

A Critical Analysis on the Novel *Pachinko* from the Perspective of Coaching Psychology

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Abstract

The novel *Pachinko* is a form of historical work centering on Koreans who lived in Japan during a period of political and economic turmoil in the 20th century. In this work, the author Min-jin Lee proposes that individuals who play pachinko machines attempt to earn money by dedicating a substantial amount of time and energy to it, and yet they never win a large amount of money. This proposition is compared to the fate of Koreans in Japan. Similar to a Pachinko machine, where the input has already been entered, and the result is illustrated in a predetermined order, the Koreans in Japan cannot improve their 'predestined' lives regardless of how hard they try. Although this gruesome and heartbreaking story of history describes the fourth generation, the author's ultimate goal and the thesis of this novel are to break this chain of fate. To accomplish this goal, Lee sheds light upon these Koreans by transforming their daily lives into important 'events' and treating them as unforgettable 'history.' This is because only when their lives become history will people reflect upon the unfortunate events in the past and then usher in a new vision of history. In this regard, this paper will argue that the author of *Pachinko* is faithful to the role of mentor in Coaching Psychology by guiding us to be the creators of a new and improved society.

Keywords: Japanese, Korean, Mozasu, Pachinko, Solomon, Sunja, Zainichi

INTRODUCTION

Min-jin Lee, a 1.5-generation Korean-American and one of the best writers in the United States, was born in Seoul, South Korea, and immigrated to the US with her parents at the age of seven in 1976 (Kim, 2017). She studied history at the prestigious Yale University and then went on to study law at Georgetown University. After working as a lawyer for a few years, she resigned due to health problems and devoted herself to writing. She has given several lectures at Harvard University and other major universities in the world. She stayed

in Tokyo, Japan, for approximately 4 years (2007-2011) and met many Koreans in Japan (who are usually called "Zainichi") who acted as her primary sources, completing her masterpiece *Pachinko* in 2017. *Pachinko* deals with the sadness and the pain of Koreans in Japan during the 20th century, which cannot be expressed in words (Chung, 1988). However, *Pachinko's* ultimate theme is not sorrow and pain but the hope that blooms amid these adversities, and a positive view of history that the new generation must develop. Past Zainichi

generations faced enormous socio-political-economic-cultural discriminations by the Japanese, and thus, *Pachinko* says in the first sentence: “History has failed us, but no matter”(3). Yet, there is a hidden premise that the history of the next generation must not be a failure but must be fruitful. In other words, Zainichi from 1910 to 1989 did not lead a healthy life due to institutional exploitation and cultural contempt of the Japanese society (Choi, 2018). Nevertheless, Koreans rose like a phoenix from the ashes of these hardships and survived by discovering the meaning of their own existence. *Pachinko* refuses to cut off many ordinary stories of Zainichi from important social discourses because their lives are too often overlooked or pushed aside. *Pachinko* transforms their lives into the center of social discourse and historicizes them. Lee compares her own experiences as a Korean-American immigrant with those of Zainichi and interprets these phenomena within the framework of history, law, and literature which are her disciplines. She leads the reader of *Pachinko* along by maintaining the dialectical tension that results from the author's interest in literature and the accurate and objective narratives of a historian and lawyer. Lee's ultimate purpose is to care for Zainichi, who showed great potential despite their unfortunate history, with respect and love. There is also a strong plea that the contradictions of past history should not be repeated for Zainichi, whose next generation must live with a new hope. This call for action is not only directed at Koreans and Japanese but also at the global community that must correct the failures of the past. In this respect, Lee acts as if she is a mentor or a wise coaching psychologist.

