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Historical Background

Introduction

This chapter aims at providing the theoretical framework of the present study including the New Historicist approach, Historiography and the postmodern concept of "historiographic metafiction". Also, it will define the genre of historical fiction with all its characteristics and give an overview on the contemporary American historical fiction. Eventually, this chapter will shed light on the historical context of *Pachinko* as the historical novel under study and highlight the major historical events that form its very basis.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

1.1.1 The New Historicist Approach

Emerging in the 1980s as a literary theory, New Historicism developed from the critical perspective of the American literary historian Stephen Greenblatt. He refers to it as "cultural poetics" (qtd. in Ramadan 31). Stephen Greenblatt defines New Historicism as a "shift away from a criticism centred on verbal icons toward a criticism centred on cultural artefact" (qtd. in Ramadan 30). Thus, a literary text can be viewed as a historical locus, as it represents the historical, social, cultural, anthropological, and ideological counterforces of a given era, and their influence on contemporary conflicts (Ramadan 30).

New Historicism is a part of the cultural studies that is based on the concepts of many theorists and historians including; Louis Adrian Montrose, Stephen Greenblatt, Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau. New Historicism reads the text in relation to its historical context, the writer's background, the readers' reception to the text and the critic's ideology. It historicizes the text as it combines the cultural and the political context asserting the interlinking relationship between history and literature (Ramadan 31).

According to the New Historicist approach, the literary text is “the product of a negotiation between a creator and a class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions and the institutions and practices of society” (qtd. in Ramadan 31). The literary text is interpreted within the scope of its social and cultural surroundings. Thus, the literary text is open to interpretations that reflect the interaction between history, culture and literature. The multiple interpretations of the literary work show how the past has its impact on contemporary world and how history is not restricted to limited views (Ramadan 31).

1.1.1.1 The Textuality of History and the Historicity of the Text

New Historicism adopts the historicity of the text and the textuality of history as one of its main tenets. It emphasizes the historical nature of literary texts and at the same time the 'textual' nature of history. It seeks to analyse the representations of history and provides a thorough revision of historical facts based on the belief in “the discursive nature” of history. As a Foucauldian concept, “the discursive nature” reflects the complicated interaction between history and literature, highlighting the political, cultural, social and ideological factors beyond the text (Ramadan 32).

Louis Montrose defines New Historicism as a combined interest in “the textuality of history, the historicity of texts” (qtd. in Ramadan 33). It involves reading all of the textual traces of the past with full attention on the literary texts. Montrose’s idea asserts that all writing is a product of a certain social and historical situation based on the poststructuralist proposition that we do not have authentic access to the past. Historicity for Montrose refers to the cultural particularity, social effects and all modes of representation whereas textuality is the unapproachability of an accurate past and the subjectivity of all historical forms (Ramadan 33).

1.1.1.2 Alternative Histories and Recreating the Past

New historicists call for recreations and different versions of the past, as the text in question is contrasted with selected historical documents, establishing a new entity. This eliminates protests that the selected files may actually be "unrelated" or identical to the literary text, since the purpose is not to present what was true in the past, but to present a new reality (Barry 117).

Instead of seeking unity in literature, new historicists assert the dynamics of change and chaos. Their reading aims to shed light on the realities of the undocumented and make the voices of the excluded heard. They see anecdotes as the raw material of history, and often use them to develop alternative stories or micro-stories that arouse the voices of marginalized groups and seek recognition of the rights of the oppressed. According to the New Historicists, the functioning of the anecdote as the "other" of history is a departure that emphasizes contingency from the prevailing narrative of general and progressive history written by the winners (Boulegroune 2).

Borrowing from Michel Foucault's concept of "power," the New Historicists sought to show how literary works dealt with the power relations of their time, not as secondary "reflections" of a coherent worldview, but as active participants in on-going reshaping of history and meaning. According to Foucault, New Historicism is concerned with subverting or opposing cultural processes that are embraced by "power" (Barry 118).

1.1.2 Historiographic Metafiction

Since it exhibits postmodernist characteristics, the New Historicist approach is an eclectic practical style of analysis that is based on cultural studies, Marxism, anthropology, psychology, history, and literature. The portrayal of historical events is a concern for both New Historicism and Postmodernism (Ramadan 32). Thus, Linda Hutcheon emphasizes the narrativity and context of historical events in her work *A Poetics of Postmodernism*.

Hutcheon maintains, “[a]ll past events are potential historical facts, but the ones that become facts are those that are chosen to be narrated” (qtd. in Ramadan 32).

In her writing, she uses the word "historiographic metafiction" to describe a specific kind of postmodern literature. She states in *A Poetics of Postmodernism* that “by historiographic metafiction “I mean those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages: *The French Lieutenant’s Woman, Midnight’s Children, Ragtime, Legs, G., and Famous Last Words”*. In such work, “a theoretical self-awareness of history and fiction as human constructs is made the grounds for its rethinking and reworking of the forms and contents of the past” (5).

According to Hutcheon, historiographic metafiction never directly rejects the components it criticizes, such as referentiality, the subject, grand narratives, or ideology, but rather “it always works within conventions in order to subvert them” (5). Thus, it examines the distinction between fiction and history: “The problematizing of the nature of historical knowledge, in novels like this, points both to the need to separate and to the danger of separating fiction and history as narrative genres” (111). For instance, such work does not “deny the existence of the past” instead it questions “whether we can ever know that past other than through its textualized remains” (119).

The methods used to distinguish between fact and fiction are exposed by historiographic metafiction. It denies the assumption that history is the only source of truth. It casts doubt on the basis of historiographical claims and highlights that history and fiction are merely human creations, casting doubt on their claim to be true. Furthermore, historiography disregards the extra textual past for the autonomy of art. But according to historical fiction, the past already existed before it was "entextualized" into history and fiction. Textualizing

that past is this genre's main literary device. The original source was once available, but it is now textualized and includes documents, eyewitness reports, and archives (Hutcheon 93).

Accordingly, Hutcheon links historical fiction to fictional narrative. Hence, both history and literature are representation of human experiences (Ramadan 34). Historiographic metafiction asserts that in order to thoroughly explore how historical reality is represented, history and fiction are used as textually designated linguistic human productions. By being seen as a text dependent on other texts with a claim to truth akin to other writings, history is shown as mere fiction. Historiographic metafiction highlights the critical value of those brief reports that aid in our comprehension of official historical accounts and the experiences of the excluded (Hutcheon 105).

1.1.3 Historiography

The writing of history based on its cyclical aspect is known as historiography. Its narrative framework is shaped by the past's stories. It uses a narrative format to shape historical occurrences and stories under the influence of Marxist and cultural studies. This demonstrates the effects of the past on the present. The postmodern concept of historiographic metafiction and the New Historicist approach to literature are just two examples of how historiography has had a profound impact on literary studies (Ramadan 34-35).

By depicting historical events and opposing ideas, literature and history complement one another. As evidenced by Foucault's notion of power and knowledge as well as Hayden's historiographic narrative, the concept of representation precedes new historicism. Foucault makes a connection between knowledge and history. He claims that representation is a discourse in which the struggle for power and the impetus for action of humans are clearly reflected. Imperialist and capitalist institutions currently exercise a variety of powers,

including political, economic, and advanced knowledge. This entails all kinds of relationships and struggles for hegemony. Literature thus serves as a depiction of historical events, the author's cultural heritage, and conflicts involving power and knowledge. As a result, the narrative's structural elements, such as themes, characters, and setting, are reflections of both the text's historicity and the textuality of history (Ramadan 35).

Hayden White claims that during the 19th century, historiography developed as a scholarly field primarily, though not exclusively, as a reaction to all kinds of myth. In due course, Leopold Von Ranke urged historians to only use factual accounts and solid proof as a means of gathering and disseminating historical information. He reasoned that by doing this, historical accounts will eventually turn into discourse free from arbitrary or inaccurate bias (Young 12).

The change in discourse in contemporary historiography from one that sought to formalize the empirical circumstances of historical inquiry to one that sought to understand the contextual, ideological, and textual motivations of the author-historian is an important development. Historiographical study cannot remain the overpowering, almost foolish, focus it once was because of the persistence of subjectivity in all historical inquiry, whether it be fictional, empirical, digital, or otherwise. Our comprehension is strengthened by being aware of the historical interpretation of the debates and conclusions that modern scholars have acquired (Young 13). In addition, such changes make historians and writers of fiction deal "less with the historical facts than with the epistemological problems attached to the reconstruction of historical events and to the writing of history" (qtd. in Young 13).

Theorists like Jörn Rüsen, Paul Ricoeur, and David Carr acknowledge that there are different types of pasts to learn from and that determining the writer's ideology is necessary when evaluating the present. They do this by maintaining a theoretical awareness and understanding of how and why predecessors saw and wrote their past(s) in ways different

from contemporary research. A startling shift in how history is accessed, discussed, and hypothesized as a social science has occurred with the development of contemporary historiography. Historiography has become a thriving discipline of historical knowledge. It addresses issues with history, aesthetics, and language, as well as the legitimacy of fiction as a historical voice, making it a very interesting and progressive consideration. This shows that history can no longer be reduced to the straightforward study and representation of empirical facts (Young 13).

A change in the way we understand things, such as adopting narrative or epistemology, did not and has not compromised the past; rather, it has given us a better knowledge of what theorists value in their past and how they come to their conclusions. Humans employ a prior imagination to fill in historical gaps, thus it is the historian's responsibility to construct a narrative that places these events "within a context by relating it as a part of some conceivable whole" (qtd. in Young 14).

The imposition of tale elements draws attention to the areas where narrative diverges from chronicle and where its claim to be an accurate reflection of historical fact is most tenuous. While a chronicle is limited to incidents that happened within a fixed timeframe, Regardless of the timeline or parameter, a narrative can depict ends as being directly connected to distant beginnings, with action also occurring in the middle (Young 15).

Hayden White exhorts history readers and writers to use their skill as a means of expression and to recognize that narrative devices are employed in historical texts in a similar way to how they are in literary works. He dismisses historical discourse theories, because historical events are stories waiting to be told, and the idea of the epic, the drama, or the comedy is not inherent to an experience but rather a trope applied by the historian, which is natural to any historical retelling (Young 14). "Events are made into a story […] by characterisation, repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive

strategies […] in short, all of the techniques we would normally expect to find in the emplotment of a novel or a play" (qtd. in Young 14).

White wants historians to renew our vision of history in order to build anything more than merely intellectual constructs, much how Friedrich Nietzsche viewed the past and the historian getting in each other's way and providing a skewed narrative of the past (Young 15).

This strategy should not be seen as a justification for writers to disregard factual information or to undermine the accuracy of historical analysis. Instead, recognizing the limitations of empirical research and the potential of the reader has more importance in understanding the past. Naturally, having knowledge of the relevant era helps us better understand historical events or periods in general. Reading the different views by historians, writers, and professors helps to build and improve knowledge. Additionally, it compels the reader to comprehend and consider the limitations of representation, the significance and motivations guiding interpretation, as well as their influences (Young 15).

The factual integrity of the story should not be perceived as compromised as long as the writer does not betray the reader's confidence (assumed knowledge, prior awareness of events), and the reader recognizes the writer's play with form. It is far too simple to say that telling a story about an event undermines its historical significance (Young 15).

1.1.4 Historical Fiction

One of the most difficult concepts in literary criticism is "historical fiction." It is made up of the terms "history" and "fiction." While fiction is based on imagination and creation, history is based on dates, evidences, manuscripts, documents, books, and any other artefacts that are concrete and factual (Akman 85-86). It is a distinguished literary genre that appeals to a wide range of readers because it blends fiction and reality. The historical novel emerged in the eighteenth century and has undergone numerous changes that have introduced new

methods (Murthy ix). “What makes a historical novel historical,” describes Fleishman, “is the active presence of a concept of history as a shaping force, acting not only upon the characters in the novel but on the author and readers outside it” (qtd. in Akman 90).

The mixture of fact and fiction in the historical novel helps the reader develop historical awareness. Historical fiction informs us about the lives, challenges, and customs of historical figures and locations. In addition to being set in the past, historical novels also faithfully reflect the historical specifics of the time period. In order to be authentic and accurately reflect the time period it is set in, which is sometimes fragmented and incomplete, historical fiction differs from other fiction in that it involves investigation of the written record. The retrospective element of the historical fiction aims to connect two distinct eras by using archives (Carroll 263). According to De Groot, a reader of a historical novel approaches the encounter with preconceived notions, expectations, and knowledge of its fictional nature (qtd. in Carroll 260).This genre is interested in the concepts of fact and fiction, history, the reading and writing of "Grand" narratives and their connections to subcultures (Murthy ix).

De Groot discusses the genre and the on-going debate on it in his book *The Historical Novel*. He examines the evolution of the historical novel from the early eighteenth century to postmodern and contemporary historical fiction highlighting its worth, authenticity as well as its purposes. He exposes the challenges that historical fiction poses to history and postmodern questioning of "grand narratives." He talks about how the historical novel interacts with culture and makes reference to important ideas of historical theory like the authentic fallacy, postcolonialism, Marxism, queer and feminist reading (2).

According to De Groot, this genre originates from the Gothic novel of the eighteenth century and European history. It later broadened to include historical descriptions, war stories, microhistories, metafictional tales, detective fiction, magical realism, and historical

fantasy (Murthy ix). He asserts that “a historical novel might consider the articulation of nationhood via the past, highlight the subjectivism of narratives of History, underline the importance of the realist mode of writing to notions of authenticity, question writing itself, and attack historiographical convention” (2).

A number of literary movements, including realism, modernism, and postmodernism, have affected the historical novel. They contributed to the introduction of new methods and thematic approaches to the past. Thus, it became a trans-disciplinary genre. A postmodernist historical novel blends fictitious plots with real information from a historical document. The realist novel acknowledges that the real world affects any depiction in fiction and holds that literature should reflect this external reality. Both viewpoints could seem incompatible and exclusive of one another. The postmodernist historical novel, however, can be seen as combining realism and postmodernist components (Murthy ix-xii).

The theoretical tradition in literature that dates back to Plato and Aristotle encompasses postmodernist and post-structuralist discussions on how to capture reality is heavily influenced by studies of representation and how it relates to reality. The works of George Lukcàs and Linda Hutcheon, who respectively explore the traditional historical novel and "historiographic metafiction," focus on how the technique supports the theme and highlight the correspondence between form and content in the novel. Contemporary historical novels exhibit a fundamental shift in the vision of history, as evidenced by the removal of the omniscient narrator, the selection of prominent and representative individuals, and other aspects (Murthy 11).

Sir Walter Scott is seen by Lukcàs as the ideal representative of the genre of historical fiction. He claims that his novel *Waverley* is the historical novel's founding text: “the most important thing here is the increasing historical awareness of the decisive role played in human progress by the struggle of classes in history” (27). He adds that “Scott endeavours to

portray the struggles and antagonisms of history by means of characters who, in their psychology and destiny, always represent social trends and historical forces" (34).

When writing a historical novel, the author sees historical facts as useful and orienting. History is never seen a barrier that prevents creativity; rather, it is a means that enables writers to explore a wider variety of issues and situations (Akman 91). In her essay, Irwin Carruthers asserts that the concept of "balance" is crucial. She maintains: "Too many scholars lack imagination, and too many imaginative writers lack scholarship". She asserts that the historical novelist should neither be fully imaginative nor totally scholarly (qtd. in Akman 92).

The postmodern historical novel emphasizes instances of convergence and divergence between fiction and history. According to McHale, the postmodern historical novel is set up to either be a complement to history or a deliberate departure from it because such narratives conflict with established historical accounts by demonstrating diversity and non-absolutism. He sees the postmodern historical novel as revisionist because it challenges accepted narratives of reality to reinterpret historical archives and alter their content. Also, it offers an update to the procedures, traditions, and standards of historical fiction (Murthy 12). McHale contends that while official history is written by winners, the postmodern historical novel aims to add the lives of unrecorded and "'lost groups,' including peasants, working-class, women, and minorities, to the historical record that animates historical inquiry (qtd. in Murthy 12).

