Minorities, Minority Identity and Violence:  
The Comparison in Contemporary Hebrew and Japanese Minority Literature

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ABSTRACT

Minorities, Minority Identity and Violence:
The Comparison in Contemporary Hebrew and Japanese Minority Literature

A thesis presented to the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies

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This thesis examines how minority identities are depicted in contemporary autobiographical literature from the 1990’s to present. In this thesis, I focus my analysis on minority literatures from Israel and Japan. In spite of the extreme rarity of the literary comparison, I examine minorities of Israeli Arab and the second generation Japanese Koreans. I explore how these minorities with different histories are represented, with shared experience of oppression and violence, and analyze the phenomena or ramifications in minority identity. By analyzing famous novelists of minority literature— Israeli Arab author, Sayed Kashua and two Japanese Korean authors, Yi Yang-ji and Kazuki Kaneshiro—I concentrate on pointing out the influences and outcomes of psychological and political violence (Chapter I and II) to their minority identities. This comparison will enable a wider
perspectives regarding minorities in various societies, and an analysis of issues of relating to minority as well as race identity in modern life.

This unique literary comparison attempts to examine cultural and political similarities as well as differences in order to explore the phenomena of two countries with different cultures but that share certain similarities, particularly in the articulation of their minority literature. Although Israel and Japan differ very much in term of culture and history, I still find significant similarities in the minority literature. The minorities I examined in Hebrew and Japanese minor literature interact with violence in various ways each society. I focused my examination especially on psychological and political violence in addition to physical violence. My questions in researching this minority literature revolve around how these minorities relate to these kinds of violence.

This thesis concentrates on presenting the ways that these the minority authors address their own political identities, and the ways that social violence and oppression influence their minority identities.
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Introduction

1. Who are minorities?

   In every society, minorities are marginalized and suffer from various kinds of biases. The term “minorities” is a broad designation for people who are systematically oppressed or marginalized in society such as women, bisexuals or transsexuals, disabled, colonized, and people of color. Jonathan Gultung’s proposes the term “structural violence” to which refer to a form of violence where in some social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from accessing basic needs (Gultung 172). The oppression which minorities experience in society is structural violence that harms them, and social biases exist in order to classify individuals according to stereotypes, in a way that elevates the social status and opportunity of privileged groups over the less privileged. George J Sefa Dei writes that in the colonial period, race was socially constructed to achieve the subordination of colonized populations because of their supposed racial inferiority (Dei and Abdi 22, 472). This is my focus, to gain greater insight into minorities who suffer from racism. I find that Palestinian and Japanese minorities suffer from racism and oppression in similar ways from the dominant society or social groups, in spite of the great differences in their histories and culture. The discrimination is generally built-in within the dominant society (e.g.—discrimination in
education, employment, marriage, and community activities) and can influence minority identity throughout their lives.

Minorities are subject to bias related to certain stereotypes that the oppressing society creates or perpetuates. Some minorities rebel against the dominant society due to the severity of the oppression while they live in the structural violent environment that resistance creates, and constantly relate with violence and crimes, thus consequently the crime rates of minority go up. Coramae R Mann argues that the racism found in each of the nation’s established institutions is enormous, pervasive, and debilitating, and racism and discrimination have contributed to and continue to perpetuate the minority status (Mann, 259). One result of this is that, as minorities commit crimes or initiate/participate in riots, the perceptions and stereotypes by the dominant society towards minorities become much more negative, thus, those with higher social status feel justified in viewing them as inferior, dangerous and vulgar. Other minorities remain silent, attempting to adjust and acculturate into the major society by oppressing themselves, hiding their identity, and assimilating into the dominant society. Either way, minorities are caught up in the cycle of oppression and violence that is the result of their marginalization to begin with, and then they have become violent or produce violence in return; or they often begin engaging in self-oppression. They lack inner peace, self-esteem and self-love. One of the most common results of this is that minorities are filled with hatred in their hearts, which affects their identities. They must fight, struggle, keep hiding or
oppressing their identity in order to have a quiet and harmonious life in the society in which they were born.

2. Who Are Israeli Arab Minorities?

Israeli Arabs are originated from Palestinian citizens of Israel who lived in Palestine before the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. According to Majid Al-Haj, this war for independence resulted in a large exodus of, through which only 156,000 Arab people out of 700,000 people remained in Israel after the war. At that time, although only months before they had been the larger population, Arabs in Israel became a minority group representing 13 percent of the whole population in Israel. Then the population rapidly grew to 600,000 in 1985 (Al-Haj 20, 176). Since then, the minority population grew, as did the Jewish population. Israeli Arabs born after the declaration of the Jewish state make up 75 percent of the whole Israeli Arab minority population.

Al-Haj additionally notes that initially, the first generation of the Israeli Arab labor force worked in agriculture. However, subsequent generations have concentrated more in modern pursuits and education. This has encouraged them, at least provisionally, to accept living in the Jewish state, along with an added value on individualism over nationalism. Many of them receive their education through the modern Israeli education system, which has resulted in Arabs becoming completely bilingual, with both Hebrew and Arabic, and bi-cultural, balancing between their native Arab and the foreign Jewish/Israeli cultures. This
tendency makes them more westernized than Arabs living in Arab states or territories. Yet, the experience of living in Israel challenges their identity further, since their lives in Israel often lead them in “the process of Israelization” (Al-Haj 20, 177). This essentially refers to the reality that their identities are constantly confronted with the necessity of accepting Israel as their country and finding ways of reconciling that.

3. Who are Japanese Korean Minorities?

Japanese Koreans are immigrant Korean-minorities who came to Japan after colonized Korea between 1910 and 1945. Some hold North Korean nationality, but the majority holds South Korean nationality, and are registered as long term Korean residences of Japan. At the same time, similar numbers of Japanese Koreans change their Korean nationality to Japanese through naturalization, and they are called Japanese citizens of Korean descent. The population of Korean resident of Japan is 519,737, and the total population of naturalized citizens of Korean descent is 284,840 in 2013 (National Statistics).¹ Thus, as of this year, approximately 805,000 Koreans living in Japan are Japanese Korean minorities. 2.

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs,

The first generation of Japanese Koreans were sent from Korea to Japan, especially after 1915, as part of a forced labor program, in order to improve Japan. They were subjected

to abusive situations and slave-like labor, with work such as mining, factories, prostitution, and among others, and were forced to work long hours and little compensation. This harsh historical fact is connected to the experience of employment discrimination towards Japanese Koreans in Japan, in which the elite Japanese companies tend not to hire Japanese Koreans after meticulous background checks. Because of this, many citizens of Korean descent hide their Korean names and identities in Japanese society, because once they reveal their true identities, they automatically face discrimination. It is easier simply to hide their identities for them and avoid severe discrimination.

Japan is considered by most Japanese to be a homogeneous country, and the Japanese a homogeneous race. The social discrimination is based on this mythic concept, which means that anybody else but Japanese are called “Gaijin (outsiders).” Many Japanese people don’t expect outsiders to understand the Japanese mentality, including Japanese tradition, language and culture. Japanese Koreans may receive the most severe discrimination: they are considered less than Japanese. However, this “Japanese homogeneity” is a myth (Wender,8). A complicating factor is that, especially after the 1980’s, Japanese reproduction tapered off dramatically, and thus the working population shrank. This has caused an influx of illegal immigrants or foreign laborers from all over the world, allowing the Japanese society to attain and maintain greater affluence. The United Nation assumes that in order to keep the working age population stable through 2050, Japan will need to add approximately 33 million
immigrants (Wilmoth 190). All of this means that Japan is far from homogeneous. But this
myth of homogeneity remains strong in the Japanese spirit—Shimaguni Konjou (the spirit of
islands country). And this myth creates and perpetuates feeling of superiority and dislike
towards foreigners and minorities. John Lie adds that the idea of monoethnicity is misleading
or mistaken. A common explanation for Japanese homogeneity is that Japan experienced
nearly three centuries of seclusion (鎖国-Sakoku). Hence the Japanese are insular and
parochial (Lie, 131). This explains the homogeneous Japanese mentality; however, as
Wilmoth points out, Japan cannot survive without foreign labor (Wilmoth 190), thus, Japan in
reality, has never been ethnically homogeneous, although its national identity and ideology is
generally seen as monoethnic.

The second generation of Japanese Koreans are those born in Japan. Some go to
Korean ethnic schools, where the first language is Korean and they receive their education
through Korean systems. Yet, some attend Japanese schools and receive a Japanese education.
Either way the second generation is typically much more assimilated to Japanese society.
According to Sonia Ryang, the first generation was reduced to a handful of elders among the
overall population of Koreans in Japan. Whereas Japan-born younger generations grew up
more immersed in Japanese culture, fully exposed to Japanese media, advertising, and
fashion, as well as books and film (Ryang, xix). They are fluent in Japanese and their
appearance often seems even more Japanese than Japanese, imitating Japanese fashion in such
a way that it is extremely hard to identify them as Japanese Koreans, especially if they do not reveal their minority identities.

4. What is Minority Literature?: Characteristics and Violence

A minority Literature is literature written by minorities. It is a literature of conflict portraying struggles and violence. Often it is also written in the dominant language, even though that is not the author’s first language. When minorities who are oppressed write, they frequently tell stories that reflect characteristics different from those of their dominant-culture counterparts. The question thus arises, how are they different and what specifically characterizes minority literature?