Coaching Psychology is a branch of modern psychology that guides problematic individuals or groups to produce the most fruitful results. A coaching psychologist tries to find the best method to overcome an individual's or a group's crises and provides proper directions for them. The coaching psychologist emphasizes the positive elements over the negative ones and attempts to eliminate the latter with the power of positive ones (Redmark, 2018). With the help of a coaching psychologist, the more positive elements of humanity can be developed, such as healing, recovering,

and inspiring hope for the future. Could the novel *Pachinko* achieve this precious goal? *Pachinko* deals with historical events that have already happened. Japan's colonial imperialism in Korea (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953) are the events of the past. The phenomenon of the Cold War after the liberation of Korea and the industrial society until 1989 are stories that have passed. Lee is a historian and a law scholar who can interpret the past facts and provide us with details of the lives in the past. She is also a novelist who can seamlessly portray both constructive and destructive powers of each age and the various ways people responded to those powers. Therefore, although she is not a coaching psychologist in a medical sense, she functions as a mentor of Coaching Psychology as she provides wisdom for living in the present through history. This study will trace these complex elements in detail to show how richly an interdisciplinary academic discipline, closely connected to history, law, literature, and psychology, interprets the lives of Zainichi to provide a fruitful direction for their future.

SAINT BACK ISAK AND HIS FAMILY

Pachinko's story begins in Yeongdo, Busan, located in the southeast of Korea. The son of a poor fisherman, “Hoonie was born with a cleft palate and a twisted foot” (3). When Hoonie turned 27, Korea merged with Japan and was subject to colonial rule under Japanese imperialism until 1945. This 36-year period of Japanese rule was a dark period of confusion for Koreans' national pride and identity. It was very difficult for Hoonie, who was born crippled, to establish a family. It was a pity for him to live alone, so his parents introduced him to Yangjin, a healthy girl who was poor and had not received normal education. Hoonie and Yangjin had 4 children, among whom 3 died, and only the fourth girl named Sunja survived (9). Sunja is the key protagonist of *Pachinko*. Hoonie passed away early, and Sunja worked to help her mother Yangjin and managed her boardinghouse around 1932 (10). During this time, two new characters appeared. One was Back Isak, a North Korean who grew up in a wealthy family, studied theology, and became a Presbyterian pastor. The other was Koh

Hansu, a fish broker who married a Japanese woman in Japan (25). Sunja dated Hansu without knowing that he was married; she conceived his child and fell into disrepute. During that period, becoming a mother without a publically recognized husband was considered a shame according to Korean customs. Therefore, Yangjin and Sunja's concerns were very great (49). Isak was the one who resolved this concern. Isak planned to leave Korea and was on his way to Osaka upon the invitation of his second brother, Yoseb, who worked as a factory foreman in Japan. However, Isak suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis and rested at Yangjin's boardinghouse for several months (61). He married Sunja, as he believed that Sunja could be saved by marrying him and becoming her legal husband. Here, *Pachinko's* author compares Isak's marriage to 'unclean' Sunja with the *Old Testament* book of Hosea (81-84), which affirms that the prerequisite for mercy is to thoroughly recognize one's sins and seek forgiveness. If one neglects one's repentance, "[one] ruins for thousands of others. And one bad Christian hurts tens of thousands of Christians everywhere" (84). Sunja sincerely repented for her mistake and asked for the forgiveness of her sin. Afterward, Isak and Sunja formally registered their marriage. Since then, Isak had never shed light on Sunja's past until his death. After marriage, Isak lived with Sunja in his brother's house in Osaka and served as an associate pastor of the Osaka Korean Church.

Isak was arrested due to problems associated with Japanese shrine worship, although he allowed his church members to visit the shrine as a national rite in accordance with the Japanese government's policy (Jeong, 2019). However, when he and his senior pastor were imprisoned because of this matter, he suffered by choosing to be persecuted rather than become an apostate of his faith. *Pachinko's* author seems to be advocating faith in defense of Biblical truth as much as possible in relation to these matters. Isak was released near the time of his death, returning to his brother's house. He was delighted to see his wife Sunja, his first son, Noa, born in relation to Hansu, and Mozasu, born in relation to him. Noa dearly loved Isak as his father without any knowledge of his family secret and wanted

Isak to live longer. Isak died shortly after. The spiritual legacy left by Isak presented a model of how a religious person should live. Isak always attempted to take care of his neighbors in need. His faith was an example to be imitated, and his life remained in Sunja's heart to comfort her.