The authors of contemporary historical novels concentrated on a completely different kind of people who were crucial to the development of humanity (Heller 91). Historical fiction transcends the realm of pure entertainment to make a statement on how the past affects the present. It also tries to uncover aspects of the past that we tend to disregard in order to better understand one's own identity. This does not, however, imply that the novelist

can rewrite history or employ it for personal gain. In contrast to other forms of artistic expression, responsibility is the key in historical novels (Akman 91).

Historiography and the historical novel are both works of fiction, but they are of distinct kinds. Although novels are works of fiction, historical novels may not entirely be. The historical novel constantly alludes to something outside of itself. Furthermore, in historical fiction, facts are revelatory, whereas in historiography, they can be simplified for the sake of accuracy (Heller 89). While a historical fiction is merely a novel based on history, historiography is the writing of history that seeks to convey the facts as accurately as possible without consideration for creative effects (Akman 90).

1.1.5 Historicising Fiction and Fictionalising History

Since the historical novel exists somewhere between history and literature, it may both narrate and explain events with greater vivacity and emotion, without the gravity of a purely historical description. Characters from a particular era or civilization get to the core of their existence. There is no inconsistency between history and literature: history presumes rigor, accuracy, and exactitude, but the novel delivers fantasy and imagination, or literary fiction. The existence of historical components in a literary work does not harm it as such, but can instead contribute significantly to its embellishment and enrichment. It all comes down both real and fictional components being blended in the appropriate amounts and in the appropriate order (Indurain 4).

Historical fiction encourages reflection by forcing us to consider the passing of time. Past and present come together in the historical novel: on the one hand, knowledge of the present illuminates the vision of the past, and understanding of the past enriches the present-day world and makes us look at the future with new lenses. Similarly, it contributes to the recovery of our historical memory, the collective memory of a people, and thus to a more in-

depth consideration of our own freedom. History and literature coexist, and as a result of placing one within the other, a conversation, a constructive and delightful discourse, between the past and the present, an updating of previous experience, emerges. The historical novel is thus an invitation to history, an opportunity to widen our knowledge of the past (Indurain 4).

The distinction between fact and fiction is frequently blurred in historical fiction. Maintaining credibility and giving readers a true picture of the time period depends heavily on historical accuracy. Historical novels frequently combine reality and fiction to write an engaging story. This can assist readers grasp a specific historical era and give their stories a sense of authenticity. More artistic license and the investigation of subjects that might not be conceivable with a purely factual narrative are also made possible by the use of fictional characters and events. Nonetheless, there is a chance of diminishing the historical significance of a work if an author takes too many liberties with the facts. To ensure that their work is both interesting and historically correct, authors must find the right balance between fact and fiction.

Many social, economic, political, and historical forces that molded the power structure and produced the grand narrative of history influenced the historian's goal. A grand narrative is a theory that seeks to explain numerous historical occurrences, experiences, and social and cultural phenomena in a complete, all-encompassing manner by making reference to universal truths or values. In this situation, the narrative serves as a story that justifies societal norms, power, and authority. A grand narrative, also known as a metanarrative, is one that makes claims about being able to explain numerous historical occurrences and attempts to connect disparate events and phenomena through the use of some sort of universal knowledge or schema (Lyotard).

In order to support the fictional grand narratives and serve the power structures that dominate them, information has thus been withheld from both history and fiction. With the

emergence of historical fiction, readers favored a story where fiction was history (Goswami 6). Hutcheon maintains that: “literature and history were considered branches of the same tree of learning” (qtd. in Goswami 6).

However, Frank Kermode sees fiction as wholly imaginary. He notes in his article "Novel, History, and Type,": “novels are made up, contain material which differs from the historical explanation in that it is not hypothetical but fictive... they do not have to be so overt about whatever relationship between facts they may be establishing” (qtd. in Goswami 30). Accordingly, the compatibility of history and fiction began to be questioned. Instead of focusing on their differences, critics tried to draw attention to their commonalities. Discussions of postmodern fiction and historical representations were related. Because of this, historical accounts and history were being reimagined in fiction (Goswami 8).Soon, "historiographic metafiction" started to emerge. The aim of this genre is “blur the line between fiction and history” (Hutcheon 113).

1.1.6 Contemporary American Historical Novel

Contemporary American historical fiction deals with issues of evidence, authenticity, and authority. It is designed to meet the particular needs of scholarly research to reinterpret and rediscover new truths about the time in which it is set. Contemporary American writers question and doubt the narrative of history. There is a definite debate about whether to treat recent American historical fiction as such “historiographic metafiction” or the “neo-historical novel.” Paul Wake states, “while much recent critical commentary has been dedicated to the genre in its postmodern iteration, the historical novel demonstrates a range of characteristics and is itself subject to numerous subdivisions” (qtd. in Maxey 3).

Most contemporary American historical fiction refers to the 20th century. They discuss issues of race, war, and trauma in American and transnational ways through

fictional accounts of global conflicts in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam by American authors. Mark West maintains that “post-postmodern writers in the United States approach recent history in more intimate and less ironic ways as they confront a past that also, in some sense, represents their own personal memory and lived experience” (qtd. in Maxey 4). They talk about the years of America's foreign wars. Furthermore, the origins of racial diversity in America today require the authors to go back to the country in the nineteenth century (Maxey 210).

Thus, many American writers have embraced inherited notions of national identity, incorporating the voices of minorities and marginalized populations, and uncovering hidden stories through fiction. Twenty-first-century American writers continue to question enduring myths and the on-going cultural dialogue between myth and history. Contemporary American historical fiction is known for its experimentation with literary techniques and themes. It uses polyphonic narrative and many other narrative devices; some authors use a simple linear time frame for chronology (Maxey 212).

Many analytical insights have been drawn to contemporary American historical fiction. They attempt to analyse a variety of examples from recent well-known American authors, questioning how they conduct historical research and why they select these specific historical periods. Recent American writers, for example, have attempted to rethink and historicize the social, political, and cultural events of the 1960s, notably the era between John F. Kennedy's assassination and the end of the Vietnam War. This time period has captivated writers of many generations (Maxey 10).

Additionally, there are numerous works in contemporary American fiction that discuss the Korean War, such as Chang Lee's intergenerational novel *The Surrendered* and Philip Roth's *Indignation*. Both authors have produced fictional works that confront the Korean War from a particular ethnic and racial perspective. Roth presents the events through literary

devices like prolepsis, analepsis, ellipsis, metonymy, and experimental narrative. Whereas Lee used the events of 1950–1953 as a framing device to convey a bigger, transnational, post–conflict stories of US imperialism, expatriation, and the white American adoption of Korean children. Lee's novel approaches the Korean War with caution and objectivity. Through their works, these authors produce a useful history and throw fresh light on the once forgotten battle. In order to prevent different US novelists from the various misconceptions about the Korean War, these novels strive to keep the conflict of 1950–1953 inside narrative boundaries and satisfactorily reflect it (Maxey 9).

1.2 The Historical Context of *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee

1.2.1 The Biography of Min Jin Lee

Min-jin Lee is a Korean-American journalist and best-selling author of the books *Pachinko* and *Free Food for Millionaires*. In her works, she frequently discusses Korean and Korean-American issues. Lee was born in Seoul, South Korea, and migrated to the United States when she was seven years old with her parents. She majored in history at Yale, before enrolling in Georgetown Law School. Due to health issues, she ceased practicing law after a few years and began writing. She has delivered countless talks at Harvard University and other prestigious universities throughout the world. She stayed in Tokyo, Japan, for around four years (2007-2011), where she met several Koreans ("Zainichi") who became her primary sources, and where she completed her masterpiece *Pachinko* in 2017 (Chung and Seok 429).

1.2.2 The Context of Writing the Novel

Min Jin Lee had the concept for *Pachinko* as a junior in college in 1989 after attending a Master's Tea, a guest speaker series at Yale. An American missionary from Japan was

giving a talk about the "Zainichi," a name used to denote Korean Japanese people who were either colonial migrants or their descendants. He highlighted that some Koreans in Japan are still recognized as Zainichi, which literally means "foreign residents staying in Japan," even after being naturalized Japanese citizens or marrying Japanese (Lee 474).

The missionary told the story of a middle school child who committed suicide after being harassed in his yearbook because of his Korean heritage. He examined the lengthy history of legal and societal discrimination against Koreans in Japan, including people of mixed ethnicity. Regardless of how hard they try to hide it, their ethnic identity can be established through identification cards and government records (Lee 475).

Lee chose to write about Koreans in Japan because she was certain that their stories should be told in some way, despite the fact that so much of their lives had been erased. She conducted extensive research on the Korean Japanese community where she met dozens of Koreans in Japan and discovered that some were historical victims. Lee interviewed numerous people about Koreans in Japan, international finance, the yakuza, the history of colonial Christianity, police work, immigration, Kabukicho, poker, Osaka, Tokyo real estate deals, Wall Street leadership, mizu shobai, and, of course, the pachinko industry (Lee 476).

She is interested in the Korean diaspora as a history student and as an immigrant as a result of the invasions and disintegration of the once-unified nation. However, it was the compelling stories of individuals who tried to overcome historical disasters that inspired her to write this story. The legacy of Japanese occupation, World War II, the Cold War, and the Korean War, as well as Confucianism, Buddhism, Communism, and Christianity, inform modern Korean. All of these topics are addressed in her book in order to investigate and better understand how ordinary people deal with these events and challenges. She maintains: “These wars and ideas loom large in our imagination, but on a daily basis, such events and

beliefs are illustrated concretely from moment to moment through that process of gathering oral histories, I felt compelled to discard my earlier draft" (Lee 476).

Lee believes that history frequently fails to reflect all people because historians frequently lack original documentation of so-called minor historical figures. As a result, women who left so few primary documents in practically all cultures and civilizations have become minor figures in history. The same is true for poor and middle-class men of all races and cultures, despite the fact that their lives were cruelly sacrificed in war and labour because they, too, did not leave enough written record of their lives. In her story, she employs an omniscient point of view, which allows her to envision and expose the minds of all characters (476).

Lee's family was a big motivation for her to create *Pachinko*; her father was sixteen when he lost his family in the Korean War. The war and her experience as a war refugee were not discussed at the time, but they had an impact on her childhood. She said: "I think this kind of trauma is an unspoken legacy for many first- and second generation immigrants in the United States and elsewhere. Many of my friends and their families have been directly affected by the Holocaust, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the suffering inflicted by military dictatorships in the Americas and in African nations". Many ordinary individuals around the world defy the humiliations of everyday life and history with grace and conviction, caring for their families and communities while pursuing their individual aspirations. As an author, Lee could not help but be intrigued by the stories of those whose history so casually dismisses (Lee 476).

1.2.3 The Historical Setting of the Novel

1.2.3.1 Japanese Occupation of Korea

In the late nineteenth century, the big imperialist countries competed for colonies, each aiming to conquer areas of influence through trade, and Korea was caught in a conflict between China, Russia, and Japan, all of which desired to rule the country. Other major powers were also participating, notably the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. Korea, which had lately emerged from self-isolation, was confronted with competing interests from a variety of countries. When faced with peril in the past, Korea chose to be China's "little brother." However, Western powers were causing concern in China, and a rapidly industrializing Japan posed a huge threat. Japan built a modern army and navy and saw Korea and Manchuria as potential economic and agricultural development areas (Miller 1).

In the 1870s, a suggestion to invade Korea was made in response to what was perceived as disrespect to the Japanese emperor. It was an attempt to mimic modern colonial powers. While it was eventually abandoned, the Korean government was forced to sign a treaty that opened ports and allowed for its recognition as an independent state, theoretically releasing Korea from the long-standing Chinese "tribute system" (Munson 54).

Korea was known as Joseon at the time, and the royal family's influence was progressively weakening, leading Joseon into a political crisis. Because of Japan's constant attempts to attack and conquer Korea, the Korean monarchs faced even more difficult circumstances. Koreans have been slower to modernize and continue to seek refuge in China. However, with China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1895), the chances for such security became dismal. Japan expanded its dominanc over Korea after winning the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. Western nations, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have made little attempt to prevent Japan from creating a sphere of influence in Korea (Miller 1).

The ensuing Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 signalled the start of significant Japanese investment and prosperity. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, fought to solidify control of Korea and north-eastern China, firmly established Japan's dominance in the peninsula. As a result, the peninsula became a "protectorate" governed by a Japanese resident-general. Five years later, Korea was constitutionally declared as a Japanese colony, bringing the Joseon dynasty's more than 500-year reign to an end (Munson 54). The Japanese seized power of Korea by a variety of tactics, including assassinating members of the Korean royal family. In 1910, Japan legally took ownership of "Joseon" and renamed it Korea (Miller 1).

The Korean-Japanese Agreement of 1905, which established the Office of Resident General in Korea and granted Japan entire administrative control over Korea's foreign affairs, transforming it into a protectorate. In July 1907, five days after King Kojong of Korea's forced abdication, a second treaty was signed, giving the resident general entire administrative control over Korean domestic affairs (K.Y. Kim 6, 7).

1.2.3.2 Colonial Period and World War II

The terrible experience that Koreans suffered for 35 years continues to have an impact on how they perceive the Japanese. As seen by bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea, Tokyo's hasty attempts to correct past wrongs only helped to exacerbate things (Panwar 1, 2). Koreans strove hard to retain their culture throughout Japanese control from 1910 to 1945. The Japanese prohibited the teaching of Korean language and history, and many historical documents were destroyed. Koreans were forced to assume Japanese names and to communicate and educate in Japanese. Many Korean farmers were removed from their land, and others were forced to rely on food handouts. The Japanese troops and

administration took seized buildings, while Korean firms were handed up to Japanese officials (Miller 2).

Nationalists in Korea were fragmented and unable to sustain a coherent opposing policy. Some organizations desired intimate relations with the West and advocated reforms along Western lines. Other organizations advocated for a return to Confucian principles and Korean traditions. Others, influenced by the 1917 Russian Revolution, advocated for a Korea founded on Marxist (communist) values. These divisions still exist in Korean peninsula today, but they were particularly difficult to resolve under the Japanese rule. At the start of the occupation, it appeared that Korean nationalists would work together to drive Japan out (Miller 2).

The independence movement began on March 1st, 1919, when students in Seoul protested Japanese authority and read the Declaration of Independence. The death of the last Joseon king, rumors that he was slain by the Japanese, and Japan's mourning limitations at his funeral sparked this campaign. Another critical component was South Korea's attempt to reach out to the world community. To end World War I, the Treaty of Versailles was recently negotiated. During the talks, US President Woodrow Wilson declared that self-determination should be the foundation of a new world peace and called for the formation of a League of Nations. These beliefs resonate with South Koreans, who believe they have the right to self-government as a sovereign state. The Japanese government took a different approach and brutally repressed the revolt. Thousands of individuals detained and imprisoned for participating in demonstrations or sympathizing with the independence struggle. Many South Koreans perished as a result of beatings, torture, and deplorable prison circumstances (Miller 3).

Korean nationalists created the Korean Provisional Government, a government-in-exile, in Shanghai in April 1919. Following the commencement of the Sino-Japanese War

in 1937-1945, efforts to assimilate Koreans accelerated. Shrine worship was intensified, and Japanese emperor worship elements were introduced into the Korean school curriculum. Between 1939 and 1945, 1.2 million Koreans were brought to Japan for forced labor, and towards the end of World War II, Koreans were inducted into the army (K.Y. Kim 8).