One of the characteristics of minority literature is “deterritorialization of the dominant language.” In other words, the language is affected by a strong co-efficient of deterritorialization as Gilles Deleuze claims. Deterritorialization of language means the desire or urge to de-code or to deterritorialize their dominant language and identity because of oppression (Deleuze, 25). What Deleuze implies here is that minorities estrange themselves from their native language in favor of the language of the oppressor because of that very oppression. Minority literature often represents or reflects their politicalized experiences and perspectives, and articulates the collective consciousness in the story. This tendency is tightly connected with experiences of violence and oppression that they go through, contrasting with literature from the social majority that do not have these kinds of inner struggles since
childhood. Therefore, the constant oppression of the minorities’ language and identity leads
to, the phenomena of deterritorialization of the dominant language in minority literature.

Writing in their dominant language rather than minor language, minorities present
“marginality and paradoxality” (JanMohamed, 12:295-297) as outcomes of their identities in
their literature.

Frequent violent representation is also another common characteristic of minority
literature. Minorities tend to be surrounded by violence and crimes. Due to the constant
oppression and negative stereotypes placed on minorities within the dominant society,
minorities tend to suffer from different kinds of violence and crime, which include acts of
violence that act as an outlet for prejudiced hostilities (Hernandez 99:845-847). Individual or
group violence based on race or ethnicity—and not only physical violence, but also
psychological and political violence that minorities usually experience in daily life—are
common themes represented in minority literature.

With all these definitions responding to primary questions relating to who are
minorities, who are Palestinian and Japanese minorities, and what is minor literature, main
questions stand out to me: what does really happen to minorities when they are surrounded by
a violent environment? How do they interact with that violence and how does it influence
their identities? According to these basic questions, my fundamental argument is that
minorities in Israel and Japan are often surrounded by violence, and the oppression or
discrimination is perpetuated in each society, such that minorities suffer on a daily basis. In this thesis, I focus on presenting the way that minorities relate with different kinds of violence and exploring the outcome phenomena and the influence that violence—especially psychological and political violence—can cause to minorities and their identities. I separate the chapters according to the type of violence to clarify how the different types of violence can influence minority identity in each chapter. I concentrate on examining psychological violence in chapter one and political violence in chapter two. I do this examining two famous novellas written by Sayed Kashua as a major author of Palestinian minority literature and two authors, Yi Yang-ji and Kazuki Kaneshiro’s, as authors of Japanese minority literature. I analyze each novel based on literary and social theories, and rationalize my literary analysis, offer a counterpoint and compare these minority literature which are from totally different countries, in order to find what is cultural and what is essentially political, or what is relative and what is universal, and what are the similarities and differences in the presentation of minority identity.
Chapter I
Psychological Violence and Minorities
Sayed Kashua’s “Dancing Arabs” and Yi Yang-ji’s “Yuhi”

It is well-documented that Palestinian or Japanese Korean minorities are often marginalized in society. I use autobiographical novels in both Palestinian and Japanese Korean minority literature—Sayed Kashua’s *Dancing Arabs* for Palestinian, and Yi Yang-ji’s *Yuhi* as Japanese minor literature. They frequently suffer from oppression and violent experiences. One of these forms of oppression is psychological violence—a form of abuse to the human psyche characterized by subjecting others to mental suffering such as trauma, stress, depression and anxiety (O’Leary and Mauro 9). And minorities are greatly influenced by the psychological violence they encounter and are surrounded by on a regular basis.

It seems that a common phenomenon among minorities living in a violent environment is that they are consistently oppressed, and this oppression causes in them a feeling of shame with regard to who they are—being colonized, weak and oppressed. By going through constant oppression, one of the outcomes of this feeling is often a language shift—a tendency for the minority to attempt to avoid using his or her native language and

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shift to the oppressor’s language. Ultimately, minorities mimic their oppressors in language, culture and mentality, which can lead to destabilization of the power imbalance between oppressors and oppressed. The psychological violence which minorities are subjected and exposed to leads to these phenomenon: shame, language shift and mimicry—yet, these coping mechanisms—can expose minorities to deep solitude and confusion in their identities. Thus, as Adia Mendelson Maoz describes, the minority authors find themselves in the midst of a conflict remembering or forgetting the nature of their minority identity in minority literature (Mendelson- Maoz 32). Their identities are conflicted between oppressors and oppressed, or majority and minority, become fractured or split, and this split identity actually isolates minorities further—they are estranged from the culture of the oppressor as well as the culture of oppressed. In this chapter, I explore this experience of identity confusion and fracturing as seen minority literature. Specifically, I look at the relationship between psychological violence and minority identity, the solitude and isolation they feel, how psychological violence affects minority identity and identity struggle phenomenon due to psychological violence that minorities experience in minority literature such as Sayed Kashua’s Dancing Arabs and Yi Yang-ji’s Yuhi.

1. Sayed Kashua’s Dancing Arabs

Sayed Kashua is a famous Israeli-Arab author. He was born in an Arab village called Tira in 1975. Although his native language is Arabic, he writes solely in Hebrew. Being an
Israeli-Arab minority in Israeli society, Kashua’s minority identity, split by the experience of oppression and mimicry of the dominant Israeli culture, deters him from writing his work in his mother tongue. By writing in Hebrew, he presents the ironic loss of native language and the solitude he feels as part of the more general oppression of his minority identity. He does this through humor, which attracts many readers. In so doing, he has become a notable figure in the Hebrew and Israeli canon (Grumberg,128), and he has established his place in Israeli Hebrew literature as an Israeli-Arab. This enables readers to recognize and come to know Israeli minorities, and through Kashua’s writing, experience the minority’s struggle for identity in Israeli society.

In his earliest autobiographical novel, Dancing Arabs published in 2002, Kashua depicts the experience of loss of naiveté from childhood to adulthood. Throughout the tale of discovery and loss, the book provides no reconciliation with his minority identity. Kashua was born an Arab, but he imitates a Jew. The novel describes his anguishing search for an authentic identity: the initial confusion, then a split and greater complexity regarding his identity. It explores his escape from Arab minority status, as he deliberately seeks assimilation to Israeli culture, and the endless internal conflict he encounters regarding his split identity. All of this lead him to a sense of estrangement from his native Arab culture, and to almost consciously eliminate his Arab identity and entirely reject Arabic culture and language. The narrative of this novel is comical: it is written with a humoristic but bitter-sweet style, marked
by the casual diction. Kashua uses irony and satire to describe the vanity of inherent in the life of a minority in Israeli society.

2. Yi Yang-ji’s Yuhi

The well-known autobiographic novel Yuhi which won the prestigious 100th Akutagawa prize for recognition in literature, was written in 1989 by a notable Japanese Korean novelist, Yi Yang-ji 1955-1992. Yang-ji was born in Japan as a second generation Japanese Korean, and became naturalized in Japan in 1964. Yang-ji kept living in both Japan and Korea over a decade in 1980’s. She graduated from Seoul University in Korea, with her student life generally dominated by her living arrangement with Korean families. Her novel depicts the life of a Japanese Korean student called Yuhi, who came to Korea from Japan seeking her true identity, and explores the struggle of identity discovery, clearly reflecting the true life experience of Japanese minority identity that Yang-ji herself actually went through when she was a student in Korea (Park and Ryang 27). And as Lisa Yoneyama describes, the minority literature of especially female author such as Yang-ji’s Yuhi dredges into the protagonist’s anxieties, instabilities of their social being, and their emasculated state, the linguistic and national ambiguities (Yoneyama 103).

The story starts with the background in Seoul. A 27 years-old Yuhi, who attends the S University majoring in Korean language and literature that overwraps with the real student
life of Yang-ji at the Seoul University, comes to a family to live. The narrator “I” and her aunt are this family, and they rent Yuhi a room after she has had to change rooms eight times.

This excessive changing of residence in such a short time, hints that something is wrong with Yuhi’s Korean life. Yuhi is an introvert; she is awkward, brusque, sullen, unsteady and frightened, hinting that Yuhi has hardships in communication and sociality for Yuhi in Korea, which possibly reflects the real character of Yang-ji herself in past. In silence and solitude she keeps experiencing trauma and nervous breakdowns as she cannot assimilate well with the Korean people and culture, and hates Korean language and society. Although she tries hard to assimilate and find her place and a sense of comfort in Korea, she fails in this attempt, and Yuhi finds herself caught in endless loneliness, as she draws into herself more and more. This brings her to a state of depression, trauma and inner turmoil as she struggles to find her identity. She impulsively withdraws from the prestigious university, gives up pursuing a degree one month before her graduation, and suddenly leaves everything behind, including Korea and her Korean identity. The novella is written with a tone of despair, sorrow, hardship and the darkness that Yuhi faces.

The narrator “I” and her aunt as a host family initially try to welcome Yuhi as a Korean, who shares the same race and ethnicity as they do, although they gradually run into

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4 In *Yuhi*, the narrator is written in the form of first person singular, “I”. Thus, I use the word “The narrator I” to describe the narrative.
differences between them and Yuhi. Despite the differences, for them, Japanese Koreans are a similar nation related to the mainland Koreans, especially in race, origin and ethnicity. The mainlanders call Japanese Korean—‘同胞 (Douhou),’ meaning a compatriot sharing the same blood (race and ethnicity) though in different regions, with a strong sense of patriotism that revolves around a trinity of country, language and citizenship (Ukiba 4),—however, a narrator “I” and her aunt totally ignore or forget that Yuhi was born in Japan. Yuhi actually comes from a completely different country and grows up with a different mentality than her fellow Koreans. They make discriminative comments towards Japan and Japanese being inconsiderate of Yuhi’s feeling such as “In Japan, we hear from TV and newspapers that ‘Douhou’ are segregated badly, huh? I hate Japanese, they are unforgivable” (Yi, 44).