According to Lee, the biggest and the most fundamental issue that Koreans in Japan faced was alienation. They left Korea, their motherland, and came to Japan, but there they were treated like dogs and pigs. In fact, many of them lived in places that were "fit for only pigs" (100). Now, they neither belonged to Korea nor Japan. Neither country had shown any effort to protect and love them. So, despite the presence or absence of their faith, many Zainichi looked for a church. These religious institutions often served as a Korean immigrant community and connected them with other Koreans. As a leader of this community, the pastor played the role of counselor and healer. If he was found in violation of the worship of the Japanese Emperor, the powerful civil religion, he was put into prison, as we have seen in the case of pastor Isak. Then, the spiritual and emotional space for the Koreans would disappear. Truly, countless Zainichi had no solid place in their lives where they could put down their roots, and thus, they were forced to be wanderers in the Japanese land. Nevertheless, many of them survived. Although father Isak died, his wife Sunja and his son Mozau continued to survive by holding fast to each other in strong family love. They had no country or hometown to belong to, yet as long as they had a family, they could live without giving up hope. The life force provided by this family was the key factor in overcoming the issue of alienation that was causing that the Zainichi to suffer.

A SINNER, YET A RESPONSIBLE MAN: KO HANSU

Hansu, drawn by *Pachinko*, was a villain on the one hand and a "savior" on the other. He was a businessman who traded between Japan and Korea and later became a Yakuza leader who dominated the Japanese dark society. His father-in-law secured Hansu's status by giving his daughter to Hansu, who was an excellent businessman. Because of this, Hansu formed considerable connections

with the Japanese political and economic world and did not suffer much, unlike Zainich at the time. However, Hansu always wavered mentally. He did not consider Korea to be his motherland, which was deprived of national rights during the Japanese occupation. Still, Japan was not the country he loved either. Japan initiated the Pacific War by attacking Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on 7 December, 1941. Hansu knew that Japan was not a capable opponent of the United States. Eventually, Japan was attacked by American atomic bombs in Hiroshima on 6 August, 1945, and Nagasaki on 9 August, 1945, and was forced to surrender unconditionally to the US. In Hansu's eyes, neither Korea nor Japan was his permanent home. On 15 August, 1945, Korea was liberated from Japan but soon divided into North and South regions. South Korea became a democratic nation based on American capitalism, and North Korea became a communist state influenced by the Soviet Union and China. Hansu did not trust communism or capitalism. He did not want to be ruled by the Soviet Union and China, nor did he want to be ruled by the United States. Strictly speaking, Hansu did not have a community to which he could devote his heart and spirit. Only the Yakuza organization in Japan, which assured his survival, gave meaning to his social life.

Even at home, Hansu was not happy. He had three daughters from his Japanese wife, but he was unable to have a deep personal relationship with them. Hansu only had eyes for Sunja. Although she was a poor woman without any education, Hansu found Sunja to be utterly charming. In Korea, when Sunja became the target of harassment by Japanese male students, Hansu overpowered them with his fluent Japanese and physical strength. In Sunja's eyes, Hansu was an "angel" or a hidden "hero" from the sky who saved her. Through this event, the two quickly became close and fell in love with each other. As a result, Sunja became pregnant with Hansu's child. As mentioned earlier, the two were unable to start a family, and Sunja had to raise Hansu's child under Isak's care. After Isak's death, Sunja had to work with Yoseb's wife, Kyunghee, to make a living for the family. At first, they sold *kimchi*, a popular traditional Korean dish, at street stalls; later they were invited to work