Others departed their homeland and continued their fight for Korean independence in Manchuria, Shanghai, or the United States. Following criticism of its strict authority in Korea in the 1920s, the Japanese government softened some of its harsh restrictions. They began to invest in education, roads, and government buildings, while also allowing the publication of a few Korean novels and magazines. The Japanese insisted on modernizing Korea and expanding business opportunities. Nonetheless, by the 1930s, the military had increasing power over the Japanese government. Moderate politicians were slain in both Korea and Japan, resulting in the elimination of those who favored humanitarian measures in Korea (Miller 2).

Japan saw the independence of Korea as a threat growing as it started its conquest of Manchuria and China. Japan used Koreans in its armed forces during World War Two. Koreans were required to serve in the Japanese army or find employment. Due to their disunity, Korean nationalists were unable to pursue a consistent program of opposition. Under perilous, slave-like circumstances, Korea still has these divisions today. Thousands of Korean women and girls were kidnaped by the Japanese forces and forced to act as comfort ladies for Japanese soldiers who were raping them. This strategy continues to be blamed on Japan, which has sparked a contentious dispute between Korea and Japan (Miller 2, 3)

The living conditions for these Koreans in Japan during the colonial era were full of hard situations. First of all, their lack of language and skill made it incredibly difficult for

them to find good employment on the Japanese labor market. They frequently competed with the lowest rungs of the Japanese labor force as "simple manual laborers" in the "most abused and least protected labor market". Just a few were given permanent factory jobs (B. Kim 236).

Moreover, Korean employees in Japan generally received substantially lower pay than Japanese workers. Notwithstanding these challenges, there were steadily more Koreans living in Japan. Employment in Japan was preferable to famine in Korea for poor Koreans. For these reasons, Japan remained a desirable destination for destitute Koreans throughout the colonial era (B. Kim 236).

1.2.3.3 Independence and the Korean War

After World War II, as soon as the Japanese surrendered to the Americans and the Korean Peninsula gained freedom from Japanese occupation in 1945. The Cold War officially began and Japan became to be a close ally of the US. Yet, the Korean Peninsula, with its northern portion influenced by Chinese and Soviet troops and its southern portion by American forces, became the first hotspot of the Cold War. This ultimately resulted in the Korean War (1950–1953), which created North Korea and South Korea as two new nations. While North Korea and Japan have had very antagonistic relations, which have slightly improved since 1971, South Korea and Japan have cooperated far more, in part because both countries are US allies. But, as we've already indicated, the colonial history continues to be effective in obscuring the possibility of better relations and poses a significant obstacle to more successful bilateral countries (Panwar 3, 4).

Over 2 million Koreans lived in Japan proper in 1945, the year of the Japanese surrender. After the war, around 1.5 million of these Koreans went back to their home country, but for a variety of reasons, more than 500,000 Koreans decided to stay in Japan. But despite the post-war devastation, they had a very difficult time surviving in Japan. First

of all, there were very few job opportunities available; even the Japanese population experienced high unemployment rates. Furthermore, it was nearly hard for zainichi to obtain attractive jobs at Japanese businesses because to the pervasive prejudice and antagonism toward Koreans that existed in Japan at the time. The vast majority of Koreans were either labourers or did not hold jobs. The employment situation for Koreans was made worse by the return to Japan of millions of demilitarized soldiers (B. Kim 236, 237). Koreans were occasionally let off from their employment to make place for the returned Japanese soldiers (qtd. in B. Kim 237).

Many Koreans either didn't have jobs nor had "antisocial" jobs. They typically worked in jobs that "anyone can do without any special training or resources," such as running tiny restaurants like yakinikuya or "entertainment" enterprises like pachinko, which were closely associated with antisocial behaviour (qtd. in B. Kim 237).

1.2.3.4 The bubble Economy Period

After a 30-year "economic miracle," Japan saw its iconic "bubble economy," in which stock and real estate prices skyrocketed to all-time highs, fuelled by speculative fervour. The Nikkei index in Japan reached an all-time high in 1989 before plummeting shortly thereafter as a housing bubble burst, sending the country into a catastrophic financial crisis and a long period of economic stagnation known as the "lost decade"(Colombo 1).

Japan's extremely traditional society suffered significant changes following its defeat in WWII, owing in part to the Westernizing effect of the Allied occupying powers. The Marshall Plan of the United States assisted Japan in rebuilding its economy, and improved relations between the two countries allowed Japan to sell manufactured goods to a richer

United States. Large family enterprises dominated Japanese industry at first, until evolving into keiretsu conglomerates in the second part of the twentieth century (Colombo 1).

When Japan experienced its "Economic Miracle" in the late 20th century, its citizens had the world's longest life expectancies and one of the greatest standards of living. Japan became the world's largest creditor nation in the 1980s when its GDP per capita equalled or even surpassed that of several Western nations. Salary men were expected to work extremely long hours and were required to show the utmost loyalty to their employers, but they were rewarded with thoroughly middle class lifestyles and lifetime employment guarantees, which was a significant improvement over the extremely modest lives that the majority of Japanese people led prior to World War Two (Colombo 2).

In 1989, the Bank of Japan made the decision to tighten its monetary policy as government leaders in Japan grew more concerned about the nation's expanding asset bubbles. Japan's real estate bubble burst as a result of the country's bursting stock bubble plunging the nation into a severe financial crisis, and putting an end to the "Economic Miracle" that had been underway for three decades. The country had poor competitive position versus other Asian exporters like China and South Korea, as well as its progressively declining stock and real estate prices. Government bailouts kept many unproductive and indebted businesses afloat during this time, earning them the moniker "Zombie corporations" (Colombo 4).

As for Koreans, the growth of the service and construction industries provided them with a variety of job and business prospects since they were concentrated in these industries. The socioeconomic situation of zainichi Koreans significantly improved in the 1980s. Pachinko, which is frequently referred to as "the biggest ethnic Korean industry in Japan," has experienced amazing growth. The pachinko market was more than 30 trillion yen/year in size, which was twice the size of Japan's domestic auto industry at the time. According to

reports, Koreans make up 60–70% of this. A noteworthy development was also made in the yakinikuya (Korean-style BBQ restaurant) sector, which was mostly created by Koreans in Japan (B. Kim 238).

It was made possible for Koreans to work as mail carriers, licensed nurses in public hospitals, and "full-time instructors" in public schools because to institutional and legal changes implemented in the 1980s and 1990s. Also, there was a dramatic decline in employment discrimination against Koreans in the private sector. Koreans are no longer the target of much discrimination, yet there is evidence that it still exists. Zainichi Koreans' access to higher education has increased dramatically (qtd. in B. Kim 239).

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter lays the theoretical framework and historical background to better understand the ways in which fact and fiction converge and diverge in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko.* The first section contains an explanation of the New Historicist approach, Historiography and the postmodern concept of "Historiographic Metafiction". The second section provides the genre definition of Historical fiction with all its characteristics as well as a short overview on the contemporary American Historical fiction. Then, the last section includes the historical context of *Pachinko* as the historical novel under study and highlights the major historical events that form its very basis.

Chapter Two: Historical Facts and their Fictionalization in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

Introduction

Pachinko employs history as a subtext, with all characters' fates intertwined with key events from national and worldwide history. Hence, this chapter explores how historical facts and events are fictionalized in *Pachinko* and highlights the ways in which it is considered a historical novel. It analyses the representation of history in the novel's fictional story from the viewpoints of the New Historicist approach and the postmodern concept of "Historiographic Metafiction". It attempts to reveal how history is narrated in subjective multiple ways and how personal and public histories are intermingled.

2.1 Plot Summary

In a small Korean town around the turn of the 20th century, Hoonie marries Yangjin. They live on the outskirts of Korean society during Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. Sunja, Hoonie's cherished daughter, is just 13 when he passes away from tuberculosis. Around the age of 17, Sunja conceives a child after falling in love with Hansu, a successful fish merchant. Months earlier, he explains that he already has a wife and children in Japan and won't wed her. Sunja finally weds Isak, a visiting pastor. Isak and Sunja live with Isak's brother Yoseb and sister-in-law Kyunghee in Osaka, Japan, after getting married. Noa, Sunja's first son, is born shortly after, and Mozasu follows. In the midst of World War II, Isak is detained while participating in a Shinto ceremony (LitCharts).

Three years later, Isak Baek, who was starving, sick, and tortured, finally gets out of prison in time and dies at home. Towards the end of the war, Hansu reappears and warns Sunja that Osaka will soon be bombed, and he arranges for Sunja and her family to escape to a farm in the countryside where they will be safe and fed. After the family moves to

Osaka, Noa starts to work hard to get into Waseda University, and Mozasu gets a job at Goro's pachinko parlor to stay out of trouble. Then, Noa's girlfriend Akiko points out his unmistakable resemblance to Hansu. Noa confronts Sunja, who is distraught when he learns that Hansu is indeed his father. Noah leaves Waseda and moves to Nagano to start a new life as Japanese. He ran the floor of a pachinko parlor, and was married to a woman named Lisa, and had four children (LitCharts).

For 16 years, he lives successfully as a middle-class Japanese man, but after Hansu and Sunja track him down in 1978, he committs suicide, unable to accept his past. Mozasu is married to Yumi, a Korean seamstress, and they have a son, Solomon. When Solomon is young, Yumi dies in a car accident. When Solomon is a teenager, Mozasu dates divorced Japanese woman Etsuko. Solomon falls in love with Etsuko's troubled daughter Hana. After getting a job at a British bank during college, Solomon is fired after Goro helps him with a deal, and Solomon's boss grows suspicious of him. Encouraged by the dying Hana, Solomon starts working for his father's pachinko business. At the end of the novel, Sunja visits Issak Baek's grave and learns that Noa visited the grave before he died, which confirms that despite his anger at Hansu, he still loves Sunja, and respect her and Isak's sacrifices for him (LitCharts).

2.2 Exploring Historical Facts and Events in *Pachinko's* Fictional Story

Pachinko can be labeled a historical novel since it encompasses key historical events such as colonial Korea, World War II, the Allied occupation of Japan, the Korean War, and Japan's period of "bubble economy." The novel underscores the New Historicist approach with its unusual plot that shows history as interaction between historicity and fictionality. Spanning 20th century Korean history, this novel tells us an astonishing truth about the

“Zainichi” people (Korean Japanese individuals who were either colonial era migrants or their ancestors).

Pachinko, unlike many historical novels, does not feature an omniscient narrator explaining the greater historical context; instead, we see events through the experiences of the protagonists, ordinary individuals with very limited awareness of the world beyond their experience. The novel is divided into three books in which the events' timeline and historical context are given (Munson 54).

Lee states at the beginning of the novel: “history has failed us, but no matter” (1). This statement shows the importance of history throughout the novel especially micro histories of the excluded through the implementation of the postmodern technique of “Historiographic Metafiction”. The author argues that we have too frequently depended on the mainstream narrative of the time and have ignored the ordinary marginalized people. The novel explores themes like Japanese colonialism, Korean diaspora, identity, discrimination, and political unrest (Munson 57).

2.2.1 Colonial Korea in *Pachinko’s* Fictional World

The novel is divided into three books in which the events' timeline and historical context are given. "Gohyang/Hometown 1910-1933," the first book is set during the colonial period. Lee states: “In 1910, when Hoonie was twenty-seven years old, Japan annexed Korea. The fisherman and his wife, thrifty and hardy peasants, refused to be distracted by the country’s incompetent aristocrats and corrupt rulers who had lost their nation to thieves” (11).

The victory over Russia at the turn of the twentieth century allowed Japan to march militarily on Seoul and establish a "protectorate" in Korea. As a result, resistance movements formed at all levels of Korean society, but they were unable to confront the repressive

Japanese apparatus that infiltrated the royal palace and took control of the country in 1910. Korea was classified as the Japanese empire's "outer region," with colonial control lasting 35 years. The peninsula suffered enormous social, political, and economic upheavals throughout this period (Del valle 55).

For the rural residents of Yeongdo, a fishing village on the peninsula's south-eastern edge, Japanese robbers and South Korea's incompetent rulers have robbed a large number of illiterates who cannot prove their title of the land (Munson 54). They are dissatisfied with the corrupt aristocrats who squandered Korea. However, little has changed in the lives of these struggling farmers who continue to struggle for survival (Singh 83).

Among them are the parents of Yangjin, a teenage girl who is married off to ease financial hardship. “Her father, a tenant farmer, was one of the many who’d lost his lease as a result of the colonial government’s recent land surveys.” Yangjin's new family, which includes her lone surviving child, a daughter named Sunja, is soon compelled to convert their home into a boarding house in order to pay expenses (Munson 54, Lee 14). The Japanese took over Korea's agricultural sector, taking many Koreans' land and giving it to Japanese merchants and corporations, forcing landowners and farmers into tenant farming (Foteini). This is also reflected in Isak’s parents struggle in Pyongyang: “Our parents have been selling their land in large parcels to pay taxes, and things are precarious now. My brother has been sending them money so they could get by” (Lee 124).

2.2.1.1 The Great Depression in *Pachinko*

The Japanese occupation was a disaster for the Korean people, causing widespread famine and poverty. The setting then shifts to the 1930s, when Korea, like the rest of the world, is feeling the consequences of The Great Depression and Japanese occupation of Manchuria (Singh 84).

In the aftermath of her husband's death, Yangjin fights to keep her boarding-house as basic essentials become hard to find. Lee maintains: **“**The winter following Japan’s invasion of Manchuria was a difficult one. Biting winds sheared through the small boarding-house, and the women stuffed cotton in between the fabric layers of their garments. This thing called the Depression was found everywhere in the world” (Lee 18). Yangjin and Sunja's only source of information from the outside world is the lodgers. They would listen to other fishermen's news at the docks and debate it in the boarding house. They'd talk about how, having conquered Korea, the Japanese are now attempting to conquer China (Singh 84). They'd say something like:

> Poor Americans were as hungry as the poor Russians and the poor Chinese. In the name of the Emperor, even ordinary Japanese went without. No doubt, the canny and the hardy survived that winter, but the shameful reports of children going to bed and not waking up, girls selling their innocence for a bowl of wheat noodles, and the elderly stealing away quietly to die so the young could eat were far too plentiful. (Lee 18)

Within the dingy walls of the boarding-house, the impoverished men taunt their mighty colonizer, safe from the colonial police, who wouldn't bother with fisherman. The brothers speak about China's strengths, their hearts longing for another nation to be powerful after their own leadership failed them (Singh 84). They say: “Yes, the bastards can take a nibble, but China will not be eaten whole […] those dwarves can’t take over such a great kingdom. China is our elder brother! Japan is just a bad seed […] China will get those sons of bitches! You watch!” (Lee 20).

Korea has previously been occupied for twenty-two years; the story clearly expresses how the new generations, who have been born under the Japanese yoke, know no other reality than exploitation and domination: "The two youngest had never lived in a Korea that

was not ruled by Japan" (Lee 20). Even newspapers bring no hope to these people: “The country had been under the colonial government for over two decades, and no one could see an end in sight. It felt like everyone had given up” (Lee 62).

2.2.1.2 Agricultural Measures and Shortage of Food Supply

By that time, Agriculture witnessed tremendous changes, with a shift toward rice monoculture, but instead of benefiting the local population, all output was sent to Japan. When this growth slowed and became insufficient to meet the empire's needs, the need arose to attract Japanese capital to the mainland in order to encourage its industrial development, which led many Koreans to enter the business sector, resulting in the creation of new professionals. The migration of large numbers of people to cities in search of work in the factories, industries, and small businesses that began to spring up during this time period resulted in the birth of a first generation of skilled workers (Del valle 55).