They attempt to show compassion for Yuhi; however Yuhi feels that she is merely criticized here, and she suffers from the criticism because she was born in Japan. Yuhi cannot assimilate with the narrator “I” and her aunt, even though they try to welcome her and emphasize the bond of ethnicity (Douhou) that they share. Thus, living in Korean society, Yuhi’s life makes her feel oppressed and forces her to re-define her complex minority identity, a Japanese Korean in Korea. This causes her great frustration, as she comes to the realizations that she actually is not, and cannot be Korean, but rather she is Japanese— the nation of the enemy and the oppressor. Yang-ji struggled with this complex identity in both countries from her childhood, which she reflects in the character Yuhi, who also experiences these serious
struggles in the need to choose a country in her youth, Japan or Korea, and a language, Japanese or Korean. This causes her to feel that her identity is fractured, and she is part of a cultural diaspora from both politically conflicting countries, and eventually Yang-ji’s trauma is seen Yuhi’s breakdown. The writing style in Yuhi is dark. Yang-ji uses allusion and periphrasis in switching the narrator, as well as synecdoche to invert certain items such as Yuhi’s identity. She employs foreshadowing or circumlocution to describe the severe oppression that Yuhi experiences as a minority.

3. Shame and Minority identity

Minorities experience various kind of oppression and violence in society, particularly those like Kashua and Yang-ji who struggle to define their national identity in cultures and societies where their native identity is not only oppressed by the majority to which they are assimilating, but also feared as the enemy. The oppressed, for their part, fear that they are surrounded by enemies as well, or colonizers, who are stronger than they are, and they cannot win. They feel vulnerable. Living in the society of the oppressor, minorities have no choice but to assimilate into the dominant culture. This is the phenomenon of psychological violence. They suffer trauma, stress, depression, and anxiety in their identities. In this psychological violence, the feeling of shame from being the oppressed is a common phenomenon which occurs in the psyche of the oppressed. As minorities face the experience of oppression by the dominant society, inevitably they deal with feelings of anger, fear and despair. Oppressed
minorities eventually convert these negative feelings into a type of “shame” rising out of self-blame for being oppressed. According to Deonna and Teroni, in a trait or behavior of shame opposite from pride, shame degrades self-esteem and respect, instead, it consists of feelings of one’s lack of worth or an unwanted identity, which causes the unity problem in one’s identity (Deonna, Rodongno, and Teroni 68:4-9). Thus, minorities reject who they are because of shame, adjust themselves to a new psychological reality, creating split identities in order to achieve an adaptability that allows them to continue to live positively in oppressed settings.

They struggle to accept this cruel oppression, often by rejecting themselves and their own background, which leads to confusion, and eventually a shift in their identities and languages.

Sayed Kashua’s work evidences this oppression and the accompanying identity struggles. The occupation threatens his psyche with constant psychological violence throughout his childhood and adulthood, leading him to negate his Arab identity, and thus consciously split his identity, part of which are his efforts to eliminate any Arab culture. This is evidenced in an especially poignant scene in Dancing Arabs, in which the main character is stopped for an ID check by a soldier. He is terrified to show that he is an Arab even though it is just a regular ID check. Kashua writes:

I am not getting back on that bus, I decided. I’m not willing to be stared at like I-don’t-know-what. I’ve had it. I can’t take this anymore. I cried like a baby. I broke down. Even the soldier felt uneasy. He said it was just routine (Kashua 100).5

The psychological violence in this moment causes the main character lasting trauma, and

5 All the translation is from English version of the novel
ultimately contributes to his decision to thoroughly eliminate his Arabness. His elimination of his Arabic language, culture and identity is directly connected to the psychological violence of the occupation and the way he experienced that in his childhood. Kashua depicts this struggle through his description of the main character in his novella and his first encounter with the oppressor: “The day I saw Jews up close for the first time I wet my pants” (63). He depicts the feeling of fear and powerlessness in this initial contact with members of the oppressing society. This traumatic experience likewise contributes to his later desire to eliminate his Arabness and Arabic language, and to imitate Jews.

Yang-ji’s Yuhi experiences similar trauma. Her traumatic expressions are depicted impulsively in several scenes, which enables us to envision Yuhi’s character as destructive, fragile, dangerous yet pure. For example, Yuhi purposely fails one of the important Korean exams, writing only one word, no real answers (99). She describes the Korean language she hears on the street as a grenade and she refuses to listen any word from people speaking on the street (98). She has a tendency to be self-destructive in several scenes in her daily life during her stay in Korea, because of her over-sensitivity.

In scene in which Yuhi travels with narrator “I’ to buy herself a study desk, Yuhi experiences a major traumatic and self-destructive scene after they get on the bus. Yuhi starts reacting to the radio music blaring in the bus, and especially when she sees a knife which an anonymous man comes to sell randomly inside the bus, her trauma reaches a peak.
“Yuhi, what’s wrong? You don’t feel well?”
Without any response, I squatted down towards Yuhi and asked her.
“The bus came, shall we go in?”
I asked her looking into her face. Yuhi was murmuring something that nobody else could hear. She did not even blink, staring only on one point and murmuring. She was murmuring in Japanese. I did not understand a word she was saying and her murmur in Japanese sounded like an incantation (Yi, 65).6

Yuhi similarly acts out after she walks through a busy crowd in the city on the way to the bus station. However, the crowd in Korea is more aggressive, noisy and chaotic, people crushing shoulders and bumping into each other; this is a sharp contrast from what Yuhi is used to with the Japanese crowd who is quiet, polite, patient, less chaotic and avoids body contacts in public spaces.

“Shall we get off at next stop? Yuhi, you are exhausted. Let’s go home”
Yuhi declined by shaking her head. She looked pale and hollow in her eyes. I smiled to her to comfort her. But right afterwards a man came to sell a knife and Yuhi saw his knife. I knew that we must get off. Yuhi was casting her head down slowly and clenching her teeth. Then when she saw the knife, she suddenly dropped her head almost as fainting, covered her ear with both hands. I held her shoulder covering her back, and touched her hands tightly covering her ears.

“Yuhi, are you ok? Yuhi”
Yuhi was crying silently (Yi 69).

She finds herself in the aggressive surroundings of Korean language and the crowd, and becomes manic depressive. She is aware of the fact that the Korean culture and people are typically more aggressive than the Japanese: their word on the street and the sharp sound of Korean language, combined with hot tempers, make Koreans look more aggressive than Japanese. Now that she is in Korea, Yuhi is terrified and overwhelmed by the aggressiveness in the Korean public spaces. She cannot cope with any aggression in Korea, but it is impossible to comprehend her fear and trauma from the surface. Yuhi immediately acts out a

6 All the translation is my translation
symptom of manic depression, in other words bipolar depression—a condition that encompasses a wide range of mood disorders and temperaments, generally symptomized severe cyclothmia, or mood swings, and characterized by pronounced, although not entirely debilitating, changes in mood, behavior, thinking, sleep and energy level (Szobel 64). Several scenes of Yuhi’s manic depression symptoms of Yuhi are depicted in the novel. Her mood changes impulsively and rapidly, the result of various triggers, which make it extremely hard for her to cope with social life in Korea. However, it is hard to see from the surface that she is acting out. From the outside, she suddenly panics or emotionally falls apart, and these episodes cause her various problems in school and in public spaces in Korea.

Accompanying all this upheaval is a feeling of shame—an acute painful, inarticulable experience which leaves those who experience it feeling exposed, passive and impotent (Pattison 43). In the case of Dancing Arabs, and for Kashua specifically, the feeling shame revolves around being one of the occupied, and it propels him to reject his Arab identity. As he suffers more shameful experiences, Kashua feels more and more inclined to erase his Arab identity. In other words, the more Kashua denies his Arabness, the more he feels a superficial sense of happiness, satisfaction and achievement in his identity.

I look more Israeli than the average Israeli. I’m always pleased when Jews tell me this. “You don’t look like an Arab at all,” they say. Some people claim it’s a racist thing to say, but I’ve always taken it as a compliment, a sign of success. That’s what I’ve always wanted to be, after all: a Jew. I’ve worked hard at it, and I’ve finally pulled it off. There was one time when they picked up on the fact that I was an Arab and recognized me. So right after that I became an expert at assuming false identities. It was at the end of my first week of school in Jerusalem. I was on the bus going home.
to Tira. A soldier got on and told me to get off. I cried like crazy. I’d never felt so humiliated (Kashua 91).

Kashua feels despair when he is recognizable as an Arab, while on the other hand, happiness or pride at being like a Jew in his childhood. These contrasting emotions and aspirations illustrate the depth of Kashua’s identity fracture, in which he feels himself neither an Arab nor a Jew. Later on in his adulthood, the main character criticizes his wife for not understanding his shame and supporting his efforts to fully assimilate to his chosen Jewish identity, and is frustrated at her refusal to cooperate with him to reject their Arabness (204).