at a popular restaurant where they worked only for a short time, and enjoyed exceptional economic security. During the Pacific War, when everyone was scattered about and had to fight for survival, the Sunja family and Kyunghee were able to live in a secluded rural village without worrying about their livelihoods. Sunja's eldest son Noa was admitted to the prestigious Waseda University English Department. At that time, there was someone who quietly solved the two big problems that Sunja was worried about: the enormous tuition fees of Waseda University and Noa's living expenses in Tokyo. It was Hansu who secretly kept watch over Sunja's daily life and resolved almost all her difficulties like a "savior." During the Korean War (1950-1953), Hansu brought Sunja's mother, Yangjin, to Japan to live with her daughter. When Noa found out that his real father was Hansu, he gave up his college education and moved to another city named Nagano and broke off his relationship with Sunja (356-357). It was Hansu who constantly tracked the house where Noa moved in and the new life of his son. In a sense, the home and shelter of Hansu's mind seemed to be the space where Sunja and Noa resided (Yim, 2019). However, Hansu had not totally secured this space. After marrying Isak, Sunja never treated Hansu as a former lover. As soon as his son Noa learned of his lineage, he ran away to hide, breaking Hansu's heart. Furthermore, the fact that Noa joined the pachinko business, which Hansu hated at heart, must have hurt Hansu even more. On top of this, Noa pretended to be Japanese, marrying a Japanese woman and raising a family. Hansu was emotionally devastated by Noa's suicide when it was revealed during Sunja's sudden visit. Hansu grew old and was diagnosed with cancer and waited for his death. For Hansu, there was nothing meaningful left in life. Despite all these problems, *Pachinko* views Hansu in a favorable light. The novel admits the mistakes he made--that is, Sunja's pregnancy, Noa's birth and death, and his dark life as a Yakuza--but at the same time, it points out the special circumstances under which Hansu was forced to do so. *Pachinko* does not presume to condemn Hansu unconditionally, mainly because Hansu was also a victim of the era.

THE WOMEN AND DEAD MEN

The story of Sunja's family in Japan is very interesting. Early in Japan, Sunja lived in the family of Yoseb, who continued to lead this family as head for a period of time even after Isak's death. When the Pacific War made it impossible to live together in Osaka, Yoseb moved to Nagasaki to get a job. The Sunja family and Yoseb's wife Kyunghee shifted to a rural village under the direction of Hansu. After a while, Sunja's mother, Yangjin, joined, forming a large family. It is important to note that the leader of this family was no longer Yoseb, but Sunja, who had more influence than either Kyunghee or her mother over the family's decision-making process. Sunja, her two children, Yangjin, and Kyunghee, lived a relatively stable life during and after the war due to their strong supporter, Hansu, who was a powerful Yakuza boss. Hansu sent his subordinate, Kim Changho, to the Sunja family to live with them and protect them. In the world of the Japanese, the Yakuza were similar to that of Japanese samurai in the past. Even Japanese people had to deal carefully with Sunja upon finding out about the relationship between Sunja and Hansu. They realized that if they humiliated her, their lives would be in danger. Suddenly Sunja became a woman with authority who could solve difficult matters easily with the help of Changho. Sunja dismissed her relationship with Hansu from her mind, however as long as Hansu was alive, she would be associated with him regardless.

Her authority as the leader of a family grew when Yoseb was crippled by the atomic bomb that fell on Nagasaki. Yoseb was no longer able to support the family, and thus, he lost the authority to interfere with the family's affairs, either big or small. Now he was merely waiting to die under the care of Kyunghee. Yangjin, too, was unable to take on the responsibility of the head of the household in Japan. She was in a position to learn new things about the Sunja family, and she was not in charge of the family's financial situation. In Korea, they had two faithful helpers—Dokhee and Bokhee (24). In Japan, there was no room to have such helpers. Naturally, most family decisions were made by Sunja with Kyunghee's advice. Yangjin helped at