In colonial Korea, white rice was thus a luxury, reserved for weddings and funerals. Furthermore, when Japan faced rice shortages, Korea became the country's primary rice supplier, leaving almost no rice for Korean citizens. In a passage of the novel, Sunja's mother, Yang-jin, is shown haggling with Cho, who is an elderly trader for two hops of rice. Yang-jin wishes her daughter could taste rice on her wedding day before departing for Japan, but the merchant is unable to do so due to Japanese surveillance on selling rice to Koreans (Foteini).

> Could you sell me some white rice? ‘Waaaaah, you must have an important guest staying with you. I’m sorry, but I don’t have any to sell. You know where it all goes, he said.” Cho grimaced. He didn’t want to sell her the rice, because he had no choice but to charge her the same price he would charge Japanese. “I have so little stock, and

> when the Japanese customers come in and there isn't any, I get into very hot water. You understand. Believe me; it's not that I don't want to sell it to you. (Lee 89)

While initially hesitant, the mother's desperation and the understanding that this may be the final time Sunja tastes rice from her birthplace persuades him to hand out three hops of rice rather than two (Foteini). Cho's daughters have married many years before. The younger one's husband has died last year. He flees to Manchuria because the police have been chasing him for organizing protests, so he now feeds this great patriot's children by selling his finest inventory to wealthy Japanese consumers whom his son-in-law has been so determined to drive out of the country. Cho's shop would close if his Japanese clients refuse to buy from him. He does the bidding of any Japanese customer ready to pay the highest price because he can't handle the thought of not being able to provide for his family; he can't bear the thought of his girls living far away in a place where Koreans are regarded no better than barn animals. He could not let the Japanese steal his children (Lee 90).

2.2.1.3 Christianity in Asia and Independence Movements

The arrival of Baek Isak, a protestant preacher from Pyongyang on his way to live with his brother in Osaka, signals an early watershed moment for Yangjin and Sunja. He contracts tuberculosis after his lengthy journey. Yangjin and Sunja do everything they can to help him recover (Munson 54). In relation to Isak's migration to Japan, one of the lodgers named Jun expresses his regret: "That Hirohitoseki took over our country, and stole the best land, rice, fish, and now our young people." He adds: "Well, I don't blame the young people for going to Japan. There's no money to be made here" (Lee 28).

By the time the story begins, around 1% of Korea's population was made up of Protestant, largely educated and prosperous households from the north. This also includes the early independence campaigners' leadership cores, many of whom were imprisoned or died.

Isak mentions that his older brother Sameol was killed during the signature protest movement of colonial Korea, which is named for the date it begins, March 1st (Munson 54, 55). He makes this evident during a conversation with Yangjin:

> Yangjin; "My husband said Christians were not bad people. Some were patriots who fought for independence, Right?"
>
> Issak: "Yes, my teachers at the seminary in Pyongyang fought for independence. My oldest brother died in 1919."
>
> Yangjin: "Are you political, too?" She looked concerned; Hoonie had told her that they should avoid housing activists because it would be dangerous. "Like your brother?"
>
> Issak: "My brother Samoel was a pastor. He led me to Christ. My brother was a brilliant man. Fearless and kind"
>
> Yangjin nodded. Hoonie had wanted independence for Korea, but he believed that a man had to care for his family first. "My husband didn't want us to follow anyone not Jesus, not Buddha, not an emperor or even a Korean leader. (Lee 65)

On March 1st, 1919 a group of Korean independence advocates held a nonviolent march, which was met with fatal repression by the Japanese military, resulting in thousands of deaths, injuries, and incarcerations. Isak has been too young and unwell to take part in the March 1 Independence Movement, but many of its founding fathers have graduated from his Pyongyang seminary (Munson 55). In the novel, Lee states: "His brother Samoel, the eldest son, was never ill, but he had died young. He had been beaten badly by the colonial police after a protest and did not survive the arrest" (65).

Readers unfamiliar with the history of Christianity in East Asia would be surprised to learn that missionaries first arrived in China, Japan, and Korea in the 1500s, though Protestants were unable to establish a significant presence in the northeast until Korea's

forced opening in the 1870s. Seminaries were formed by 1910, and the first native ministers were ordained (Munson 54). When Baek Isak goes to meet Pastor Shin in Busan, the elder pastor tells him about the troubles the churches have been facing:

> It had been a long time since they'd had a new pastor stop by. Many of the Western missionaries had left the country due to the colonial government's crackdown, and fewer young men were joining the ministry. More people were afraid to attend services here and in Japan because the government didn't approve. The Canadian missionaries had already left. (Lee 68)

Accordingly, another character, Yoseb states "Back home, the colonial government had been rounding up Christians and making them bow at the shrines each morning" (Lee 152). During the colonial rule, the opening up to the outside world led to the introduction of Christianity into Korea. Not only were Christian missionaries the first to build a comprehensive and universal educational system on the peninsula, but they were also the first to introduce previously unknown Western subjects like science and medicine. In addition to their educational impact, the missionaries performed significant humanitarian work by creating orphanages and social support networks for the elderly and in need (Del valle 55).

As a result, many Koreans chose religion not only for religious reasons, but also for advancement and breaking free from a backward past. The influx of new ideas from other countries generated debate on issues like as freedom, human rights, democracy, and gender equality. It is worth mentioning the significance of these churches' participation in independence fights during colonial occupation or, later, in democratic ambitions in the second half of the twentieth century (Del valle 55).

2.2.1.4 Japanese Oppression and Military Prostitution

The novel also shows the common situations of sexual harassment, prostitution to which Korean women in Japan were subjected. This constant discrimination against Koreans is included in the beginning of the book, when Japanese students make fun of Sunja (Del valle 59, 62). This bunch of Japanese schoolboys attempt to attack Sunja in her way home from the market. Such events are common on the mainland while there are fewer Japanese in Yeongdo. They harass her saying: “Yobos don't just eat dogs, now they steal their food too! Girls like you eat bones? Stupid bitch [...] why can’t you speak Japanese? All of the Emperor’s loyal subjects are supposed to know how to speak Japanese! Aren’t you a loyal subject?” Koh Hansu saves her from those boys and yells at them saying: “Your parents were losers in Japan, and that’s why you had to settle here. Don’t get any dumb ideas about how much better you are than these people” (Lee 36).

Some passages of the book connect to another tragic historical event that directly touched women: the "Comfort Women." The Japanese imperial government used this term to characterize the nearly 400,000 women and children trafficked as sex slaves under their control between 1932 and 1945 (Del valle 62). The Japanese deployed 200 thousand young females as "Comfort Women" to the front lines. Between 50,000 and 70,000 of them became whores for Japanese samurai. They were between the ages of 16 and 32 at the time (qtd. in Jeong and Dreyer 454).In the novel, Koh Hansu warns Sunja in the beginning of their meetings:

> Listen, you have to be careful not to travel alone or ever be out at night. If you go to the market by yourself, you must stay on the main paths. Always in public view. They are looking for girls now […] the colonial government, to take to China for the soldiers. Don’t follow anyone. It will likely be some Korean person, a woman or a

> man, who'll tell you there's a good job in China or Japan. It may be someone you know. Be careful. (Lee 39)

There are other passages that tackled this issue including the story of Sunja's friends Dokhee and Bokhee whom Sunja and her mother have left in Yeongdo:

> I still think about our girls, Yangjin said. "Dokhee and Bokhee? Didn't they find work in China?" "I shouldn't have let them go with that smooth-talking woman from Seoul. But the girls were so excited about traveling to Manchuria and earning money. At the market, I hear that the girls who went to work in factories were taken somewhere else, and they had to do terrible, terrible things with Japanese soldiers. (Lee 233)

This was strictly limited prostitution: Japanese troops were "served" by Korean girls throughout WWII. The Korean government considered this to be disgusting and corrupt. As a result, the truth was not formally revealed until 1992. When the Japanese lost the war, a significant number of the comfort ladies were killed. A few ladies remained in Japan, while a small number returned to Korea. They were regarded as heathens and despicable individuals. This means that they were both abused by Japanese colonization and rejected by their own countrymen (Jeong and Dreyer 454).

The vast majority of those killed were Koreans and Chinese, with many more coming from other Asian countries. They were held in appalling conditions, tortured physically and psychologically, and exposed to sexually transmitted diseases. After Japan's surrender, they were liberated, but many committed suicide because they couldn't bear the horrors they had experienced. Today, the few survivors are still waiting for the Japanese government to acknowledge and apologize for their losses, in addition to financial recompense (Del valle 62).

2.2.2 Korean Diaspora in Japan in *Pachinko*

Throughout the novel, the generations of the Korean family keep struggling, having little say over the course of their lives. The destiny of the characters is influenced by forces including as colonization, World War II, wealthy gangsters, and a prejudiced Japanese society. They are all victims of circumstances beyond their control as they strive to make a living in a country that regards Koreans as dirty criminals unworthy of any social position. Even if some of the family's succeeding generations become successful, they are never really integrated into Japanese society (Newell 68).

The title of the novel, *Pachinko*, is a reference to a Japanese gambling machine of the same name. According to statistics, Zainichi Koreans worked primarily in pachinko parlours, since hiring discrimination forced them into the so-called unclean, dangerous, and degrading professions. The pachinko game is a metaphor for Koreans in Japan's history, as they win, lose, and strive for their place and their lives. As a result, the title *Pachinko* embodies the immigrant experience and the Korean diaspora, highlighting the dangers of moving to a foreign country. After all, it was Sunja's family's ability to settle in the new country that permits them to work in pachinko parlours (Foteini).

As it expanded into Asia, Japanese imperialism required people to manufacture armament. The decision to travel to Japan, like many of their countrymen, to seek a better life that they could not reach in their homeland which is devastated by famine and poverty during this colonial period (1910-1945), is central to the Baek family saga. Isak and Sunja relocate to Japan, along with hundreds of thousands of other Koreans (Del valle 56).They move to Osaka, where they reside with Baek's younger brother Yoseb and his wife Kyunghee (Singh 86). Lee states: “Every day, trains from Shimonoseki and boats from Jeju brought more hungry Koreans to Osaka” (100).

2.2.2.1 Ethnic Discrimination and Subordination

Although Korea was considered part of the Japanese empire, Koreans were never considered equals by the government. The Japanese called Koreans "zainichi", a term for foreigners residing in Japan that legally implied temporary residence. Because they were not considered Japanese citizens, they lacked basic rights. The same state that drove them to migrate also discriminated against and excluded them: they were deemed subjects of the emperor to serve the Japanese empire, but were denied the same status when forced to migrate. The policy of exclusion and prejudice was supported not just by the Japanese government, but also by the civilian community as a whole. This strategy of exclusion and prejudice was supported not just by the Japanese government, but also by the civilian population as a whole. Some of the passages in that text demonstrate the racism that would mark the conduct of the Japanese empire on the peninsula (Del valle 55).

Sunja is delighted to start a new life in a new city, but she is disappointed to learn that Koreans in Japan are treated harshly and are only allowed to work in lowly jobs (Singh 86). Koreans in Osaka are forced to live in a ghetto "They got off at Ikaino, the ghetto where the Koreans lived […] the animal stench was stronger than the smell of food cooking or even the odours of the outhouses." Ikaino area is a "misbegotten village of sorts, comprised of mismatched, shabby houses" (Lee 103). Yoseb advises Sunja and Isak to not trust even Koreans. He states "We're all hungry […] just because they're Koreans doesn't mean they're our friends" (Lee 107).

The story depicts how Korean inhabitants of Osaka live in distant neighbourhoods. It was normal for an average of twelve individuals to live in a single room built for only two occupants. The living accommodations are shared with farm animals, and basic facilities like running water, heating, and so on are unavailable (Del valle 59). When they move to Osaka,

Isak gets a job as a pastor in a church. Yoo, the head of the church, explains to him the situation of Koreans and how they are living in Japan:

> No one will rent to the Koreans. As pastor, you'll get a chance to see how the Koreans live here. You can't imagine: a dozen in a room that should be for two, men and families sleeping in shifts. Pigs and chickens inside homes. No running water. No heat. The Japanese think Koreans are filthy, but they have no choice but to live in squalor. I've seen aristocrats from Seoul reduced to nothing, with no money for bathhouses, wearing rags for clothing, shoeless, and unable to get work as porters in the markets. There's nowhere for them to go. Even the ones with work and money can't find a place to live. Some are squatting illegally. (Lee 122)

The living conditions were unpleasant and even if a Korean family wanted to rent a decent house near the Japanese, they couldn't since no Japanese landlord would rent them (Del valle 59). The story itself explains the case: "The Japanese did not want Koreans to live near them, because they were not clean, they lived with pigs and their children had lice." In another passage: "The Japanese won't rent decent properties to us. We bought this house eight years ago; I think we're the only Koreans who own a house on this row, but no one can know that" (Lee 238, 104).

The same discrimination is replicated in employment, as Koreans were given the lowest positions or had to engage in disreputable gambling. They were also seen as criminals (Del valle 60). "Everyone thinks Koreans are gangsters", says Mozasu. The book also notes that Yoseb was paid half the salary of Japanese with the same responsibilities (379, 171). The same thing happened to the Korean and Chinese girls who worked with Yoseb at the factory placing twenty thin wheat biscuits into wooden boxes to be transported to army commanders stationed in China. A girl was fined a yen from her earnings for every two broken biscuits,

pushing her to work carefully as well as quickly. If she even ate a broken corner of a biscuit, she'd be fired right away:

> Shimamura viewed this as yet another example of Korean weakness. The factory owner believed that if all Asian countries were run with a kind of Japanese efficiency, attention to detail, and high level of organization, Asia as a whole would prosper and rise able to defeat the unscrupulous West. The biscuits were war orders, and they had to be met promptly. Men were risking their lives fighting for their country; each family must make sacrifices. (180)

Also, Koreans are frequently arrested by police officers for stealing or home brewing. Noa would argue that because some Koreans break the law, everyone is held accountable. According to Noa, Koreans must improve themselves by working harder and becoming better. The Japanese don't want Koreans to reside near them because they are filthy, live with pigs, and have lice on their children. Mozasu just wanted to punch everyone who said harsh things, but Noa warned him that because Koreans in Japan were no longer citizens, they may be deported if they got into problems (Lee 238).

2.2.2.2 Japanese Assimilation Measures

The narrative consistently emphasizes the Japanese hatred towards Koreans, with only those who concealed their origins being accepted as equals. The persistent harassment and prejudice, combined with the marginalization and poverty they face both inside and beyond the peninsula, leads many to believe they are culturally and racially inferior. Because of his Korean ancestry, Noa suffers the most internally throughout the novel (Del valle 60). He states: "The Japanese have been telling me all my life that my blood is Korean, that Koreans are aggressive, violent, criminal, and deceitful and liars" (Lee 303).

Even as far away from the colonial era as 1974, the book narrates how a boy of Korean origin commits suicide due to the harassment of his classmates (Del valle 60). They attack him saying: "You Koreans are ruining the country" or "Koreans are criminals and pigs. Get out of my country" (Lee 360). In this sense, one of the characters states: “Japan will never change. They will never integrate the gaijin and, honey, here you will always be a gaijin, and you will never be Japanese. Nee? The zainichi can't leave, nee?” (451).

One of the first measures taken by the Japanese empire on the peninsula was to prohibit the teaching of Korean in schools and to force its new subjects to use Japanese names. It also becomes visible when twelve-year-old Noa cannot read Korean and Hoonie's father has sent him to study the language of the colonisers (Del valle 58). The book states: "Everyone the emperor's loyal subjects must speak Japanese!" (Lee 37). Similarly, the Japanese government attempted to eradicate Korean roots and identity through these actions. It is explained in two passages in *Pachinko* (Del valle 58).