In Yuhi, Yang-ji depicts the feeling of shame felt by minorities who deal with psychological violence in vivid, vulnerable and sad ways. However, though the expressions are simple and clear, the way her shame is delivered is complicated. Yuhi gets drunk and takes a pen and writes in Korean on a paper near her study desk, as the narrator “I” watches.

언니
나는 위선자이다
나는 거짓말쟁이입니다
우리 나라 사랑을 할 수 없습니다

オンニ
私は 偽善者です
私は 嘘つきです
母国
愛することができません

Sister, I am a hypocrite.
I am a liar.
My homeland
Cannot love (Yi 82).  

Yang-ji describes the complexity of Yuhi’s attempt to describe her struggles to the narrator “I”. These sentences are different than the rest of novel in that they are actually written in Korean letters at first, and then translated in to Japanese. The narrator “I” is Korean and does

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7 In the novel, the passage is written exactly as the same form, primarily in Korean, then translated to Japanese. The English translation is my translation.
not have any knowledge of the Japanese language, but she recalls Yuhi’s memory in Japanese for Japanese readers throughout the story. However, suddenly these fragmented sentences pop up in Korean in the novel that Japanese readers cannot understand. Only the narrator “I” can comprehend, which highlights and strengthens Yuhi’s main message that she is ashamed that she cannot be Korean and cannot love her homeland. The narrator “I” actually reads and repeats reading these sentences in Korean, reaffirming and emphasizing for her and all readers the agony and the struggles Yuhi has experienced, as well as portending “Yuhi’s shame and the ultimate rejection of Korean identity” (Ryu 312).

Minorities thus feel utterly threatened and oppressed in their identities and experience psychological violence, and often shame causes minorities to deny their original cultural identity. This prevents them from full participation in the national culture, which has likewise been oppressed, since its central components are memory, yearning, or returning to pre-colonization life (Grumberg 156).

Kashua depicts this nostalgic memory, and his feeling of yearning for Arab culture in his childhood through the figure of his grandmother and a key to the cupboard. In fact, he begins the novel with that very image: “I was always looking for the keys to the cupboard (Kahua,1). The locked cupboard symbolizes his Arab identity, and the old rusty key to the cupboard is also a key to his Arab identity. Likewise his grandmother is the main person he yearns for in his memory—the warmth, love, acceptance and understanding he felt from her.
However, as he goes through the harsh struggle for identity and psychological conflict of growing up as one of the oppressed, he eliminates his Arabness within himself, and his grandmother also passes away. The novella ends with the sad scene of her death.

I hug her and kiss her head, trying not to cry. She hides her eyes now behind her white scarf and says it isn’t death that makes her cry. She’s tired already and she doesn’t want to be a burden to Mother and Father anymore. She says the only reason she’s crying is that she used to think she’d be buried in her own land. “Do you remember where the key to the cupboard is?”
And we both cry together (227).

By this point, Kashua no longer desires to participate in the Arab culture. With the death of his grandmother, he has decided to lose the old rusty key to the cupboard, as if he will never again open the cupboard, and symbolically smothering his Arab identity entirely. Thus Kashua as a minority in both Israeli and Arab societies constantly feels isolation and solitude, which is further complicated by his own inability to find self-acceptance or satisfaction in his identity.

On the other hand, Yang-ji writes of Yuhi’s yearning for Japan in terms of drastic detachment. Yuhi shows nothing sweet or yearning for her feeling towards Japan in the story. But rather she cuts anything personal about her Japanese identity, culture or language in the entire novel. For example, in the scene the aunt asks Yuhi to teach Japanese,

“Though I am getting old, I thought it would be good learn Japanese while Yuhi is here. I felt it was a strange destiny for her, because I am somewhat influenced in my feelings about Japan, since your dead uncle kept telling me about Japan.”
“Did you ask her to teach you Japanese?”
“Yes, Yuhi is a good girl. We all should not have prejudice. So I asked her to teach me Japanese. But she refused. I told her I would pay her. But she said she could not do that, she just could not do that, so apologetically, and her face… looking down, a wrinkle on her forehead and narrowed her lips, just like a little boy in trouble. Why should she feel like that, why would she be in a trouble? In the end, I felt sorry for telling her I wanted to study Japanese” (Yi 94).
For Yuhi, learning Korean and teaching Japanese is like becoming a bridge between two conflicting countries. She must feel inner peace if she is doing so. However, she never feels peaceful, but rather sorrow, struggle, despair and fear in her identity. Yuhi is threatened by her Japanese Korean identity. Thus Yuhi, being in Korea, detaches her yearnings for Japan, although she finds herself unable to assimilate with Koreans, which indeed forces her identity to a place devoid of belonging.

4. Shift in minority’s language

Language is a primary component of identity; thus, it also factors greatly into the experience of oppression for minorities. Minorities often reject their native language and force themselves to use the language of the oppressor. Fanon claims that language is a potent vehicle for cultural and political domination in a colonial situation, and the language of the oppressor is one medium through which the oppressed suffer from cultural or psychological violence (Fanon, Markmann and Frantz 21). In addition to oppression that minorities—in this case Israeli Arabs and Japanese Koreans—experience from the oppressive society, the minorities actually also oppress themselves, in a manner: they oppress their own language. In order to liberate themselves from this inferiority, minorities firstly oppress their language and shift to use the language of the oppressor. As a fundamental human communicative tool, language is a powerful identity-forming agent, and when the oppressed find themselves using the oppressor’s language, the minority’s identity is affected in various ways that often include
group identity loss or damage, and the development of fractured identities.

Loss of native language and adaptation to the dominant culture and language are major outcomes of oppression that minorities experience in their psyche and language in order to liberate themselves from oppression. Gayatri Spivak claims that while learning the major or colonialist language, the subordinated writer experiences a hybrid identity resulting from the loss of his ancestor’s culture, and the very use of the colonialist language defamiliarizes the minority identity (Spivak 67-71). She further argues that the minorities cannot speak in their language, but only in the language of the oppressor. Thus, in minority literature, the minority author who writes in foreign languages lose their authenticity in their identity. Kashua’s crisis of identity began early. He notes how, even as a young boy, he felt the effects of oppression and language domination. Remembering an important article his grandmother kept hidden in the cupboard, and his desire to be able to read it, he states “I made up my mind: I’ve got to learn Hebrew. I’ve got to be able to read a Hebrew newspaper” (Kashua 8). Kashua realizes the importance of Hebrew even as a little boy, but later on in adulthood, his decision of learning Hebrew in his childhood greatly affects Kashua’s whole minority identity.

Hoping to find greater opportunities in the dominant culture, the main character in *Dancing Arabs* studies Hebrew in a Jewish school in his childhood. Ultimately, Hebrew becomes very nearly his first language in adulthood. At first he immerses himself completely
in Hebrew, and he struggles to master the difficult challenges, nothing some of the differences between Hebrew and Arabic. In a particularly humorous passage, Kashua depicts the challenges of differentiating between Hebrew and Arabic.

My roommates laughed when I said bob music instead of pop music. They laughed when I threatened to complain to Principal Binhas—instead of Pinhas. “What did you say his name was?” they asked, and like an idiot I repeated it: “Binhas.” (92). Yet, aware of the disadvantages that his Arabic accent imposes on him, Kashua tirelessly works to eradicate the linguistic traces of his native language, in which there is no p sound as there is in Hebrew. He begins rejecting his native language by removing any elements of his Arabic accent.

I told Adel we had to learn to pronounce the letter p properly. He didn’t care. The Bible teacher gave me a tip: “Hold a piece of paper up to your mouth. If the paper moves, you’ve said a p,” he said. Adel laughed at me, and when the paper moved, he said he couldn’t tell the difference. He was convinced there was really no difference between b and p, that it was all in my head, and that Hebrew is a screwed-up language. He didn’t see why they had to have two different letters for the same sound (102).

Kashua’s description of his struggles to master Hebrew are intriguing, and even humorous.

Later, Kasua mocks his Arab friend for his inability to fully adapt to Hebrew. He is slowly shifting his language from his native Arabic to the more culturally acceptable Hebrew, and in the process rejecting not only his native language, but also those who represent Arabness altogether.

By eliminating their native language, and adapting themselves to the dominant language and culture, minorities alienate themselves from their native identities. At the same time, they create new identities, in this case, the split identity, which for Kashua means an
identity as both a Jew and an Arab. In fact, he becomes neither a Jew nor an Arab. In this split identity he has created, the original Arab identity and dominant Arabic language are completely oppressed and rejected by the defense mechanism produced in his psyche—anger, fear, threat and despair, transformed into a kind of rejectionist hope that attempts to infiltrate the oppressor as Homi Bhabha articulates (Bhabha 56), become one of them. And this split identity causes minorities endless feelings of loneliness, solitude and isolation. De Vos argues that ethnicity is social loyalty and existential meanings derived from a human need for continuity in belonging (DeVos 46). However, minorities with split identities are unable to feel unity in their ethnicity. They lose the sense of belongingness to their original group or their native culture, yet they also don’t belong to the dominant group or the culture to which they have adapted, although they desire to feel the belongingness. In their search to escape the sense of oppression and shame, they find themselves estranged and isolated. They belong nowhere.

In Yuhi, the language shift is described in sophisticated and convoluted ways. In fact Yuhi’s use of language offers a sharp contrast to the linguistic elements depicted in Dancing Arabs. First of all, Yuhi’s first language is Japanese. However, since she is a Japanese Korean, she goes to Korea to learn Korean—the language of her origins. This is almost a complete reverse from the main character’s language shift in Dancing Arabs. The main character is thrust into an environment that forces his language shift. In Yuhi’s case, the language shift she
experiences is initially intentional, with her choice to live and study in Korea. And in her stay in Korea, Yuhi automatically experiences a language shift back to Japanese.