Sunja's household until she became very old. She cooked, did laundry, and worked hard to clean Sunja's house. She loved her grandchildren, Noa and Mozasu, and she enjoyed spending time with them. However, one day in 1979, she thought that she did not receive enough care and love at Sunja's Osaka home. Yangjin felt that Sunja was less interested in her because her daughter was more involved in the matters of Noa and Mozasu (415). Whenever Yangjin thought of this, she experienced a feeling of deep isolation. When this feeling emerged, she was comforted by thinking of her deceased husband, Hoonie, who devoted much time to her, or the sermons she heard in her church on Sundays (411). In this way, it cannot be denied that many Korean immigrant churches in Japan played a very valuable role in the lives of Koreans who were suffering both spiritually and emotionally. They did this by sharing emotional burdens and displaying communal concern with the Koreans, as we have seen earlier (Chung, 2010).

Sunja's life also had countless pains and sorrows. Her sickly husband died shortly after coming to Japan. Her eldest son Noa, whom she had raised with great care and affection, left her a great wound by committing suicide. Her second son, Mozasu, had been working as the owner of a pachinko shop, but the pachinko business did not have a good reputation, and so she was constantly worried about her son. When her only grandson, Solomon, studied abroad in the United States, finished college, and returned to Japan, she had high expectations for him. She thought her grandson would surely live in better conditions, and she almost collapsed when Solomon decided to succeed Mozasu's pachinko business. With Hansu's help, Sunja had overcome the crises in Japan relatively easily when compared to other Koreans. Still, her heart was often empty. Sunja used to think of her father, Hoonie, who gave her infinite courage and comfort in her times of emptiness and alienation. She sometimes went to the cemetery of her husband Isak and chatted with her husband: "*Yobo . . . Mozasu is well. Last week, he called me, because Solomon lost his job with that foreign bank, and now he wants to work with his father. Imagine that? I wonder what you'd make of this*"

(477). We think the dead cannot speak, however their words can live on in our minds. The dead are in the past, but when we recall that past, it becomes part of the present. For this reason, we must study history (Kim and Chung, 2021). Yangjin, Kyunghye, and Sunja all overcame many crises by “talking” to the dead when they were struggling and when no one could soothe their alienation and loneliness. The dead sometimes come back to life as fathers and sometimes husbands, talking with the living and telling them the secret to overcoming difficult realities. Their connections to their past and their relatives gave Koreans the courage and strength to live meaningful lives through the turmoil in Japan. By “talking” with the dead these Korean women were able to provide new life, wisdom, and imagination to the second and third generations of Zainich.

WHERE IS MY PLACE?

The two sons of *Pachinko*'s protagonist Sunja, Noa and Mozasu, noticed at a very early age that it was difficult to understand their place in their home country, Korea. This carried over into Noa's adult life when he was recognized for his academic talent at Waseda University. There he met Akiko, an upper-class Japanese student who was majoring in sociology. They began a relationship with the intent of marriage. However, Noa, who had been dreaming of entering Japanese high society, was shocked to learn that Hansu, the Yakuza boss, was his biological father. Despite this, Akiko said that she had no intention of giving up on marrying him. In fact, she told Noa to accept his heritage and boldly challenge the Japanese society: “I am not embarrassed that you are Korean. Koreans are smart and hardworking . . . if you want I can arrange for you to meet my whole family. They'd be lucky to meet such an excellent Korean” (307). But when Noa realized this, he could not marry her because he knew what Japanese society was like. He expressed his anger to his mother, Sunja:

Yakuza are the filthiest people in Japan. They are thugs; they are common criminals. They frighten shopkeepers; they sell drugs; they control prostitution; they hurt innocent people. All the worst Koreans are members of these gangs . . . I will never be able to

wash this dirt from my name . . . All my life, I have had Japanese telling me that my blood is Korean—the Koreans are angry, violent, cunning, and deceitful criminals. All my life, I had to endure this. I tried to be as honest and humble as Baik Isak was . . . A foolish mother and a criminal father. I am cursed (311).