> Due to the requirements of the colonial government, it was normal for Koreans to have two or three names, but in Korea she had hardly used the tsumei on her identity papers (Junko Kaneda), because she had not gone to school or been associated with official institutions. Sunja's surname was Kim, but in Japan, where women assumed their husband's surname, she was called Sunja Baek, which translated as Sunja Boku. Her tsumei was now Junko Bando. When forced to choose a Japanese surname, Isak's father decided on Bando because it sounded like the Korean word ban-deh, meaning "objection". Thus he turned his Japanese name into a kind of joke. (147)

In another passage, the novel refers to the “Japanisation” of the Korean character’s names and how they have to deal with this in their daily lives: “Most Koreans in Japan had at least three names. Mozasu was Mozasu Boku, the Japanisation of Moses Baek, and he rarely used his Japanese surname, Bando, the tsumei that appeared on his school and residence

documents" (Lee 237). One of the most profound cultural shocks occurred when Korean society was forced to adopt Japanese names and reimagine their lives as new subjects of the Japanese emperor. This historical period widened a gap in Korean national identity that was already pervasive. In an effort to distance the people from traditional Korean culture, the Japanese Empire adopted Japanese assimilation techniques to conquer Korea. In schools and universities, Korean was outlawed, and Koreans were compelled to adopt Japanese names (Del valle 58).

Zainichi Korean's children grew up in Japanese schools, studying Japanese (since Korean was outlawed), and assimilating to Japanese culture. They, on the other hand, were bullied because of their Korean origin and were frequently mocked when their clothes smelled like kimchi. As Zainichi Koreans, they are never entirely accepted by their Japanese peers, employers, or, eventually, Japanese society (Foteini). In the case of Noa's character, he tries to hide his Korean origins starting with his name (Del valle 58).

> At school he preferred to use his Japanese name, Nobuo Boku, rather than Noa Baek, although everyone in his class knew he was Korean. When he met someone who didn't know, he hid that detail. He spoke and wrote Japanese better than most native children. In class, he dreaded the mention of the peninsula where his parents were born and would look at his notebook if the teacher mentioned anything about the Korean colony. (Lee 174)

2.2.2.3 Isak as a Pastor in Japan and the Japanese Emperor

Book 2, "Motherland 1939-1962," covers both the Korean War and all of World War II. The first chapter is set six years after Noa's birth. Sunja later gives birth to Mozasu, the son she has with Baek (Munson 55).Sunja, who comes from a working-class family, is desperate to find employment in her new home (Singh 87).

Isak contemplates reaching out to patriots fighting against colonization. At home, things are becoming worse; even his parents are selling sections of their land to pay taxes from the latest land surveys and Yoseb is sending them money. Isak believed that resisting oppression is Christ like. But everything changed for Isak in a matter of months. These beliefs seem to take aback due to his profession and Sunja. He has to consider the safety of others (Lee 110). Via reading newspapers, Yoseb gets the latest news about the situation in Asia:

> Japan would save China by bringing technological advancements to a rural economy; Japan would end poverty in Asia and make it prosper; Japan would protect Asia from the pernicious hands of Western imperialism; and only Germany, Japan's true and fearless ally, was fighting the evils of the West. Yoseb didn't believe any of it, but propaganda was inescapable. Each day, Yoseb Tonight, all the papers repeated virtually the same things; the censors must've been working especially hard the night before. (150)

Although Yoseb has no idea of what would happen, he is aware of the ultimate truth that war was ultimately "senseless," and that Koreans, whether in Japan or abroad, have to rely on themselves. Political and military history, for everyday folks, is no match for the struggle for daily survival the "belly as emperor." After deciding to work, the priority for Sunja and her family is to survive poverty. Yoseb warns Isak from getting involved in political activism saying: "Don't get mixed up in the politics, labor organizing, or any such nonsense […]Don't pick up or accept any of the independence-movement or socialist tracts. If the police find that stuff on you, you'll get picked up and put in jail". Isak is asking his brother about any activists in Osaka (Lee 109). Yoseb replies:

> Yeah, I think so, More in Tokyo and some hiding out in Manchuria. Anyway, when those guys get caught, they die. If you're lucky, you get deported, but that's rare "The

> military police will harass you until you give up or die “I’ve seen men arrested here. It’s not like back home. The judges here are Japanese. The police are Japanese. The laws aren’t clear. And you can’t always trust the Koreans in these independence groups. There are spies who work both sides. The poetry discussion groups have spies, and there are spies in churches, too. Eventually, each activist is picked off like ripe fruit from the same stupid tree. They’ll force you to sign a confession. (110)

In 1939, Japanese police detain a number of Christians, Isak among them, at a Shinto temple because one of their groups is mouthing the Lord's Prayer during the rite. This shakes the family’s settled life in Osaka. Authorities imprison Baek on suspicion that he may be encouraging people to honour God and religion rather than the Japanese Emperor. He suffers persecution and torment in jail (Munson 55). After his brother’s arrest, “Yoseb remembered how good it was before the Japanese came he was ten years old when the country was colonized; and yet he couldn’t do what their elder brother, Samoel, had done so bravely fight and end up as a martyr. Protesting was for young men without families” (Lee 110).

The religious theme runs throughout the story; Isak is imprisoned by Japanese authorities along with several members of his church. They are imprisoned for refusing to bow and swear devotion to the emperor in a Shinto ceremony, which they regard as idolatry (Del valle 61).

> The police arrested them this morning when everyone went to the Shinto shrine to bow, one of the village leaders noticed Hu mouthing the words of the Lord’s Prayer when they were supposed to be pledging allegiance to the Emperor. The police officer who was supervising questioned Hu, and Hu told him that this ceremony was idol worshipping and he wouldn’t do it anymore. (Lee 151)

For the Japanese people, the image of the emperor was central to the Shinto-nationalist religious conception; his figure was inseparable from Japan, as the emperor was a symbol of

his people. The Japanese imperial house was considered to be descended from the sun goddess Amaterasu, and therefore loyalty to the royal family was unquestionable and unwavering. The Emperor was, and is, seen as the "sacred father of the Japanese people" who unites the whole nation as one big family (Del valle 61). In the novel, Sunja is told that “A mother must eat well if she’s to raise a strong worker for the Emperor” (Lee 129).

2.2.2.4 World War II

The second part of Book 2 is set during a crucial juncture in modern East Asian history, but Lee only skims the surface of a number of occasions that are widely regarded as essential to our comprehension of the period: the end of World War II and Japan's surrender; American occupation of Japan; the division of the Korean peninsula; and the Korean War are all only marginally mentioned. This isn't always a disadvantage, because (young) readers frequently skip through the explanatory part that can be found in historical fiction. Furthermore, such a narrative style is more in line with the novel's characters' experiences, as their awareness of international events is necessarily limited (Munson 56).

Sunja and Kyunghee start manufacturing and selling kimchi to supplement their household income. Sunja's family cannot easily obtain ingredients to make kimchi because Japan is devastated by WWII. Sunja quickly finds work in a restaurant, which keeps them afloat (Singh 87). For months, the women have visited the jail and spoken with the kind Japanese guard. They bring Isak food, which he never receives, they discover. Their religion has informed them that Korean hostages are frequently brought home just before they die in order for them not to expire in jail. In prison the situation is awful and described in the novel as follows:

> The cells were full of Koreans and Chinese, and according to their family members, nearly all of them would be held for a very long time these religious activists always

> were. In times of war, there had to be crackdowns against troublemakers for the sake of national security[…] Koreans caused trouble, then made excuses some sort of serious health problem that should preclude them from jail time. Religious books are not allowed, however. Also, all reading material must be in Japanese. (Lee 153-154)

Shimamura-san, Yoseb's boss, would never help someone in jail. He considers Christians to be rebels. The folks in command of the March 1 demonstration are Christians which is common knowledge among the Japanese. Yoseb doesn't even tell him he attends church. He'd just fire him if he thinks that he is involved in any type of protest activity, and he won't be able to find any other job as a Korean (Lee 155).The police has been at Isak's house a day after his arrest to seize his few books and papers. The family's movements are tracked, and a detective pays them a visit every few weeks to question them. The church is padlocked by the authorities, but the congregation continues to gather in secret in small groups headed by church elders (Lee 156). Under pressure, the Presbyterian Church's decision-making authority rules that the mandated Shinto shrine ritual is a civic responsibility rather than a religious one, despite the fact that the Emperor, the head of the state religion, is regarded as a living deity (Lee 157).

> Pastor Yoo, a faithful and pragmatic minister, had believed that the shrine ceremony, where the townspeople were required to gather and perform rites, was in fact a pagan ritual drummed up to rouse national feeling. Bowing to idols was naturally offensive to the Lord. Nevertheless, Pastor Yoo had encouraged Isak, Hu, and his congregation to observe the Shinto bowing for the greater good. He didn't want his parishioners, many of them new to the faith, to be sacrificed to the government's predictable response to disobedience prison and death. (Lee 157)

Japan is in danger, but the leadership refused to concede defeat. The Chinese civil war continued unabated. The sons of Yoseb's boss fight for Japan. The older one, who's been

transferred to Manchuria, has lost a limb and died of gangrene last year, and the younger one has been dispatched to Nanjing to take his place: “Shimamura-san had mentioned that Japan was in China in order to stabilize the region and to spread peace, but the way he’d said all this hadn’t given Yoseb the impression that Shimamura-san believed any of it” (Lee 172). At the time, the Japanese were advancing in Asia, and there were rumours that Japan would soon be linked with Germany in Europe. Nonetheless, Japan's escalating war in Asia appeared pointless to every Korean. China was not Korea, nor was it Taiwan; China could lose a million people and continues to exist. Pockets of it could fall, but it was a large nation that will survive through sheer numbers and resolve (Lee 172).In due course, Yoseb keeps wondering:

> Did Koreans want Japan to win? Hell no, but what would happen to them if Japan’s enemies won? Could the Koreans save themselves? Apparently not. So save your own ass this was what Koreans believed privately. Save your family. Feed your belly. Pay attention, and be skeptical of the people in charge. If the Korean nationalists couldn’t get their country back, then let your kids learn Japanese and try to get ahead. Adapt. Wasn’t it as simple as that? For every patriot fighting for a free Korea, or for any unlucky Korean bastard fighting on behalf of Japan, there were ten thousand compatriots on the ground and elsewhere who were just trying to eat. In the end, your belly was your emperor. (Lee 172)

2.2.2.5 The Yakuza in Japan

Book 2 delves on the connections between Japanese crime syndicates known as yakuza and the Korean-Japanese community, which are sources of contention throughout the narrative. Though the origins of Japanese organized crime are obscure, the yakuza emerged during Japan's Imperial period, when large-scale immigration aggravated concerns of income

disparity and prejudice. The only important characters in the story that openly pursue illegal activities are Noa's biological father, Koh Hansu, and his aide, Kim Changho, though they never identify to themselves as yakuza (Munson 56).

When Noa discovers that he states: “Yakuza are the filthiest people in Japan. They are thugs; they are common criminals. They frighten shopkeepers; they sell drugs; they control prostitution; and they hurt innocent people. All the worst Koreans are members of these gangs” (Lee 303). In another passage, lee notes: “An open secret, several of the larger farms sold their produce on the city’s black markets through Koh Hansu and his distribution network, but no one discussed this; Foreigners and yakuza controlled the black market” (202).

Excluded from the industrial bureaucratic success ladder, the Korean and Korean-Japanese populations, as well as other minorities or persecuted groups such as “burakumin” (Half Japanese), were frequently resigned to a life on the side-lines. Though numbers are limited, it is reasonable to say that a significant proportion of organized criminals in post-war Japan were not of pure Japanese heritage, and so were prohibited from pursuing honest means of living (Munson 56).

2.2.2.6 End of WW II and the Effects of the Bombings on the Family

Years later, Isak is released, having been tortured and starved, and he dies soon after. The Second World War wreaks havoc on Japan and Sunja's family who struggle to find kimchi ingredients (Singh 87). In the novel, “the women preferred to sell candy, but sugar was far more difficult to find than cabbage or sweet potatoes” (164). Sunja quickly finds work in a restaurant, which keeps them afloat. As this phase of the story progresses, it is clear that conditions in Japan are deteriorating. In addition to that, there is already prevailing uncertainty and a deep fracture in Korean national identity (Singh 87). Sunja’s son Noa

thinks: “it was certain he’d never be regular Japanese. One day, Uncle Yoseb said, they would return to Korea; Noa imagined that life would be better there” (Lee 189). Later the restaurant closes for shortage of food supplies and Kim Chango the owner states:

> The restaurant will be closed tomorrow,” Kim said. “For how long?” Sunja asked. “Till the war is over. The kitchen’s almost empty now. All the steel rice bowls, basins, cooking pots, utensils, steel chopsticks were requisitioned. Even if I could find new ones and remain open, the police will know that we’ve kept things back and confiscate them. The government doesn’t pay us for what they take. We can’t keep replacing” […] “Suspicious of military service dodgers, the police and neighborhood association leaders routinely questioned any male not in uniform. (Lee 216)

The war with the Americans begins, and Osaka is firebombed, causing tremendous destruction and loss of life. Koh Hansu warns Sunja that Osaka is going to be bombed saying: “The Americans are going to bomb Osaka in a matter of days” (Lee 194). He informs Sunja that the B-29s have been in China as well as other locations on the islands. The war is being lost by the Japanese. The government knows it will never win but refuses to recognize it. The Americans are well aware that the Japanese military must be halted. The Japanese military would rather slaughter every Japanese boy than accept its mistake. He says: “The Americans will finish this stupid war. Maybe tonight, maybe in a few weeks, but they’re not going to put up with this nonsense war for very long. The Germans are losing, too” (Lee 196).

Sunja and Kyunghee have heard that American soldiers rape women and girls, and they think that it would be preferable to commit suicide than to surrender to such beasts. Furthermore, Haru-san, the leader of the community association who is in charge of rations

most of the time, has informed the neighborhood youngsters that Americans kill indiscriminately and that everyone should flee at the sight of American forces (Lee 197).

Later, with Hansu's help, the Baeks flee to the countryside. At the farm, they never hear any planes, and there is far fewer bomb shelter drills. Meals are abundant and delicious. Short months pass before the attacks began, but the bombings last throughout the summer. Hansu is wrong about the date, but he is correct about the destruction of the neighbourhood. The American bombs have destroyed their favourite department stores but sparkling visions of such metropolitan pleasures beckoned to them, feeding their mounting discontent (Lee 199).

The farmer who is hosting Sunja and her family asks Hansu for news of the war: “It can’t last much longer. The Germans are being crushed, and the Americans are just getting started. Japan will lose this war. It’s a matter of when.” Hansu says this without a trace of regret or joy. “It’s better to stop this madness sooner than later than to have more nice boys get killed, is it not?”(Lee 204). The novel reflects another period of unrest that shocked Koreans at home and abroad in 1945 with the defeat of Japan (Del valle 55).

> When the Americans win, we don't know what the Japanese will do. They will leave Korea, but who will take over the country? What will happen to those Koreans who supported the Japanese? Chaos will reign. There will be more bloodshed. You don't want to be there. You don't want your children to be there […] I’ll take care of myself and my people. You think I’d trust my life to a bunch of politicians? The people in charge don’t know anything. And the ones who do don’t care. (Lee 208)

The war does conclude sooner than Hansu anticipates, but he could not have predicted the final bombs. During the bombings, Yoseb has been protected by a bunker, but when he eventually emerges onto the street, a burning wall from a nearby wooden shed hits his right side, enveloping him in orange-and-blue flames. Someone he recognizes from the factory

floor put out the fire, and Hansu's soldiers eventually discovere him in a pitiful hospital in Nagasaki. Yoseb is alive, despite the terrible news reports about the bombings. Yoseb has lost his right ear's hearing (Lee 212). The original residence has been destroyed by the bombardment. Kyunghee has stitched their legal documents into the inner of her excellent coat, and when the time came, Hansu's lawyer forces the city authorities to acknowledge Yoseb's property rights (225).