From the outset, the text in Yuhi manifests certain problems. Firstly, the author, Yang-ji’s native language is Japanese, the same as Yuhi’s. Secondly, in the story, the narrator “I” is Korean, and thus her native language is Korean, and she does not speak a word of Japanese. However, the contradiction here is that the narrator “I,” although she is Korean, uses Japanese entirely to tell a story about Yuhi. In this way, Yang-ji conveys the core messages that Yang-ji herself does not fit in Korea, and she does not feel she is Korean to Japanese readers, through hidden meanings in certain passages, and by highlighting Korean sentences in the midst of Japanese writing. The entire story is written in Japanese except this passage: “I am a hypocrite. I am a liar. My homeland, Cannot love” (82). Moreover, Yang-ji uses complex language shift and anastrophe to show the readers that it is not Yuhi’s language shift; rather it is actually the narrator “I” shifting her language to Japanese in the novel.

Yuhi writes a 448 page journal in Japanese before she disappears. Yang-ji depicts the fact Yuhi writes the diary but she does not reveal any content of her writing. And then, Yuhi suddenly makes a telephone call to inform about her diary written in Japanese to the narrator “I,” who refused to send her off at the airport as she leaves Korea,

“On’ni, I have a favor to ask. Please open the top drawer of the closet in my room. There is a brown envelope. I want you to have it. If something happens and if you lose it, I don’t care. I am sorry I suddenly ask you this. I hesitated, but I cannot throw it away or burn it, I even cannot take it with me to Japan…It is a diary I kept writing since I started living with you. I could not throw it out… On’ni you please do
something with it, you don’t need to hold on to it, throw it away please.”
“I got it, I will do what you say. You said your departure was at four o’clock, right?”
“Yes.” “It’s soon then.” “Yes.”
“So, it’s in the dresser on the left side of your room, as you were saying.” “Yes.”
“I shouldn’t read it, though, right?”
“…but, you probably won’t be able to understand it. It’s in Japanese.”(Yi 22)

This journal of Yuhi is a complete secret: Yang-ji did not introduce a word written in the
journal to anybody; neither to the narrator “I” nor to Japanese readers. This reflects the real
Yuhi herself—her feelings, her thoughts and her identity that nobody can read and completely
sealed. Melissa Wender argues that the marginalization and the ambivalence of identities such
that the diary itself presents Yuhi’s identity in this case, are discovered and embraced in Yang-
ji’s writing (Wender 11). In Yuhi’s case, the marginalization and the ambivalence of her
identity are doubled because she is a minority both in Japan and Korea. The core message of
Yuhi’s journal is an untouchable total secret, which symbolizes the intersection between the
Korean and Japanese languages and their national identities in their mutual inability to
enunciate what both Yuhi and the narrator desire in truth.

The complicated language shifts that occur between Yuhi and the narrator “I” show
the oppression, brutality and hardship of navigating between languages and cultures, which
Japanese and Koreans, as well as Japanese Koreans, go through. The narrator “I” is looking at
Yuhi’s diary with every single word written in Japanese, not understanding what these pages
said, but just gazing at the Japanese letters Yuhi wrote. The narrator “I” expresses her feelings
of frustration for Yuhi’s estrangement from Korean culture and people.

We stayed together close like that, and I was worried, sympathizing for her as my
real sister. I sometimes scolded her seriously. And I was sure that she felt the same
way for me as her real sister and we attracted each other in a same way. But Yuhi was far away.
Yuhi started living in this house and the closer we get, the more Yuhi complained to me about Korea.
Yuhi used to tell me “The students in this country spit on the floor of the cafeteria, and they don’t throw trash into the bin. They also don’t wash their hand after using the restroom. If I rent them my textbook, they return it with marks in pen. They rip foreigners off with their prices and never say thank you for sharing a ride in a taxi. They never say sorry when they step on your feet. They yell and don’t know how to compromise. Onni, in Korean language, there are almost no passive expressions. Did you know that, Onni?”(77).

Yuhi criticizes Korea, and the narrator “I” describes her criticism in Japanese. Yuhi explains that she does not participate in Korean national culture and rejects her Korean identity to the narrator “I,” who does not understand Japanese. But eventually the narrator “I” repeats that in Japanese for Japanese readers. In repeating Yuhi’s criticism for Korea in Japanese, the narrator “I” accepts her criticism rather than disagreeing, and describes Yuhi’s struggles through a Japanese perspective rather than a Korean, confirming to Japanese readers that Yuhi rejects Korean the culture, language and identity in which Yuhi relates. As an “exophone narrator” (Ryu 316)—a narrator who is in the state of “exophony”, that is “being outside of one’s mother tongue (Tawada 3)—telling a story in Japanese, Yuhi’s Koreaness is absolutely rejected and overcome by her Japaneseness, and the narrator “I” acknowledges and cooperates with it. Thus, every language shift goes backward in this novel. Rather than the narrator “I” criticizing Yuhi in Korean, she accepts, reassures and re-identifies Yuhi’s solitude and rejection of her Korean identity by retelling the story in Japanese.

5. Mimicry and minority identity

While shifting to the dominant language, minorities often end up mimicking their
oppressors. Homi Bhabha claims that inevitably in a world of cultural mixing and differences of power, the colonized often end up mimicking their colonizers, adapting the colonizers’ language, as well as educational and governmental systems, and new cultural forms emerge (Bhabha 28). Minorities find themselves adopting the culture, language and mentality of the dominant culture because of the shame of being oppressed, and they blend themselves into their dominant culture, hoping for liberation from oppression by displaying a reformed, recognizable identity. This results in the urge to create a split identity within their minority experience. Moreover, mimicry is more than just the suppression of one’s native culture. According to Bhabha, although they rarely realize it, the oppressed society’s mimicry of the dominant culture undermines the powerful systems created by the oppressor. By imitating them, the oppressed prove just how hollow and unstable those systems are (Bhabha 28).

In Kashua’s case, while he represses his Arabic language and adapts himself only to the Hebrew environment, he simultaneously and thoroughly adopts the culture of Jews.

Kashua rigorously goes about changing his fashion, possessions and behavior.

In my second week at school I bought myself some pants in a Jewish store. I bought a Walkman and some tapes in Hebrew. After that, I’d always have my Walkman and a book in Hebrew whenever I went through the airport. I took a cab whenever I needed to get to or from the central bus station. Adel an Arab friend and I stayed friends, but I never invited him home again (Kashua 102).

By changing his own looks and behavior, Kashua escapes the shame he used to feel in his childhood, and instead he believes himself to be happier, proud and powerful. He determines to follow through with his decision to erase his Arabness and believes this will afford him the
peace he seeks. So thoroughly does he attempt to negate his Arabness that even when he participates in a school trip to Wadi Qilt, an Arab village, and he is recognized by boys from his home village, he refuses to acknowledge them.

The kids from Tira called out my name, and I pretended not to hear them. “Hey, look, it’s him. Over there, in the shorts,” they said. I passed by them quickly. A few of them said, “Hi, how’re you doing?” and I wanted to dig a hole and hide. I nodded and kept going. Later, when some of the kids asked me if I knew them, I said I didn’t. “But they know your name,” one of them insisted, and I said it was a common name among Arabs (105).

Kashua’s struggle to overcome his Arabness is nearly complete. He has become a new person.

He concretizes himself with his new split identity and feels no guilt or regret, but rather a makeshift sense of contentment. This scene is a good example of Bhabah’s theory of mimicry and identity, which supposes that the oppressed mimic their oppressors; however, because it is mimicry and imitation, those who mimic prove plagued by ambivalence, hollowness and unstableness. Thus the main character here hides his identity and lies to the children from his hometown.

The mimicry in Yuhi is more complex and contradictory. At the beginning, Yuhi seems to be oppressed by Koreans in Korea. However, the narrator “I” recalls a memory of Yuhi, and does so by mimicking her Japanese. Thus, the story itself acts as a type of mimicry in the form of Yuhi, a Japanized Korean. The narrator “I” switches from oppressor to oppressed when she mimics Yuhi in Japanese. She is obsessed how Yuhi copes in Korea, swinging from joy to sorrow as if she herself is controlled and oppressed by Yuhi. Even though the main background of the novel takes place in Korea, and Koreans are supposed to
be the oppressors in this story, Yang-ji uses an extremely subtle technique to switch between oppressor and oppressed through the contradiction of switching the language and mimicry in this story. Yang-ji follows this with the unavoidable historical facts as they exist between Japan and Korea: Japan conquered Korea. This is depicted multidimensionality of the story: Yang-ji uses the narrator “I” telling a story in Japanese, and in her recalled story, she mimics Yuhi symbolizing items as Yuhi’s voice, face aspect, her gaze, her hand writings, and a small lump. For example;

“An empty taxi sped toward me, and I flagged it down and got in. As soon as it started to move in the direction of the house, my restlessness returned with the swiftness of a forgotten thought suddenly resurfacing, Yuhi’s voice, the voice I heard over the phone”(Yi 7).