Around ten years after this, Noa finally ended his life by suicide. But what path did his brother Mozasu take? He, too, decided to increase his strength in Japan instead of developing relations with his motherland, believing that “in Seoul, people like [him] get called Japanese bastards” (377). He felt that it was impossible for him to be integrated into mainstream Japanese society no matter how hard he tried, so he chose a job that would not interfere with his own survival and that of his family. Unlike his older brother, Noa, he gave up his studies early and worked hard at a pachinko store. As a result, he was able to accumulate considerable wealth. The pachinko business is a kind of gambling. People come and spin pachinko beads and spend a lot of time and money expecting the beads to arrive at the pins, which is changed into money. However, because the pachinko operator has already a fixed a predetermined pin arrangement, many customers do not win any money. The arrangement of the pachinko pins and the colorful butterfly ornaments almost ensure that the gambler will lose. In fact, no matter how hard a customer tries, the reward never corresponds to their effort. Thus, pachinko businessmen are supposed to make money because customers flock to their games and gamble but are unable to earn a lot of money.

Mozasu lived a good moral life by obeying Japanese law and going to a Korean church on Sundays. One of his Japanese friends was a police officer. After Mozasu's wife Yumi died in a car accident, he began dating a Japanese woman with marriage in mind (340-342). With this background, his business was doing quite well. As Mozasu became more financially stable, he hoped that his son Solomon would have a better life than himself. Mozasu did not want his offspring to believe that the Korean-run pachinko business was associated with criminal groups, a common view in Japan

(443). So, if Solomon could study in the US, he would have an opportunity to live freely outside Japan. Solomon studied in the United States, graduated from Columbia University, and began dating a Korean-American woman, Phoebe, who was a US citizen. This woman came to Japan and asked Solomon to marry her. After marriage, the two could live a new life in the United States, where there was less discrimination and prejudice than in Japan. Solomon refused. He seemed to like showing his abilities in the middle and upper-class financial world in Japan.

Solomon began working in a Japanese branch of a foreign company surrounded by foreigners with substantial freedom. The company's boss Kazu acknowledged Solomon's talent and used him to accomplish a big project. After that job was successfully finished, Solomon was fired without a specific reason (465). In the end, no matter how smart Solomon was, and regardless of his brilliance and sincerity, he could not climb Japan's ladder of success as long as the label of Korean followed him. Zainich was surrounded by large social devices so that they could not obtain outstanding benefits in Japan. Just like the pachinko machine, there were predetermined factors that hampered his success. This device operated on prejudice and discrimination and was manipulated by mainstream Japanese society (Yim, 2018). Solomon was born in Japan and educated in a foreign school in Japan, and graduated from a prestigious university in the United States. Despite all this, he had to visit the Japanese government office every three years on his birthday to extend his alien registration and provide fingerprints. Eventually after being dismissed from his job, Solomon would return, not to Korea or the United States, but to his father's pachinko business shop, which Mozasu was loath to pass on to his son. The reason, the author of *Pachinko* writes, that Solomon will not be sent to the United States but instead will remain in Japan seems to be an attack on the conservatism and closure of Japanese society, which divides "me and the other, inside and outside" (Saebyeog, 2021). Although this accusation is justified, it is regretful that Solomon did not immigrate to the United States, which was Solomon's

mother Yumi's wish. Solomon, however, did not expand his vision beyond Japan to the world.

PROBLEMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE

The author of *Pachinko* argues that she was motivated to write this novel and address the systematic discrimination against Zainich in the 20th century so that it would not be repeated again. The specific incident of the historical event which she wants to talk about is that of a high school Korean boy in Japan killed himself after being bullied at school. The boy received the following handwritten messages from his Japanese classmates (372):

"Die, you ugly Korean."

"Stop collecting welfare. Koreans are ruining this country."

"Poor people smell like farts."

"If you kill yourself, our high school next year will have one less filthy Korean."

"Nobody likes you."

"Koreans are troublemakers and pigs. Get the hell out. Why are you here anyway?"

"You smell like garlic and garbage!!! If I could, I'd cut your head off myself, but I don't want to get my knife dirty."