2.2.2.7 The Korean War and the Division of the Peninsula

This scenario would worsen years later during the Korean War (1950-1953), which pitted the US and Russian powers against each other on the Korean peninsula, devastating the country once again and leading to its division into what is now the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Things did not look promising with the Allied advance, and with the wreckage and poverty of a country devastated by World War II; the Allied armies did not appear to provide relief to the Koreans (Del Valle 56).“Conditions in the communist-occupied north were horrible. Many landowners had been arrested, killed and thrown into mass graves” (Lee 217).

Yoseb and the family want to go back to Korea, but Hansu warns them saying “Pyongyang’s controlled by the Russians, and the Americans are in charge of Busan. You want to go back to that? You’re living for a dream of a home that no longer exists.” He claims that the men that travel from Korea are significantly more desperate. They'll work for stale bread. Women who are hungry will whore after two days if they have children to feed. Back at home, Yaseb and Kyunghee's parents are assassinated. All landowners who are foolish enough to stay were killed by Communists who saw humans in basic categories (Lee 215).

The news reports from home are so horrifying: cholera, famine, and soldiers kidnapping tiny boys to the extent that their little life in Osaka and their pitiful attempts to

scrape together enough money to send Noa to college seem luxury in comparison. Sunja realizes that they can't go back yet because the army would take Noa and Mozasu and she could not let her sons become soldiers (Lee 234).

The fears of thousands of Korean migrants rise when Japan sought to expel them from the country. "The government is eager for all poor Koreans to leave", says Hansu. Korea, a destroyed country did not prove to be an encouraging prospect for those who had fled in search of a better future (qtd. in Del valle 56). "Every day, for every boat leaving for Korea full of idiots who want to go home, there are two boats full of refugees returning because there is nothing to eat there" (Lee 216).

The Cold War had a tremendous impact on Japanese Korean ethnic connections. Within their ethnic groups, Zainichi Koreans are ideologically divided and have formed two ethnic organisations with opposing political views. Mindan is made up of Zainichi Koreans who have political or ideological ties to South Korea. Other zainichi Koreans who identify ideologically with North Korea have joined Chongryun. Both organizations, primarily influenced by first generation zainichi, are extremely centralized, with hundreds of branches and offices spread over Japan. These two Korean ethnic groups have strong ideological beliefs and have been involved in political activities in their "home" country (Shipper 60).

Mindan is an institution of long-distance nationalism for largely first-generation zainichi Koreans who hope to return to the Korean peninsula in the future. Living in a country where there are no active initiatives to completely integrate immigrants into its society, Koreans with no political rights eventually feel vulnerable as outsiders and seek greater relationships with their co-ethnics and home countries. As a result, they centre their operations primarily on the politics of long-distance nationalism. First generation zainichi Koreans frequently prefer to focus their efforts primarily on their own ethnic organization,

which serves as an institutional and cultural extension of their "imagined" homeland. This connection and attachment to their hometown provides people with energy (Shipper 56, 57).

These institutions are portrayed in the novel as Noa is avoiding Koreans at Waseda University because they seem too political. During one of their monthly lunches, Hansu has said that the leftists are “a bunch of whiners” and the rightists are “plain stupid” (Lee 270). Also, Kim Chango, Hansu’s assistant, wants to return to Korea and he keeps attending Socialists meeting in Japan. Hansu tells him:

> I don’t care if you go to those socialist meetings, but don’t start believing that horseshit about returning to the motherland. The heads of Mindan are no better. Besides, they’ll kill you in the North, and they’ll starve you in the South. They all hate Koreans who’ve been living in Japan. I know. If you go, I will never support it. (Lee 224)

For the women, the idea of being a communist was not clear; Kyunghee asks: “Are there different kinds of communists? I think so. I don’t know if I’m a communist. I am against the Japanese taking over Korea again, and I don’t want the Russians and the Chinese to control Korea, either Or the Americans. I wonder why Korea can’t be left alone” (Lee 230). In due course, Changho says “I don’t trust the communists. I wouldn’t want you to go back home when they’re in charge. And this can’t last forever. Japan will be a rich country again soon, and Korea won’t always be divided” (264). Kyunghee asks him:

> So you’re not a communist, then? You go to those political meetings. I thought if you went to them, then perhaps they’re not so bad. And they’re against the Japanese government, and they want to reunify the country, right? I mean, aren’t the Americans trying to break up the country? My husband said that the communists are a bad lot; they’re the ones who shot our parents. (Lee 230)

Leader Kim Il Sung of Korea collaborated with the Japanese government in the late 1950s and early 1960s to facilitate the return of Koreans to North Korea through the North Korean and Japanese Red Cross (qtd. in Shipper 63). Hansu along with Chango discuss these matters in the novel: “The leader Kim IL Sung fought against Japanese imperialism.” Hansu replies: “I know his guys. Some of them might actually believe the message, but most of them are just trying to collect a pay envelope each week. The ones in charge who live here are never going back. You watch” (Lee 223). For Hansu; “Every man thinks he’s smarter than the next. I suppose whoever is in charge will fight very hard to keep his power” (Lee 230).

Mindan engaged in long-distance nationalism by developing ethnic allegiance to South Korea. To begin, it runs four Korean schools in Japan: Tokyo Korean School, Kyoto Korean School, Osaka Keum Kang Institute, and Osaka Keon Kook School. In 1957, the South Korean government began supporting educational initiatives at Mindan schools to counter propaganda directed against Korean communities in Japan by the North Korean dictatorship. The majority of pupils in Mindan schools are not zainichi Koreans' offspring (Shipper 64).

In this regard, Hansu maintains: “These foreigners are cutting up the nation into. Listen, I know the heads of both the Association and Mindan” he snorted, “I know them very, very well, Mindan’s a mere puppet of the Americans.” He adds that if everyone believed in some samurai nonsense, this country would fall apart. The Emperor is not concerned about anyone. Those communists are unconcerned about Korea or anyone else. Home does not exist for people like us. Kim wants to go to the North to participate with the reunification efforts, but Hansu informs him that patriotism, like capitalism or communism, is simply a notion. However, ideas might cause men to lose sight of their own interests. And the men in control will take advantage of men who place too much faith in ideas. He tries to convince him that Korea cannot be fixed by this small amount of people. The Japanese are

gone, and now Russia, China, and the United States are warring over this tiny country; no one can stop them (Lee 224).

2.2.2.8 Japan’s Bubble Economy and High Growth in *Pachinko*

The third book is titled "Pachinko 1962-1989," and it takes place during the "economic miracle" when Japan's economy grew to become the second-largest in the world. As the post-war economy booms, the family's wealth soars when they return to Osaka. Mozasu, a member of Japan's rich elite, now resides in a mansion stocked with Western luxuries and even hired a well-known pop singer to play at his son's lavish birthday celebration. His lucrative pachinko business, which was well-liked by the Japanese Zainichi people, is what brought him success. The Japanese government requires Solomon Mozasu, Mozasu's fourteen-year-old son, to register as a "resident alien." The family is financially successful, but their future is still uncertain (Munson 57).

The novel depicts Solomon's experience at the Yokohama Ward Office. Following Japan's recovery of sovereignty in 1952, Japanese-born Koreans were effectively stateless even if they had never visited their "home" nation and spoke no Korean (a 1951 survey revealed that 63 percent of Korean–Japanese were born in Japan). They were considered “foreigners living in Japan” (Munson 57). In the office, Solomon finds proud staff members who argue mockingly that he is an "alien" in the nation of his birth. “Fingerprints and registration cards are vitally important” for foreign citizens. Accordingly, his father states: “this is something Solomon must understand. We can be deported. We have no motherland” (Lee 382).

2.3 Historical Accuracy in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*

Pachinko is a delicate example of "historiographic metafiction" in which there is a close interaction between fact and fiction. *Pachinko* is a fictional work that is grounded on real historical events that are portrayed without any modification. To make sure that the novel accurately depicts the historical events of the time period, Lee conducted a deep research on the history of Korean-Japanese relations and the experiences of "Zainichi" in Japan in order to create a detailed and immersive world for her characters. The novel, for instance, accurately describes the difficulties the Korean community in Japan faced during the second World War and its aftermath as well as the prejudice and discrimination Koreans encountered in Japan throughout the 20th century.

The novel authentically reflects the social, political, and cultural context of its time period. It faithfully captures the periods' appropriate clothing, mannerisms, and vocabulary. This focus on the details contributes to the feeling of historical authenticity. While the historical setting is accurately portrayed, the people and events in the work are fictionalized. The opinions and experiences of the characters are still the result of the author's imagination. *Pachinko's* rich plot is a mixture of both fictitious and historical elements. The novel helps readers understand these historical events through the perspectives of its fictional characters. Despite the author's artistic freedom with characters and events, she depicts historical facts in a way that is both respectful of history and illuminating for larger social and cultural dimensions.

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter examines *Pachinko's* fictionalization of historical facts and events as a historical novel. The New Historicist approach and "Historiographic Metafiction" are used to analyse how history is depicted in the novel's fictional story demonstrate the

intersection of personal and public histories. Accordingly, *Pachinko* covers significant historical eras such as colonial Korea, World War II, and the Allied occupation of Japan, the Korean War, and Japan's period of the "bubble economy." The novel depicts history as an interaction between historicity and textuality, and reveals startling facts about Korean society and "Zainichi" individual’s experiences from 1910 to 1989 residing in Japan as forever foreigners.

Chapter Three: The Historicization of Fiction in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*: Facets and Motives

Introduction

Lee's *Pachinko* shows us to what extent Japan and Korea's histories are intertwined. It has thrown light on the themes of colonialism, Korean Diaspora, ethnicity, discrimination and political unrest. Lee's analysis of these subjects shows that history and fiction are inseparable in the historical novel. It reveals the multiplicity of the text which makes it open to diverse interpretations. The novel emphasizes that knowing the past enables us to understand the present, particularly the issues of colonialism and the unending struggle of the ethnic minorities and marginalized people. Thus, this chapter explores the multi-facets of the historicization of fiction in *Pachinko* and the motives behind it. Also, it highlights *Pachinko's* blend of public and personal histories underscoring the new historicist approach and "Historiographic Metafiction."

3.1 The Motives behind the Hisroticization of Fiction in *Pachinko*

Historicising fiction is the act of situating a work of fiction within a specific historical context, using historical events, figures, and places to create a sense of authenticity and realism. This needs substantial research into the time period in question, culture, and social standards, as well as rigorous attention to historical accuracy and detail. Historicising fiction provides readers with a fresh perspective on historical events and individuals, allowing them to experience the past in a vivid and fascinating manner. Also, it can shed light on the social, cultural, and political forces that affect historical events, as well as offer a critique of prevalent narratives and perspectives of the time.

Situating *Pachinko* in this particular historical context serves multiple purposes in the novel. History offers a historical context for the novel's characters and events. From the 1910s to the 1980s, the novel chronicles the experiences of Korean immigrants living in Japan, and historical events such as Japanese colonialism of Korea, World War II, and the Korean War which have a profound impact on the protagonists' lives. The novel gives a rich and vivid portrayal of the time period and cultural background in which the story takes place by combining historical events with fictional characters and plot details.

Moreover, the novel's use of history serves to challenge standard historical narratives and perspectives. The novel focuses on the experiences of Korean immigrants in Japan, a community which is frequently overlooked in standard historical accounts. The novel presents an alternative viewpoint on Japan and Korea's history by stressing the experiences of these characters and investigating the impact of historical events on their lives. Furthermore, history aids in the exploration of universal themes and challenges that transcend time and space, such as identity, family, and love. The novel challenges readers to analyse how these concerns have played out throughout history and how they continue to effect individuals and society now by grounding them in a historical framework.

Lee opted to write about Koreans in Japan because she was convinced that their stories, despite the fact that so much of their lives had been ruined, should be shared in some way. She did a lot of research on the Korean Japanese community. In Japan, she met dozens of Koreans and learned so much about their experiences and struggles. Lee interviewed a variety of people concerning Koreans in Japan: international finance, the yakuza, colonial Christianity's history, police work, immigration, Kabukicho, pokers, Osaka, Tokyo real estate deals, Wall Street leadership, mizu shobai, and, of course, the pachinko industry. As a history student and an immigrant as a result of the invasions and breakup of the once-unified nation,

she is fascinated by the Korean diaspora. The interesting experiences of individuals who attempted to overcome historical calamities motivated her to write this story (543).

Modern Korean is influenced by the legacy of Japanese occupation, World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, as well as Confucianism, Buddhism, Communism, and Christianity. Her book covers all of these themes in order to study and better understand how regular people deal with these occurrences and challenges. She asserts: “These wars and ideas loom large in our imagination, but on a daily basis, such events and beliefs are illustrated concretely from moment to moment through that process of gathering oral histories, I felt compelled to discard my earlier draft” (Lee 545).

As historians frequently lack original evidence of so-called minor historical characters, Lee feels that history frequently fails to portray all people. As a result, women, who left so few primary documents in almost all cultures and civilizations, have become historical footnotes. The same holds true for poor and middle-class men of all races and cultures, despite the fact that their lives were ruthlessly sacrificed in war and labour because, like them, they did not leave a sufficient written record of their life. She uses an omniscient point of view in her novel, which allows her to disclose the minds of all characters (546).

3.2 The Multi-facets of the Historicization of Fiction in *Pachinko*

3.2.1 Reflecting Japan and Korea’s Intertwined Histories

Pachinko teaches us about the extent to which Japan and Korea's histories are intertwined. Indeed, there were numerous parallels between the civilizations of the southern Korean peninsula and the southern Japanese islands throughout the centuries preceding the Common Era. In the centuries that followed, waves of immigrants arrived, bringing with them skills like writing, construction, and metallurgy, as well as ideologies like Buddhist and Confucian systems of governance and education. After Japan became a unified state, the

focus switched to China, the ancient Asian world's center of civilization and technology**.** Relations with Korea became hostile in the medieval and early pre-modern eras, first from frequent assaults by “Japanese pirates” (actually composed of various ethnicities) and later from a failed invasion force ordered by the hegemon Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the late sixteenth century (Munson 54).

In *Pachinko,* the intertwined history of Japan and Korea is a central theme. The novel explores the complex relationships and tensions between the two countries, as well as the social and cultural forces that shaped these relationships. One of the key historical events that are central to the novel is the Japanese colonization of Korea in the early 20th century: “In 1910, when Hoonie was twenty-seven years old, Japan annexed Korea. The fisherman and his wife, thrifty and hardy peasants, refused to be distracted by the country’s incompetent aristocrats and corrupt rulers, who had lost their nation to thieves” (Lee 11).

The novel depicts the discrimination and oppression faced by Koreans both in Japan and Korea during this time, as well as the struggles of Korean independence activists. Baek Isak’s brother samoel is one of the independence movement activists along with his teachers. In this regard, Isak states: “my teachers at the seminary in Pyongyang fought for independence. My oldest brother died in 1919.” The novel also explores the experiences of Korean immigrants in Japan, and the challenges they faced in trying to build lives and communities in a country that did not fully accept them (Lee 63).

The novel also delves into the impact of World War II on Japan and Korea, and the ways in which this conflict further complicated the relationship between the two countries. The novel explores the experiences of Koreans conscripted to fight for Japan during the war, as well as the devastation wrought by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

> The war did end, faster than he had predicted, but even he could not have imagined the final bombs […] The American bombs had burned down the cinemas, department stores, and their beloved confectioneries […] The Japanese have suffered, too. Nagasaki? Hiroshima? And in America, the Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps, but the German Americans weren't. How do you explain that? (Lee 202, 211, 454)

Korea and Japan have had a turbulent history, but no decade in bilateral relations has arguably caused more horrors than the twentieth century. It took two decades for the two countries to establish diplomatic relations after Japan's four-decade colonial control of Korea. The memory of colonization has impacted later interactions significantly. From similar cultural values to shared economic interests and a commitment to contain North Korea's threat, Japan and South Korea have a lot in common. Both countries are democratic and free. Both have seen significant economic growth over the last several decades. And both have substantial political and security ties to the United States. Nonetheless, despite these strong ties, major difficulties frequently obstruct the two countries' bilateral relationship (Hundt and Bleiker 61, 62).