Yuhi’s voice as a more invasive physical force than before Yuhi left, penetrates directly into body of the narrator’s “I” (Ryu 321). Likewise the small lump the narrator “I” sees floating around in her heart as Yuhi’s facial expression, and the voice she hears in her heart as Yuhi’s, “우리 나라 (Uri Nara) my homeland”(55), are all part of Yuhi’s identity. Yang-ji uses metonymy in the narrative replacing Yuhi in her mind with various objects, such as a lamp.

All these mimicries and symbolisms are actually Yuhi’s identity that the narrator “I” recalls in her heart, and by recalling and telling the story in Japanese, they become the real Yuhi. Yang-ji wants Japanese readers to perceive the real Yuhi through the voice of the narrator “I,” rather than Yuhi’s own, so that, in the very telling of the story, the author creates a split identity of

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8 This word is particularly written in Korean language, English translation is my translation
the actual Yuhi and the other Yuhi. The actual Yuhi is a Japanese Yuhi who, although Korean by ethnicity, was born in Japan, and after visiting her supposed homeland, leaves Korea hating it. The other Yuhi is a Japanese Korean Yuhi whom the narrator “I” recalls as a voice, a gaze, as certain facial expressions, as her writings and a small lump in her heart.

Mimicry is in fact complex because it is ambiguous regarding to whom it gives power, particularly since the oppressed can use it to subvert the oppressor. However, through mimicry the oppressed become almost the same as the oppressor, but never quite fit in with the hegemonic cultural and political system that govern both of them. Through mimicking the oppressor, the oppressed can express their ambivalence toward the perceived temporal superiority by infiltrating the culture of the oppressor. Thus, mimicry can become unintentionally subversive for the oppressed.

In Dancing Arabs, Kashua depicts this complexity and ambiguity of mimicry in the last scene of the hospital visit with his wife. The main character feels uneasy because people in the waiting room at the hospital all look like Arabs. He wishes neither to interact with anybody nor to reveal his identity. Then a lady who in religious garb asks him a question, which causes him great turmoil and agony.

“Excuse me,” someone addresses me. She’s young, dark-skinned, and fat. Behind her are two more women. They all look the same. Must be sisters. The woman stresses the words wildly: “She is in a birth condition,” she says, and I don’t know where to hide. What should I tell them now? Maybe I should answer in Hebrew. I do that sometimes. Arabs turn to me in Hebrew, and I answer them in Hebrew, because how should I know they’re Arabs? True, you can tell, but if they didn’t recognize me, maybe I could pretend not to recognize them either. Then again, with those three, you can’t miss it. They’re Arabs from head to toe. Maybe I ought to give my “I haven’t the faintest idea”
shrug? Because I really don’t have the faintest idea what they want from. Why me? Why not someone in a white coat? Is it the book? Did they think I was a doctor on his break?
I lower my voice and whisper to them in Arabic that they should speak with the nurse, and I point toward the nurse’s station.
“Ahhh,” the younger one says, and shouts out in Hebrew, “Because she is in a birth condition!” I can feel my face on fire, and I try to conceal it with my book (Kashua 205).

This scene illustrates the different aspects of mimicry, and the possibility that mimicry can break the boundary of stereotypes in cultural settings. Kashua uses the satire of mimicry in a way that the main character is tricked by somebody who looks typical, while on the other hand he depicts the verisimilitude of stereotypical mimicry. This complex identity-mimicry scene shows how the main character is deprived of power. He always feels more powerful and successful when he mimics Jews; however, the power he feels consists of mimicry and falsity. And when his mimicry and falsity are shaken by the confusion of responses as in this scene, it destroys his mimicry, and the facade and ambivalence of the imitator are exposed, revealing the absence of any real power. Instantly, the woman talking to him disturbs and confuses him, and he makes a mistake in his response. This mistake embarrasses him, and he realizes that he is the hollow, powerless one in reality, and his fake power is valid only in mimicry.

In Yuhi’s case, first and foremost, Yuhi is a Japanese Korean. She has processed entirely the mimicry of her Japanese conquerors—in the form of culture, identity and language. She was born in Japan as a Japanese-Korean minority. Because of her minority identity, Yuhi is constantly segregated and isolated in Japanese society. No matter how much she acts Japanese, she is still considered a minority. Then she comes to her mother country,
Korea. Though she intentionally mimics Koreans—Korean culture and language—she again feels the same isolation she felt in Japan. Yuhi attempts to mimic Koreans in order to find her Korean identity, but keeps failing, and instead finds herself estranged from Koreaness, rediscovering her true Japaneseness. The narrator “I” functions not only as a storyteller but also as a converse mimicry of Yuhi’s Koreaness, by using Japanese in a story. This reminds Japanese readers that Yuhi is much more Japanese than Korean. In several scenes, the narrator “I” mimics Yuhi in a somewhat mocking but affectionate manner. This particular passage is not Yuhi’s voice, but is the narrator “I” mimicking what Yuhi says.

“I like On’ni and Ajumoni’s (the Aunt) Korean language…..it makes me happy to know that there are people who speak this kind of Korean. I am happy that I kept staying in this country. I was here in this house, not in this country, but in this house” (Yi 86).

Yuhi shows affection to her host family for the first time. She does not like the Korean language spoken by Korean people, but she does, somewhat ironically, likes the Korean language of the narrator “I” and her aunt. By recalling this, the narrator “I” re-acknowledges Yuhi’s affection for them. The aunt also recalls Yuhi and mimics her.

“She loved the Tofu Chige(a Korean hot pot dish) more than anything. She was such a cute girl, wasn’t she? She never looked her age,” Said an aunt.

“I remember when I was cooking Tofu Chige like this, and Yuhi came suddenly and said, ‘Excuse me, Ajumoni,’ and scooped a bit of soup and tasted it. She continued tasting it more and more and said ‘Masshisoyo,’(delicious) hugging me. Her glasses became dimmed from the steam. She wiped her glasses with edge of her sleeve, making round shapes on her glasses as if she were wiping her eyes. Funny gestures, they made me laugh. I could not bear her cuteness” (90).

In a separate passage the narrator “I” mocks Yuhi affectionately.

“Hey, Ajumoni (aunt), do you remember how Yuhi peeled an apple?” I asked my aunt. “It will be a waste of an apple,” Yuhi, said but I persuaded her to peel an apple. Almost 5 centimeter apple skins fell into the sink.
Then Yuhi said to me ‘Kuronika Akkapchanayo’ (I told you it would be a waste). I mimicked Yuhi with an awkward accent and narrow lips, and said to my aunt “She must find a man who does not eat an apple…” and we laughed (115).

Recalling Yuhi in these scenes show the love that the narrator “I” and her aunt indeed have for Yuhi. However, it also shows certain vexation and sorrow that Yuhi’s Japaneseess is stronger than her Koreaness. In other words, her Japaneseess defeats her desire for Koreaness, and Yuhi’s efforts at achieving an authentic Korean national identity during her stay in Korea are ultimately in vain. As Bhabha claims regarding minorities and mimicry more generally, the mimicry of the narrator “I” shows the ambivalence of the oppressed, but also gives power to Yuhi as a member of the oppressing society. Indeed, this is a sophisticated way to depict mimicry such as the vulnerability born of the Koreans’ love for Japanese Koreans, as opposed to the Japanese Koreans’ love for Koreans.

6. Chapter conclusion

Minorities in Dancing Arabs and Yuhi are exposed to oppression in many forms, including psychological violence. This creates for them a sense of crisis in their identities that we cannot really perceive from surface. Minorities go through certain processes that result in their split identities: they feel shame at being oppressed and desire to pursue a happier, more comfortable life in which they are empowered by infiltrating the oppressive society and culture. In so doing, they often oppress their native language, and eventually mimic the culture, mentality and language of their oppressor.

However, although it may appear that minorities succeed in adapting and becoming
part of the oppressor’s society, they still are not accepted. They remain apart, unable to escape their oppressed status. Minorities—in this case, Israeli Arab or Japanese Korean minorities such as Kasua or Yang-ji suffer from this dilemma and experience an ongoing ambivalence regarding their split identity, in which they lose belongingness: they no longer belong to their original national culture, nor have they succeeded in fully becoming part of the culture of oppressor. Both Kasua’s and Yang-ji’s writings exhibit phenomena of trouble some minority identity. Oppression, split identities, and the solitude they feel are part of the complex minority experience. Although these two minority literatures illustrate significant influence from psychological violence, Dancing Arabs and Yuhi have almost opposite style of tone in their narrative. One is bright and the other is dark in their presentations of the identities of minorities who live in these psychologically violent environments. This juxtaposition of tone is fascinating because we can assume that the social situations in Israel and Japan are quite dissimilar: one in constant, if not always blatant, conflict and another seemingly peaceful. Likewise, when it comes to the plot, narrative and tone, they are completely opposite from each other. Still, they both depict clear synesthesia, as the minorities experience ongoing oppression in each society.
Chapter II
Political Violence and Minority Identity
Sayed Kashua’s Let It Be Morning and Kazuki Kaneshiro’s Go

Minorities often live in an environment strongly influenced by politics—for example, along the border between Israel and Arab territories, or Korean towns, the regions or districts where most Koreans live in Japan. And in these areas, minorities often experience political violence. According to Perry Mars, political violence—in the form of wars, international conflicts, insurgencies and guerrilla campaigns, riots and uprisings, massacres, genocide, stone-throwing and terrorist attacks, military occupation and state repression—is usually the result of the interaction and interdependence between individuals and groups, and as such solutions to the problem can only be found within the political system as whole (Mars, 24). As minorities in their societies, Israeli Arabs and Japanese Koreans suffer from political oppression, biases and particular conflicts in their political system, and between two conflicting countries—Israel and the Arabs or Japan and Korea.