It is quite heartbreaking to realize that the students threw away pure fellowship by demonstrating hateful prejudice, simply because their friend was Zainich. An American, who learned about this regretful Korean tragedy, aptly has pointed out "the monstrous degrees of hardships, disrespect, and inhumanity" (Boyne, 2017). And before blaming the Japanese students at the time, the structural and internalized oppression of Japanese society that created this environment must be analyzed. At the bottom of this prejudice lies a false view of history that Koreans are inferior and Japanese are superior. It is in line with the logic that whites are superior to blacks (Jeong, et al., 2021). However, this view is very wrong. Now, no one but a few Japanese believes that Koreans are inferior to any other people in the world. South Korea is the world's 10th largest economic power. She is the world's 6th largest military power as well, leading the 4th industrial revolution. And the Korean Wave or *Hallyu* is capturing people from all over the world, including the

United States, China, India, and England. Many people say that South Korea is probably the world's number one cultural powerhouse. This fact will be proved in more detail by young Japanese people.

Fortunately, in the 21st century, the prejudice and hatred from Japan have gradually disappeared. Also, the Japanese government is implementing more flexible policies regarding fingerprint imprinting and alien registration for foreigners. Yet, it is also true that many Japanese still demonstrate a form of discrimination against Koreans. Now, we must all try to prevent the problems of the Japanese that are described by *Pachinko* from appearing again in history. We must be honest about our history, and based on this honesty, reforms must be initiated.

PACHINKO FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

Coaching Psychology is a discipline that helps individuals or groups to achieve their dreams and visions in a healthy way. In other words, coaching psychologists are those who act as mentors or counselors for individuals or groups. So let us take a look at how *Pachinko* exemplifies this role. *Pachinko* very strongly emphasizes that humans are social animals. In this context, humans are active in the smallest unit of society, namely, the family. They are also active in larger units of groups, communities, and states. Within these spaces of activity, humans experience misery and alienation if they do not have two very important elements. Firstly, if they are not treated and loved personally. Secondly, if they feel that they are not properly affiliated within these spaces. In other words, alienation, which is the very destructive force of human existence, occurs when humans do not have a sense of belonging as well as are not enjoying the feeling of being loved. Thus *Pachinko* deals with this alienation at both the individual and community or national level and suggests a solution. Some examples of the personal level may be described as we begin looking at Yangjin, the first Zainichi generation. She came to live with her daughter in Japan. As we have discussed earlier, at first, she was happy to live with Sunja, but she sometimes

felt alienated as she thought that Sunja only cared for Noa and Mozasu and not her. Although Yangjin overcame her loneliness by meditating on Hoonie's loving care in the past and by remembering a Korean church where she enjoyed a sense of belonging, *Pachinko* insists that Yangjin's alienation problem would be solved more satisfactorily if Sunja's family had paid more attention to Yangjin. Sunja, the second-generation Zainichi, also had several family crises. She became the head of the family when her husband Isak died, and Isak's older brother Yoseb was a dying patient on bed rest. When Noa committed suicide, her heart was torn apart. Despite these hardships, Sunja overcame the adversities because she had Yoseb's wife, Kyunghee, who was always with her. Kyunghee had the opportunity to remarry after her husband died, but she refused and guarded Sunja to maintain her family community to the end, faithfully sustaining her religious life in the Korean church with Sunja. In addition, Sunja still had Mozasu, her second son, as the third-generation Zainichi. She was comforted whenever she saw Solomon, who was the fourth-generation Zainichi. *Pachinko* demonstrates that these immigrants can overcome crises and live healthy lives by relying on family love and membership in the church community. *Pachinko* offers Zainichi's fourth generation, Solomon, the opportunity to liquidate Japanese life and live in the United States, a freer and wider space. There is some regret expressed that Solomon refused this opportunity and it was not put into practice in reality, but at least *Pachinko* consistently manifests its efforts to lead Solomon towards a better life by playing the role of a mentor or a counselor.