3.2.2 The Japanese Colonial Political Propaganda

The introduction and development of new media for political propaganda had a significant impact on the Japanese occupation of its colonies. The Japanese military government paid close attention to how to "grasp people's minds" and "promote and tame them" in order to carry out their plans smoothly in occupied territories. They saw mobilizing the entire population and completely changing people's mentalities as critical to their military effort. They moulded their propaganda to indoctrinate the population so that they could become dependable participants in the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, believing

that people had to be totally shaped into a Japanese pattern of conduct and thinking (Kurasawa 59). In the novel, Yoseb is exposed to this kind of propaganda through reading his daily newspapers.

> Yoseb sat down on a floor cushion in the front room and opened up one of his many newspapers. Printed columns of words about the war floated in front of his eyes: Japan would save China by bringing technological advancements to a rural economy; Japan would end poverty in Asia and make it prosper; Japan would protect Asia from the pernicious hands of Western imperialism; and only Germany, Japan's true and fearless ally, was fighting the evils of the West. Yoseb didn't believe any of it, but propaganda was inescapable. Each day, Yoseb read three or four papers to glean some truth from the gaps and overlaps. Tonight, all the papers repeated virtually the same things; the censors must've been working especially hard the night before. (Lee 150)

Most of the time, it was impossible or extremely difficult for an ordinary citizen to discover the truth. Newspapers in Japan were heavily censored. Newspapers, pamphlets, books, posters, pictures, broadcasts and speeches were all used to carry out their propaganda programs. The Japanese saw the media as the most efficient tool for influencing the illiterate rural people who made up the majority of the population (Kurasawa 59).

3.2.3 Representation of National Identity through *Pachinko*

Representations of the past and rewritings of history play an important role in building and spreading a sense of national identity and belonging. Writing historical novels is a way of reflecting on current situations and presenting the feeling of existence of a particular period. The historical novel has long served as an expression of national character and self-definition. It enables us to investigate how nations, and thus national identity, are produced (Farahmandfar and Abdollahi 125).

As a result, history and nation have a reciprocal relationship. On the one hand, history discloses national identity and its specific qualities and identifications in various epochs; on the other hand, the nation owns its survival and continuation to history in order to remember and protect the sense of belonging and nationhood. Historical novels can help bring to light characteristics and qualities that all members of a society share (for example, language, religion, myths, custom, and ideals). These aspects are internalized by people of a culture who are typically unaware of them (Farahmandfar and Abdollahi 125).

The nation is a lived experience, and the historical novel is an accurate depiction of such a rich experience. The nation is a form of identification; the formation of the nation as narration in historical novels offers the writers with such a rich cultural store from which to take their material (Farahmandfar and Abdollahi 125).

The ultimate theme of *Pachinko* is not grief and pain, but the hope that sprouts despite adversity, and the positive vision of history that the new generation must adopt. Previous zainichi generations endured significant socio-political and economic-cultural discrimination by the Japanese (Chung and Seok 429-430). In due course, Lee states: “Sadly, there is a long and troubled history of legal and social discrimination against the Koreans in Japan and those who have partial ethnic Korean backgrounds. There are some who never disclose their Korean heritage, although their ethnic identity may be traced to their identification papers” (464).

However, there is a concealed notion that the next generation's history must not be a failure, but rather constructive. In other words, from 1910 to 1989, Zainichi did not live a vigorous life as a result of institutional exploitation and cultural disrespect of Japanese society (qtd. in Chung and Seok 430). *Pachinko* refuses to exclude many common Zainichi experiences from significant societal debates since their lives are too frequently disregarded (Chung and Seok 430).

Pachinko historicizes and converts their lives into the centre of societal conversation. Lee compares her own experiences as a Korean American immigrant to those of Zainichi and interprets these events through the lenses of the disciplines of history and literature. She guides the reader through *Pachinko* by maintaining the dialectical tension between the author's interest in literature and the exact and objective narratives of a historian. Lee's ultimate goal is to demonstrate respect and affection to Zainichi, who has shown remarkable promise despite their tragic history. There is also a strong request that the past mistakes of history should be avoided for Zainichi, whose future generation must live with the Japanese in harmony. This appeal to action is addressed not only to Koreans and Japanese, but also to the world community, which must correct past mistakes (Chung and Seok 430).

The Korean people have suffered greatly in the last century as a result of being cut off from the outside world for hundreds of years, with the exception of their exclusive relationship with China. This link and balance, founded on Korean reverence for China as the apex of culture and power, came to an abrupt end with the military invasion of foreign powers against whom China had no idea how to defend itself. This must have resulted in a significant material and symbolic imbalance in Korean society. After experiencing comparable situations themselves years ago, the Japanese entered the picture at that point Decades of colonization and impositions broke the Korean people's determination once more. It is extremely difficult to keep one's identity and sense of belonging when one's own name is denied (Del valle 63).

> Most Koreans in Japan had at least three names. Mozasu went by Mozasu Boku, the Japanization of Moses Baek, and rarely used his Japanese surname, Bando, the tsumei listed on his school documents and residency papers. With a first name from a Western religion, an obvious Korean surname, and his ghetto address, everyone knew what he was there was no point in denying it. (Lee 237)

When the emancipation arrived, they found themselves adrift once more, resulting in a new conflict, this time between the same split people. Years of dictatorship and hunger followed, until they managed to transform from a rural civilization to one of the most technologically advanced on the globe in less than 50 years, with external assistance and significant internal sacrifice (Del valle 63). Lee states:

> [A]fter the peninsula was divided, the Koreans in Japan ended up choosing sides, often more than once, affecting their residency status. It was still hard for a Korean to become a Japanese citizen, and there were many who considered such a thing shameful for a Korean to try to become a citizen of its former oppressor. (422)

All political groups are established in some manner by memory issues, most notably how previous traumas are utilized to construct a sense of shared purpose and identity. This process of identity construction is both unavoidable and troublesome. However, the problems at stake in Southeast Asia are extremely critical and delicate (Hundt and Bleiker 62). In the novel, Kazu, Solomon's boss, a Japanese national who was educated in California; he discusses the issue of identity from the Japanese perspective:

> Japan is not fucked because it lost the war or did bad things. Japan is fucked because there is no more war, and in peacetime everyone actually wants to be mediocre and is terrified of being different. The other thing is that the elite Japanese want to be English and white. That's pathetic, delusional, and merits another discussion entirely. (429)

Both Japan and South Korea have built their national identities around a certain perspective of the past. And, in many cases, these understandings are diametrically opposed, resulting in ongoing political friction. The consequences of such tensions could be significant, because a close relationship between Japan and South Korea may be required to address a variety of future security challenges in the region, such as dealing with an unstable

North Korea or finding ways to mediate a potential clash between the US and an increasingly powerful China (Hundt and Bleiker 62).

3.2.4 Memory as a Dialogue with History

Pachinko uses history in order to investigate historical memory and how it impacts the characters' experiences. In the novel, we notice how historical events of the time, such as Japan's annexation of Korea, World War II, and discrimination against Koreans in Japan, affect the lives of the characters. The novel depicts how these historical events continue to shape the present, as well as how they influence the identities and experiences of the Korean-Japanese characters.

Sunja's father, Hoonie, for example, recalls the Japanese conquerors' terrible treatment of Koreans, and his recollections of the past inspire his determination to resist and combat Japanese oppression. Similarly, Sunja's kid, Noa, struggles with his identity as a mixed-race person and the hostility he suffers from both Koreans and Japanese. These encounters are rooted in the two groups' historical tensions and disputes.

Sunja's journey, in particular, is nostalgic yet melancholic, as it serves as a reminder of the wartime and post-war memories of first-generation Koreans and beyond. The subtext of these memories compels Koreans to consider what they have actually experienced throughout history and how it impacts the contemporary Zainichi Korean generation. The story also emphasizes the significance of conserving and transmitting these historical memories to future generations (Fatahi). Despite being born and raised in Japan, Sunja and her family continue to honour and remember their Korean ancestry, and this connection to their cultural roots gives them a feeling of identity and belonging (Mali 9-10).

Sunja, being a diasporic character, is regularly troubled by memories of her homeland and mother. Sunja wants to return to her native Korea out of a sense of belonging. So Sunja

inquires of Kim about the current state of affairs in Busan. For the diasporic community, memory is extremely essential. Diasporic people always carry their home with them in their memories, making plans to return to the land and searching for prior identities that the homeland provides. It signifies that a person can be away from his or her hometown but not from his or her mind. Sunja, the main character, fantasizes about her country and mother and want to return to Busan (Mali 12).

The significance of history in *Pachinko* resides in the narrative's power of attraction and reaching the audience, which is reinforced by testimonials of communal and familial memory. Memory contributes to identity formation, and this is reflected in the stories we tell and are told about the past. Therein lays the sense of identification that the author's testimonies provide as a source of inspiration for her story: they reflect thousands of similar stories (Del valle 64).

The memories and experiences of the Korean people's suffering as their country was devastated by multiple conflicts, of discrimination and humiliation, of death, drew them together in the same story. Aside from that, the families all had a traumatic past, to varying degrees. Those stories of adversity, sacrifice, and difficulty were passed down through centuries with one objective in mind: to broaden those relationships beyond families and unite a people by transforming misery into brighter future. In addition, the key source of tension between the two countries is the memory of Japan’s colonial occupation of Korea during the first half of the twentieth century. More than sixty years have passed, but the wounds of that period are still fresh enough to generate significant political obstacles (Del valle 63).

3.2.5 Promoting Reconciliation and Seeking Recognition

The anguish of historical events, such as Japan's colonial era, is deeply etched in societal consciousness. However, a reconciliation method that includes dialogue about tolerance with the different "other" is likely to help the two countries resolve their disputes in a nonviolent and courteous manner. If Japan and South Korea stick to this strategy, their historically antagonistic political relations will almost probably improve (Hundt and Bleiker 89).

This idea is embedded in the novel through some Japanese characters and their changing attitudes towards Koreans. Haruki, Mozasu's friend says regarding discrimination against Koreans: "That sort of thing was from long ago. Things are better now. We know many kind-hearted Japanese." In due course, Etsuko, Mozasu's girlfriend declares "Koreans do lots of good for this country, they do the difficult jobs Japanese don't want to do; they pay taxes, obey laws, raise good families, and create jobs" (Lee 383).

In the third book, Solomon keeps defending the Japanese whenever the issues of acknowledging the war crimes or racism are brought up. Solomon believes that there are many benevolent Japanese now including his father's girlfriend Etsuko: "Etsuko was the obvious example of a Japanese person who was kind-hearted and ethnically unbiased." Also, Solomon's boss Kazu has been far kinder to him than most Koreans in Japan who has occasionally eyed him with suspicion as a wealthy man's son or as competition at school. He states: "Yes, some Japanese thought Koreans were scum, but some Koreans were scum, he told Phoebe. Some Japanese were scum, too. There was no need to keep rehashing the past; he hoped Phoebe would get over it eventually" (Lee 422-424).

Fortunately, in the twenty-first century, Japan's prejudice and hostility have gradually faded. In addition, the Japanese government is enacting more flexible laws for fingerprinting and alien registration for foreigners. However, it is also true that many Japanese continue to

discriminate towards Koreans. Both the Japanese and Koreans must all work together to prevent the problems revealed in *Pachinko* from reoccurring in history. They must be honest about their history, and reforms must be implemented as a result of that honesty (Chung and Seok 436).

Lee wrote this work in order to address the systemic prejudice against Zainichi in the twentieth century and ensure that it does not happen again. She contends that the Japanese society's structural and internalized oppression, which created this atmosphere, must be examined. At the root of this prejudice is a historical misconception that Koreans are inferior and Japanese are superior. It conforms to the logic that whites are superior to blacks (qtd. in Chung and Seok 435). However, this viewpoint is completely incorrect. Except for a few Japanese, no one believes that Koreans are inferior to any other people on the planet (Chung and Seok 435).

Moreover, the novel referred to the issue of “Comfort Women” where the Japanese army took the ladies by force and treated them as sex slaves back then. Lee gave voice to the many victims trampled on by Japan's merciless rule through the characters of Bokhee and Dokhee. Those miserable servant girls at the Yeongdo boardinghouse are duped into working as "sex slaves" (233). This shows the urgent need for the recognition of such past mistakes and promoting reconciliation between the two countries.

What appears to be required is a new code, a distinct language of narrativization that gives voice to those who have been silenced by official versions of the past (Kim and Lee 77). According to *Pachinko,* honest repentance and action which are the only ways to solve problems is far more persuasive. Reconciliation between individuals and nations necessitates thorough regret as well as proper actions (Chung and Seok 437).

Restoring the feeling of "historical justice" that has been lost as a result of the official interpretation of Japanese imperialism is one of the book's driving ideas. Since the late

nineteenth-century "Japonisme" heyday in the world to its rapid rise as an economic powerhouse in the 1970s and 1980s, Japan established itself in the Western imaginary as a respected and outstanding East Asian country, an idealized image that allowed it to obscure the negative aspects of its colonial legacy in addition to the tragic legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Kim and Lee 77).

“History,” argues E. H. Carr, “is an unending dialogue between the present and the past” (qtd. in Kim and Lee 78). If this brief definition of history as an ongoing interactive process suggests the potential for eventually achieving a certain pure entity called "history," in the case of Korea's colonial past, there are revisionists and fake news propagators on both sides of the Korea/Japan strait who still deny the existence of sex slaves and forced wartime labour (Kim and Lee 78).

Japan has apologized for some of its acts. The government apologized and compensated victims and the families of those forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during colonial control in 1993 and 2015. Even ignoring the refusal to accept responsibility for atrocities for nearly 50 years, or the gravity of the pain inflicted on victims and their families, attempts by ruling Liberal Democratic Party politicians to withdraw this apology or engage in denials, as well as the downplay or absence of references to these acts in Japanese textbooks, ensure tensions remain high. In addition to the modern-day hate groups like Zaitokukai, who attempt to attack and deprive the rights of Koreans living in Japan (Haddick).

In the novel, Solomon and Phoebe discuss how Koreans found it hard to be citizens of their former oppressor: “Solomon found it peculiar that Phoebe got so angry about the history of Koreans in Japan. After three months of living in Tokyo and reading a few history books, she’d concluded that the Japanese would never change. The government still refuses

to acknowledge its war crimes!" Phoebe views the Japanese as criminals and aggressive as they associate negative stereotypical traits with Koreans (Lee 422).

Koreans and their offspring who resided in Japan prior to the end of colonial authority are still regarded as "Special Permanent Residents," not citizens. Those who moved and chose to remain after the war were effectively made stateless, given the status of Zainichi Korean that othered them within Japanese society, whether through marriage, conscription, or people leaving in search of economic opportunities no longer available in an increasingly impoverished colonized Korea while Japan's economy prospered (Haddick).

There are numerous recommendations for fostering a culture of reconciliation between Japan and Korea. First, the importance of not viewing reconciliation as an attempt to restore some genuine, pre-conflict concord between the countries, as is usually done. Instead, both countries should emphasize the intrinsically political and continuing process of reconciliation. Both countries must be cognizant of the complex nature of confronting a violent colonial past (Hundt and Bleiker 63).

There is a necessity of discourse, particularly the need to exchange ideas about how to depict a shared understanding of history. While significant progress has been made in this area, most notably with the co-production of a history textbook in 2005, there is a necessity to acknowledge that differences in how the past is depicted and interpreted will always exist. Rather than viewing historical understanding gaps as an unavoidable cause of conflict, they could be seen as part of an on-going, and possibly beneficial, process of negotiation between two respected adjacent governments (Hundt and Bleiker 63,64).

After publishing her novel, Lee hoped that a frank glance at Japan's still-unresolved history by an American outsider would not deter publishers: "I do have love for Japan. At the same time, I have a complex relationship with Japan because I'm Korean," she said, "But I

think it shows the strength of a country when you can talk about the past transparently" (qtd. in Soble).

The novel examines themes of race, immigration, and discrimination; indeed, this is a subject that Lee focuses on in a variety of ways throughout the novel. While the Korean experience is central to the story, we are reminded in a variety of ways that discrimination exists in Japan, a country that has traditionally favoured a narrative of cultural and ethnic homogeneity, despite the presence of a population that calls the notion of a singular Japanese people and culture into question (Munson 57).

Pachinko is a story with far more to say than simply recounting colonial pain or seeking sympathy for hardship. On the contrary, there's a defiance that defines the book. Lee has emphasized the similarities in anti-Korean sentiment faced by Koreans in Japan and in America, having initially been inspired to write of *Pachinko* after learning the history behind the novel at Yale. Rather than assuming that life will be better elsewhere, the story's characters hold fast to their unique identities as Koreans living in Japan (Lee 545).

In the novel, Sunja decides to continue living in Japan despite becoming increasingly alone as she ages and after having a chat with Geum-ja, Solomon decides not to stay in the US. Sunja later decides to visit Korea. Lee highlights in a remark provided for Newsweek Japan's editorial: "Japanese people are not responsible for the past. All we can do is understand it and live truthfully in the present" (qtd. in Haddick). The loop of discrimination that exists today can only be changed through listening and understanding, and understanding is a critical step in that process (Haddick).

Pachinko examines the complexity of Japanese-Korean historical relationship and the consequences of that relationship on individuals and families. It does indirectly advocate for reconciliation between the two countries. The characters are influenced by historical events that have shaped Japan-Korea relations. These incidents aggravate underlying cultural and

political conflicts between the two countries, as well as contribute to the prejudice and marginalization of Koreans living in Japan.

In due course, the novel contains moments of connection and empathy between Japanese and Korean characters. Some of the Japanese characters in the novel express pity and understanding for the Koreans who live in Japan; likewise, some of the Korean characters build close ties with Japanese people. For example, Mozasu is friendly with both the Japanese people while remaining true to himself. Unlike others, he is also able to establish love and friendship with certain Japanese classmates. He has relationships with Japanese girls and his lifetime best friend is a Japanese guy whom Mozasu saved from bullying during their school years.

These touching moments show the possibility of peace and understanding between the two nations. *Pachinko* highlights the possibility of empathy and understanding among people from different cultural backgrounds. Readers are encouraged to contemplate the impact of historical events on individual lives and relationships, as well as the possibility of healing and reconciliation.

3.2.6 Historicizing Fiction for a Shared Human Experience

Lee's family was a big motivation for her to write *Pachinko*; her father was sixteen when he lost his family in the Korean War. The war and her experience as a war refugee were not discussed at the time, but they had an impact on her childhood. She maintains: “I think this kind of trauma is an unspoken legacy for many first- and second generation immigrants in the United States and elsewhere. Many of my friends and their families have been directly affected by the Holocaust, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the suffering inflicted by military dictatorships in the Americas and in African nations”. Many ordinary individuals around the world defy the

humiliations of everyday life and history with grace and conviction, caring for their families and communities while pursuing their individual aspirations. As an author, Lee couldn't help but be intrigued by the stories of those whose history so casually dismisses to reflect the global human experience (Lee 547).

The important mission of educating Korea, Japan, and even the entire globe about Zainichi is being carried out through Lee's *Pachinko*. As a historian, journalist, and professor of English literature from the United States, the author has impartially illuminated the people and events she chose to narrate in English, a language that is spoken throughout the world, without favoring either Korea or Japan. Her writing is incredibly rational, amusing, and convincing. Politically significant individuals have already read *Pachinko,* including former US President Obama and former US Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy. The book is anticipated to become widely read and provide readers the knowledge that they are not alone in the world. They are a part of a larger universe where other people have faced fears, surmounted challenges, and triumphed over challenges (Chung and Seok 437).

People throughout the world have only had a superficial understanding of the lives of Zainichi up until now, but this story depicts the numerous sufferings and sorrows of Koreans in a more sobering manner. We have a lot of knowledge about the numerous Korean concerns in Japan thanks to this historical literature, which could aid to improve their status (Chung and Seok 437). *Pachinko,* in some ways, serves as a microcosm of the history of the Korean diaspora in Japan, which is represented in the struggles the Baek family has faced over the years as they have tried to make a good life for themselves abroad. The book (re)imagines what a "homeland" is and how Korean immigrants establish themselves in their new nation (Tablizo 108).

The very historicity of our human experience is exposed through historical fiction, while the reader discovers how history becomes imprinted in human lives, impacting our

unique fates, through imaginative play with historical events and the guiding forces of a period (Tlustý 550).

Historical fiction reveals specific moral and mental changes. It examines familiar human characters within a specific set of circumstances, allowing us to relive the social and personal motivations that prompted people to think, feel, and act as they did throughout history. Historical fiction raises awareness of the fact that historical events have an impact on the present. Historical fiction allows the reader to enter the thoughts of a member of a previous culture, eliciting empathy and a living connection between then and now (Tod).

We can think about social change while reading historical fiction. We observe change in retrospect, which permits the individual to reflect on their current situation. Similarly, historical fiction can chart the course of religious and political evolution. Historical fiction gave readers the creative freedom to build alternative, more inclusive views of history. It can report from historically marginalized locations and give a dissident or dissenting account of the past. Historical fiction allows us to comprehend human behaviour at its most extreme. The work has the potential to explore various ways of confronting, understanding, and living with the horrific events of the past (Tod).

3.3 The Intersection of Personal and National Histories

The novel is a historical novel in which personal history intersects with public history, which is the central point of New Historicism. *Pachinko* combines personal and public histories; that is, the historical context is blended with the characters' personal and fictional history. By blending the fabricated, imagined, and idealized personal past with the historical realities and facts, the characters' memories take precedence over both records and public history. In particular, the characters' private histories reshape public history (Serdaroğlu 790).

For Montrose, history cannot be a portal to the true past unless it contains signs of complicated social processes associated with the processing of these writings and materials which are not modified by people who write them. The meaning of a text is not fixed, even when it is historically specific, and different interpretations can be found in every reading of the same text. As a result, Montrose believes that historians have histories; there is no one history that is the same for everyone and every period, but there are subjective and private histories. Lee's recreation of the past based on the experiences of her characters reaffirms the denaturalization and the subjectivity of history (qtd. in Serdaroğlu 790-791).

Hutcheon draws attention to the blurred relationship between history and fiction, as well as the interaction between public reality and personal history, as each impacts the other, "[B]oth history and fiction are discourses; human constructs, signifying systems and both derive their major claim to truth from that identity" (qtd. in Serdaroğlu 791). Thus, Lee employs public history in her portrayal of her characters in the novel, and she incorporates Sunja and her family's personal past into public history (Serdaroğlu 791).

The annexation of Korea by Japan, World War II, and the Korean Diaspora are also shown from the perspective of a fictionalized person. This is also crucial for the depiction of history, as Lee allows her protagonists to depict their personal histories from multiple perspectives. As a result, the novel's depicts history as private (Sunja's family's experience with war, immigration, and living as perpetual foreigners in Japan) and public (colonial Korea, World War II, the Allied occupation of Japan and the Korean War). Lee investigates individual and public history as both a historian and a novelist. The fabricated universe in the novel, along with the fictionalized characters and plot, created a textualized version of Japan and Korea's (public) history (Serdaroğlu 791).

Lee establishes a foundation on which she can clearly convey the consequences of public history on the lives of individuals through her fictional characters, which is also the

reason for the transitions. What people remember and say about the past is more important than what actually happened. That is why she considers current awareness and recollection of the past to be more vital (Serdaroğlu 791).

Although the personal and public histories are intertwined in the novel, what matters the most is Sunja's family and their struggle in the midst of the actual public history of Korea and Japan's shared histories which represents the effect of history the characters. In other words, personal history is influenced by public history, and public history is influenced and shaped by personal history (Serdaroğlu 791).

Louise Montrose maintains in his “Professing the Renaissance,” that: “our analysis and our understandings necessarily proceed from our own historically, socially and institutionally shaped vantage points; that the histories we reconstruct are the textual constructs of critics who are, ourselves, historical subjects” (qtd. in Serdaroğlu 791).According to Montrose, the past is always governed by contemporary consciousness, and it is impossible to distinguish between diverse histories (private, public, and local histories), which are already intertwined. In due course, Montrose emphasizes the relationship between the text and context by referring to the "historicity of texts" and "textuality of history," and by mentioning multiple histories, he asserts that there are no boundaries between text(uality) and context(uality) (Serdaroğlu 791-792).

Montrose emphasizes diverse interpretations of history rather than one single view. As a result, there is a tight line in the novel between public history and personal history, as well as memory and history (Serdaroğlu 792). In *Pachinko* personal stories intersect with national histories. Sunja's experiences reflect the impact of Japan's colonization of Korea (which began in 1910), as do her brother-in-law's horrible injuries from the bombing of Nagasaki in 1945, and so on until 1989. In the novel, history is completely absorbed into characters and story, which is not impossible for a work covering nearly a century of history (Akbar).

Lee states: “[a]lthough the history of kings and rulers is unequivocally fascinating; I think we are also hungry for the narrative of ordinary people, who lack connections and material resources” (qtd. in Tablizo 108). *Pachinko* serves as a potent counter-narrative to a historiography that marginalizes non-Japanese personal stories and aids in giving voice to Koreans in Japan. It suggests a solution to the problems the Zainichi are facing. Contrary to them, it includes the existential struggles of every generation as depicted by the Baek family. *Pachinko* develops an intergenerational historical narrative, giving a more comprehensive account of the Zainichi experiences. Additionally, because the work is released internationally and written in English, readers from other countries can more easily understand the Zainichi's situation (Tablizo 108).

Sunja’s family face homelessness, poverty, disease, suicide, unexpected death, and incarceration without trial, among other hardships. Lee's examination of the immigrant experience exposes several types of trauma, including that passed down through the generations from Sunja to her sons, Noa and Mozasu, and grandson, Solomon (Akbar). In the novel, Sunja tells her son Noa that: “Noa, I’m so sorry. Your father brought us to Japan, and then, you know, we couldn’t leave because of the war here and then the war there. There was no life for us back home, and now it’s too late, even for me” (Lee 372).

While Mozasu defies the expectation that he is a pliant, submissive "good Korean," Noa hides behind a carefully constructed facade of "Japaneseness" to survive in his difficult environment. Meanwhile, Solomon is shielded from anti-Korean prejudice due to his father's riches and an American education, but despite his advantages, he must still confront issues of identity (Akbar).

Lee's picture of an immigrant who starts from nothing yet succeeds despite all odds is both specific and universal. Sunja looks back on her life and finds it difficult to connect her early poverty to her eventual affluence. *Pachinko* covers many different people's lives and

expertly brings its imaginative characters to life. The plot is occasionally jolted by overly clever twists, such as Sunja's lover's reappearance, which is announced on the same page as her husband's death. The most significant note is Lee's handling of Noa, who is discarded in an abrupt death. Lee's appears to be demonstrating how war and migration may split a family far beyond a single generation (Akbar).

Lee sheds light on these ordinary Koreans by rendering their daily lives into significant ‘events’ and considering them as unforgettable ‘history.’ Despite the numerous catastrophes, passion and love continue to thrive in *Pachinko*, and substitute parents can be found in aunts, uncles, and grandparents. The final artwork depicts Sunja as an elderly woman. Lee appears to be indicating that she is standing over her husband's grave, thinking on her losses but still standing, like a genuine survivor (Akbar).

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter explores the multi-facets of historicizing fiction in *Pachinko* and the motives behind it. It also emphasizes *Pachinko's* combination of public and personal histories, emphasizing the new historicist approach and "Historiographic Metafiction." Lee's *Pachinko* demonstrates how closely Japan and Korea's histories are connected. It has shed on memory, Korean national identity building and the efforts of reconciliation between the two countries. The novel reflects the shared human experience and brings us new paths for the examination of the past and the present, and how the past may help us comprehend the present, particularly in the context of colonialism and the unending plight of the ethnic minorities.

General Conclusion

In the light of the above detailed analysis, this dissertation attempted to study the way in which fact and fiction converge and diverge in the novel and how those historical facts are represented by the author in her fictional work. This research is structured following the New Historicist approach which emphasizes the dialogue between history and fiction. This research explored Lee's fictionalized representation of crucial periods in the history of Korea and Japan.

Lee's *Pachinko* takes place in a rich era of East Asian history and the historical events in the novel are open to multiple interpretations depending on from which perspective we view them. Through the fictional people, the historical timeline, and the genuine locations, she effectively tackles these periods of history. *Pachinko* is a fictional work that covers the broader historical context, including significant historical events. It accurately depicts the cultural and social conventions of the time period.

The novel depicts the historical facts in a way that is both authentic and accurate to history. The historical facts are referred to without any modifications and they intersect with the personal experiences of the novel's fictional characters. This shows that the demarcation line between fact and fiction in *Pachinko* is blurred which makes them converge throughout the novel. Historical facts are placed within a fictional world where the historical setting is accurately portrayed whereas the opinions and experiences of the characters are still the result of the author's imagination.

Historiographic metafiction and new historicism are postmodern approaches to history that provide historically oppressed individuals a voice while emphasizing the historical context's relevance. Through the use of the postmodern technique of "Historiographic Metafiction," this study demonstrates the significance of history throughout the novel,

particularly micro histories of the excluded. It reveals how Lee sheds light on these ordinary Koreans by rendering their daily lives into significant ‘events’ and considering them as unforgettable ‘history.’

Historical and literary interpretations are meant to interact intimately, revealing how official history can intersect with the ordinary lives of fictional characters. By tracing the fortunes of his heroes, the reader gains access to official history, all of whom suffer as a result of those in power's acts. *Pachinko's* unconventional plot, which depicts history as an interaction between historicity and fiction, highlights the New Historicist perspective.

This research explored the fictionalization of historical facts in *Pachinko* using The New Historicist approach and "Historiographic Metafiction". It analysed how history is depicted in the novel, demonstrating the junction of personal and public histories, revealing astonishing facts about Korean society and "Zainichi" individuals' experiences living in Japan from 1910 to 1989. *Pachinko's* rich plot is a blend of both fictitious and historical elements. The novel helps readers understand this broader historical context through the perspectives of its fictional characters.

Moreover, this research is an attempt to investigate the multi-facets of the historicization of fiction in *Pachinko* and the motives behind it. The novel demonstrates how the histories of Japan and Korea's are closely linked. It has shed light on memory, Korean national identity, and reconciliation endeavours between the two countries. Lee’s analysis of these subjects reveals that fiction and history are complementary in the historical novel which shows the various possible meanings and leads to a variety of interpretations of the text. The novel represents the shared human experience and gives new opportunities for examining the past events.

The findings reported herein should be considered in the light of some limitations due to the lack of information on the reasons that led the author to make use of such historical

accounts as well as the limited knowledge of the field of historiography. However, this study will lead to a better understanding of the genre of the new historical novel. It will clarify the relationship between fiction and history as the genre's main components. It also will help readers gain new insights into the interconnected histories of Japan and Korea. It would also attract our attention to various historical views and certain unforeseen realities.

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