Now let us take a look at the example of the Zainichi student who committed suicide. This student's problem was the sin of bullying which was prevalent across Japanese society at the time. This issue was not a personal issue for the Japanese, and hence, changes in the perception and behavior of Japanese society as a whole must follow. Political groups such as the Japanese government and the National Assembly must first step forward, recognize the problem seriously, and formulate legal procedures to correct it, if necessary. *Pachinko* urges, as a principle of resolving

this problem, that the people who caused the problem should thoroughly repent. Bullying, a form of school violence, is a sin that destroys people's minds. Those who commit this sin must repent or be punished accordingly. When Sunja tried to marry Isak, the officiating pastor saw their adultery as an issue of society as a whole, rather than as her personal issue, and public repentance from both Sunja and Yangjin was ordered. The minister allowed them to marry when they openly repented and corrected their mistakes. Likewise, in the matter of bullying by the Japanese students, those who caused the problem must demonstrate public repentance in front of all the members of the school. And the students in question must undertake the right actions required of this repentance.

A similar Japanese crime also appears in *Pachinko*. It is the sad story of the numerous Asian women who were turned into sex slaves of Japanese soldiers. In *Pachinko*, Yangjin's assistants, Bokhee and Dokhee, had fallen into the systematic lies of the Japanese government and became victims of the Japanese military. Even though many countries in Asia, including Korea, suffered from Japanese aggression, the Japanese government has been very tight-lipped, never demonstrating sincere repentance to Korea and East Asia. Unlike Japan, German political leaders have publicly apologized several times. During the Pacific War, the United States committed the crime of collectively expropriating Japanese people, and even recently, President Biden publicly apologized for this crime (Yim, 2021). *Pachinko* instructs us that reconciliation between individuals and nations requires thorough repentance and appropriate actions that accompany repentance. A good example in *Pachinko* is when Hansu showed Sunja and Noa how to reward themselves by sincerely acting out of genuine concern, although Noa did not accept his support. Recently, in his paper "Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War" Professor Mark Ramseyers of Harvard Law School, has expressed the position of the Japanese far-right, stating that women in the Japanese colonial period voluntarily became prostitutes for money (Kim, 2021). This paper is being criticized by professors of history at Harvard University as well as

scholars around the world. His thesis is not based on accurate historical facts but in fact, cites false data. The truth is that the women in those days were taken by force by the Japanese army and treated as sex slaves. Lobbying renowned American university professors to conceal past Japanese sins will not help solve the problem. *Pachinko*'s suggestion that honest repentance and action are the only shortcuts to problem-solving is much more persuasive.

CONCLUSION

Lee's *Pachinko* is carrying out the weighty task of informing Korea, Japan, and even the world about Zainich. Since the author is a historian, jurist, and an American professor of English literature, she has objectively shed light upon the events and people she chose and described in English, an international language, without bias to either Korea or Japan. Her writing is very entertaining, logical, and persuasive. *Pachinko* has already been read by politically influential people, including former US President Obama and the former US Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy, and the novel is expected to spread around the world. Until now, people of the world have only had a superficial knowledge of the lives of Zainich, but this novel shows the many pains and sorrows of Koreans in a more sobering way. Because of this historical literature, we know a lot about the various Korean problems in Japan. Therefore we can gain wisdom and find ways to solve them. Of course, we cannot solve all the problems in one day, but there will be many good solutions when people around the world approach them with deep interest and affection. In this regard, *Pachinko*'s author seems to have played the role of, as Coaching Psychology calls it, a great mentor.

Acknowledgment: This paper was completed by Jillian Noe's meticulous English structural editing and proofreading. We sincerely thank her for her hard work.

Contributorship: The original idea of this research was by Jong-ok Seok. All analytical interpretations and paper writing were done by the two co-authors.

Details of funding: None of the authors had any external funders and there are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Declaration of competing/conflicting interests: The authors declare no competing interests in the conduct of this research.

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