One of the causes of the political violence from which these minorities suffers is the oppressors’ Orientalist perspectives towards the oppressed. The oppressive society tends to view the oppressed through certain images created and perpetuated by the media, including
discriminative stereotypes, through which they judge them and reaffirm their biases. And these biases are tightly connected with the way that Edward Said described Orientalism. However, minorities experiencing their present oppressive culture often struggle among themselves, which means that they do not take the fight to their oppressors because they are discovering or reestablishing their original national culture and identity. This national culture and identity refers to race or ethnicity. Often however, the outcome of political violence for minorities is that, their identities shift between the two societies or countries—that of their oppressors and of the oppressed. They eventually lose any belongingness, such that they belong in nowhere, with no actual legitimacy or real political apparatus.

Minority identities are caught in this “no man’s land” as Karan Grumberg claims (Grumberg 128), because Israeli or Japanese culture, guided by Western Orientalist views of Arabs or Japanese Koreans, has stripped them of their culture and identity. These minorities have begun to rediscover their national identity, but they have not yet come together in the struggle to assert themselves against their oppressors. Thus, these minorities, in effect, exist in this no man’s land as a people—caught between the rediscovery of and the unified struggle to reclaim their national identities. In this chapter, I examine the autobiographic minority literature of two Hebrew and Japanese minority authors—Sayed Kashua’s Let It Be Morning⁹

⁹ Kashua, Sayed, and Miriam Shlesinger, Let It Be Morning, (United States: Grove Atlantic, 2006)
and Kazuki Kaneshiro’s *Go*. ¹⁰ I examine how these minority identities are affected and
influenced by political violence and the way this influences their identity, analyzing through the lenses of important literary and social theorists such as Keren Grumberg, Franz Fanon and Edward Said.

1. Sayed Kashua’s *Let It Be Morning*

Sayed Kashua’s *Let It Be Morning* was published in 2006 as his second novel, following *Dancing Arabs*. This novel, like his first, is also semi-autobiographic. In *Let It Be Morning*, the main character is married to an Israeli Arab woman just as Kashua did. After experiencing the struggle over identity described in *Dancing Arabs*, it is crucial for the main character to determine to go back to his hometown, in an effort to reestablish his root of identity, because he must reverse his choice to assimilate into Israeli society and identity, and attempt to find a way to embrace his original Arab identity. The entire novel describes the struggles and puzzlement over his minority identity back in his home town, Tira.

Yet in addition to the struggles over identity, Kashua, through the point of view of the narrator, vividly describes moments of political violence and conflicts within Arab national culture in *Let It Be Morning*. The story starts when the narrator and his family, his wife and his little new born baby arrive to his parents’ house, hoping that they will find a better life there. The story depicts the eruption of the second Intifada in October 2000, in which thirteen

Arabs were killed by Israeli police during a demonstration. This incident quickly leads to the chaos and tragedy of the second Intifada. The narrator is an Arab Israeli who works as a journalist at a Jewish newspaper. By going back to his hometown and into the heart of second Intifada, his work position becomes unstable and unreliable, such that he cannot fully earn enough money to support his family. This causes great turmoil and financial stress for the narrator, who just has moved and has a new born baby to take care of. Additionally, the second Intifada brings frightening chaos into his Arab village; particularly when the border is blocked. In turn, all communication and media is shut off, water and electricity supply is suddenly cut off, the bank stops providing services, and basic items such as food and water become scarce. This set of events unfolds quickly, and nobody knows what is really going on, since neither the government nor the media have officially reported or given any warning. Thus Kashua depicts the vivid struggle for survival in the small village of Tira, which is merely indicative of the larger national struggle, the fear and confusion experienced by Arab citizens of Israel in the midst of such chaos, and the change in the narrator’s identity regarding his nationality and citizenship.

Then all of sudden, some of the tension is released when the electricity returns. The mystery is revealed. Only then, do they see the big picture: the second Intifada had erupted on the border. A peace agreement has been reached between Israelis and Palestinians, which makes most of the Arabs in Arab villages in Israel part of a new Palestinian entity—they are
officially Palestinian citizens governed by the Palestinian government. Kashua writes this scene telling his wife almost comically at the end of the novel, “I think we’re Palestinian now. We’ve been transferred to the Palestinian Authority” (Kashua 266) in the end of novel. It seems rather paradoxical that the national identity as race or ethnicity of the main character depends not on his personal choice, but on the political conflict itself. This seems to indicate that minorities have little agency in determining their nationalities and their destiny. Their whole lives are unstable, and they feel hollow because they cannot actively settle the question of their nationalities.

Identity discovery and “Transfer” is one of the major motifs in *Let It Be Morning*. Catherine Rottenberg argues that Kashua literalizes the significance of “transfer” and forcefully dramatizes the sheer improbability of inhabiting a Palestinian-Israeli identity, when the state refuses to recognize Arab citizens who remained in Israel post-1948 as Palestinians, and insists on defining them as Israeli Arabs (Rottenberg 4). Because minorities are oppressed and have little agency, they are often transferred without political stability, politically, historically and culturally, in terms of their identities. Only after the implementation of the peace agreement were villages previously part of Israel, placed under the jurisdiction of the new Palestinian state. Thus, their the Israeli citizenship was revoked, with most Arabs being transferred to a Palestinian in national identity. The novel depicts the notion of “transfer” throughout the entire story—the narrator’s physical transfer to Arab territory, the mental
transfer in his identity, the cultural transfer in the sense of nationality, and political transfer from Israeli to Arab. However, these transfers are greatly influenced by the political violence of the second Intifada that provides a harsh path for those who in Arab villages during this chaos, wading through various struggles and shocks to their culture and their identities.

2. Kazuki Kaneshiro’s *GO*

Kazuki Kaneshiro is a famous Korean Japanese novelist. He published his autobiographic novella *GO* in 2000 as his first work exploring the experience of the Japanese Korean minority. This novella won the Naoki Prize—a Japanese literary award, which recognizes the best work of popular literature in any format written by a new, rising, or (relatively young) and well established author. *GO* became a film the following year and also won a couple of best movie awards. Kaneshiro’s work is broader than this novella, and he continues to publish various works of pop literature that influences the Japanese film and Manga (animation) industries.

Kaneshiro was born in 1968 in Saitama, Japan. He went to North Korean ethnic schools in Japan through middle school, where Korean was the first language. The academic curriculum of his school was based on Korean culture, politics, history and philosophy. When Kaneshiro finished middle school, his family chose South Korean as their nationality. Then Kaneshiro chose to attend a Japanese high school, where Japanese was the first primary language. He received a Japanese education and later went to Keio University, one of the most
prestigious in Japan. From his childhood throughout his teenage years, and into adulthood, Kaneshiro experienced dramatic changes in his environment and identity. He decided to be a novelist after he completed his education.

In *Go*, the main character, Sugihara, is a student at Japanese high school. Sugihara is cheerful and strong—the kind of protagonist everyone loves. Though in the story Sugihara criticizes discriminatory Japanese culture as ignorant and weak, he is still an attractive character to Japanese readers because of his strength, beliefs and optimism. In high school, Sugihara experiences various moments of discrimination because he is a Japanese Korean, even though he uses his Japanese name. But he is strong and confident enough that he is fearless, including using violence to defend himself. If Sugihara has a conflict with another individual, he never gives up until he is victorious. This novel is a good example of a minority living in a violent environment who overcomes the adversity of his geographic and demographic situation. Sugihara was brought up by a masculine and chauvinistic father who has no problem with domestic violence. Growing up, they practice boxing together daily. His father believes and teaches his son that violence can be used to obtain justice and in self-defense. Sugihara internalizes this doctrine and gets into countless fights with his Japanese schoolmates. Yet the physical violence that Sugihara experiences has political roots. Kaneshiro depicts this discrimination, the political violence and aggression, along Sugihara’s minority identity with a humorous and philosophic tone.
In this midst of all the harshness of Sugihara’s life—the countless fights, the discrimination and political struggles, the political violence between Japanese and Japanese Korean society, Sugihara falls in love with a Japanese girl. He tries to deny his feelings at the beginning, but he does not succeed. In the end of the story, when she simply accepts him as a person, tears come to Sugihara’s eyes—contrary to, his father’s education in toughness and against tears or any sign of weakness in front of people. Indeed, it is a beautiful ending in which Kaneshiro depicts love pushing beyond the boundaries of nationality, oppression and the struggle of identity.

The formal name of this novel is “Go—No Soy Coreano Ni Soy Japones, Yo Soy Desarraigado” (I Am not Korean Nor Japanese, I Am Uprooted). Kaneshiro surprisingly utilizes a Spanish sentence as part of the name of his book. It seems unusual to use Spanish, rather than English for the book title, when the entire book is composed in Japanese for Japanese readers. In the story, Sugihara studies Spanish as part of his preparations for the university entrance exam. In an effort to portray his core message, Kaneshiro uses Spanish to emphasize that Sugihara is uprooted.

3. Orientalism and Minorities

One of the common causal factors of minority prejudice is Orientalism. Often minorities experience repression due to Western orientalist perspectives, and both Israeli and

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11 The title is written in two languages, English and Spanish, and the novel is written in Japanese.
Japanese cultures are heavily influenced by Western culture. Minorities in Israel and Japan are often oppressed because the oppressors perceive minorities through an Orientalist lens.

Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism offers some insight into the challenges that Israeli Arab and Japanese Korean face in society. Said claims that the West, as it developed relations with the peoples of the East, viewed and interacted with those peoples through an “Orientalist” prism. (Said 40) When interacting with different cultures, what one sees on the surface is often different from the reality that individuals within that culture experience. It is impossible to define a culture from outside the system, or surface we see. This phenomenon can be found in both minority novels of Kashua and Kaneshiro.

The stereotypes assigned to Oriental cultures and "Orientals" as individuals are specific: Orientals are despotic and clannish when placed in positions of power, and sly and obsequious when in subservient positions (Said 42). Orientals, so the stereotype goes, are impossible to trust. They are capable of sophisticated abstractions, but not of concrete, practical organization or rigorous, detail-oriented analysis. This concept automatically gives superiority to Westerners and an authority to judge, oppress and discriminate against oriental people. Orientalism, as a part of the colonialism of the 18th and 19th centuries, attempted to impose the “superior” Western culture on Eastern people, and one of the results has been fractured cultures and identities among the colonized people.

Israeli Arabs are biased because many view Arabs, even before Jews arrived in
Palestine, a dangerous, violent, less sophisticated and indigenous people. The Israeli Arab conflict has only complicated that perception further. Due to the Orientalist perceptions towards Arabs, Jews tend to perceive Arabs with bias leading towards discrimination and oppression. In turn, Arabs rebel against this and tend to become violent out of frustration. This series of ongoing conflicts complexes the relationship between Jews and Arabs, in which Jews feel threatened by Arab violence. Thus, Arabs are viewed as being dangerous and threatening, Jews attempt to condemn Arabs within the Israeli society.

Japanese Korean culture in Japan is also perceived and oppressed in Orientalist terms, even though many Japanese Koreans look, act and think very similarly to Japanese. Stefan Tanaka introduces the historical archives of Japanese Orientalism that in the late 1800’s, European historians such as Francisco Guizot had a strong influence on Japanese intellectuals. He describes the concept that Europe leads the rest of the world in overall progress with respect to advances in civilization further leading to a dominant culture in the global perspective. In Japan, intellectuals who were heavily influenced by the European ideals adopted the new thoughts standards into Japanese academia. By the early 1900’s, this shift in academic standards defined Orientalism in Japan, and created severe biases towards Chinese and Korean citizens (Tanaka 39-47). After formal colonization in 1910, Japanese pressured Koreans to assimilate towards more Japanese culture (Ryang xiv). Moreover, Eiji Oguma argues that Orientalism was completely accepted in Japan as an authoritative academic
paradigm imported from the West and kept growing. A number of scholars started modifying and creating Japanese versions of Orientalism, employing terms from modern Japanese intellectuals when referring to Chinese and Koreans (Oguma, Askew, and Rubin 111-116).

Ever since the emergence of this phenomenon, Japanese Orientalism, which has been implanted into Japanese nations is quite strong that firstly Japanese tend to look down or despise non Westerns. It is ironic because Japanese are also non Westerns. Japanese have perceived Chinese, Koreans and Japanese Koreans as inferior, less educated, not cultural, not civilized, violent, dirty and animal-like and thus, they own impure blood, thus they are generally less valuable to society than their Japanese counterparts. And even nowadays, many Japanese people get annoyed to be called that they are Chinese or Koreans. When Japanese Koreans reveal their minority identity in Japan, they immediately and automatically experience severe discrimination within Japanese society, and the discrimination appears everywhere: the workplace, marriage, school, university, and so forth. Thus, many of Japanese Koreans, still today, actually hide their Korean names, using only Japanese names, avoiding the revelation of their identities in Japanese society till nowadays.

In *Let It Be Morning*, Kashua depicts this Western Orientalist view, and the narrator endures work-related biases after he decides to leave Jerusalem to return to his Arab village. He is an Arab newspaper journalist, but he speaks and writes in Hebrew for a Jewish newspaper. When he lives in Jerusalem, he has no problem at the workplace. He gets along
with the company, his boss and colleagues. The fact that he is part of the Israeli Arab minority seems irrelevant. However, when he decides to leave for his boyhood Arab town, everybody around him changes their attitude.

I tried to survive. I’d always been a survivor. I knew how to adapt to my surroundings, working and doing what I wanted. Except that ever since those two bitter days in October, the task of survival had become tougher. I had to be twice as careful, to listen to quips and jabs by colleagues who’d never spoken to me like that before. I smiled when the secretary asked, almost every morning, ‘So, did you throw any stone at the entrance?’ I denounced the Islamic Movement when they did, I expressed my grief over every Jewish casualty after a terrorist attack, I felt guilty, I cursed the suicide bombers, and I called them cold-blooded murderers. I cursed God, the virgins, paradise and myself. Especially myself, for doing everything I could to hold on to my job” (Kashua 21).12

Kashua tries to describe the discrimination he experiences at the workplace, which highlights the Orientalist views towards minorities present in the society. He implies that Israeli society is influenced by political conflict, and this conflict creates severe bias for Israeli minorities.

The main character did nothing wrong, and was never involved with terrorism. However, he is lumped together with the terrorists and violent faction in the Israeli Arab conflict. His decision to live in the Arab village, even though the narrator has changed nothing regarding his views or his identity, causes the people at work view the narrator differently, as if he is one of the enemy. To them he has suddenly become, “a dangerous Arab who wants to attack Jews” or “an Arab who wants to participate in violent acts of revenge,” and consequently the narrator feels oppressed, judged and unhappy, through no fault of his own. Kashua uses allusion of bias based on Orientalism in Israeli society; how the Israeli Arab conflict directly

12 All texts presented are from English version of the novel
influence Jew’s view towards Arabs. This allusion suggests that one day Jews and Israeli Arabs can be both friends and allies, while another day they can be complete enemies. In Kashua’s story, the Jews are heavily influenced by Orientalism towards Israeli minorities as depicted in this scene of his workplace.

This strong bias of Orientalism toward Israeli minorities is influenced by Israeli media. The narrator watches Arab cable TV for the first time at home after his return to his hometown.

I switch just in time to catch the news on Channel One, Israel TV, which begins with another item about a cell of Israeli Arabs who’ve been picked up on suspicion of helping a Palestinian suicide bomber get to Tel Aviv (35).

Israeli media continuously broadcasting news about dangerous Arabs attacking Israel. It’s points of view are one-sided portraying noticeably Orientalist depiction of Arabs.

Kashua depicts another similar scene.

I hate watching the news on Israeli national television. Tanks appear on the screen, planes and fire are everywhere, and in the background they’re playing a military march heralding the war that could break out any minute (92).

Every time the narrator opens Israeli channels, he sees violence. The Israeli channels do not report movements for peace or the other side of the story, such as the fact that many Arabs simply want to live in harmony and wish for peace in Israel. According to Rosemary Righter, the problem with international media that perpetuates Orientalist vies is twofold. First, the media is powerful such that they permeate widely and thoroughly. Second, their service is not truly neutral: the news is selected to suit Western attitudes and interests, and is heavily biased, generally ignoring news is often inaccurate and subjective (Righter 121-122). Righter exactly
points to the Orientalist bias in media, which can easily manipulate the viewer. Jews who watch Israeli news channels will likely simply believe everything the reporter says, not questioning whether the news is biased or not, and therefore build personal hatred towards their violent enemies, who they see as all Arabs. Kashua depicts this issue of Israeli media and bias, which the media creates by showing what the narrator watches on Israeli TV. Kashua and the narrator of the narrative are both Israeli Arab minorities, who see the news on Israeli TV from both the Jewish and Arab perspectives. This scene of the narrator watching Israeli TV fully depicts that all Israeli Arabs can develop a negative connotation towards themselves and the Jews who depict them as criminals. The writing of this scene brings synesthesia to the reality of Israeli minorities who lives in Israel.

Kaneshiro provides similar problematic biases in his story GO. In the narrative, Japanese Koreans experience Orientalist stereotypes—Japanese perceive Japanese Koreans inferior because they are minorities, and are often talked about in sarcastic ways. The background is a Japanese high school, since Sugihara is about start school there.

I passed the entrance exam, and waited for the entrance ceremony for my Japanese high school. One day suddenly the school called me. I went there and the vice principal and a teacher in charge took me to the office and questioned me. “We expect some problems to accompanying your entrance to the school, so consider using a Japanese name.” In other words, if I use my Korean name, I could be bullied or something, so I should hide my identity by using my Japanese name. “I am proud of my Korean name, which I inherited from my ancestors. Ditching my name is the same as ditching my pride. So I cannot accept that.” I did not say such stupid things. Why? Since expressing my desire to attend Japanese high school, I was actually bullied badly by teachers at my Korean ethnic school. Some teachers called me “traitor.” (Kaneshiro 23)\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{13}\) All texts shown are my translation from the original novel written in Japanese
For Japanese people, Koreans in Japan are automatically considered a negative minority.

Koreans from Korea are not really minorities, but Japanese Koreans are minorities in Japanese society. And when they need to interact with them, the Japanese force Japanese Koreans to follow Japanese ways—first and foremost, to adopt and use solely a Japanese name. The identity problem of Japanese Koreans is reflected in their reluctance to use Korean names. Afraid of discrimination, eight out of ten students use their Japanese names when they register for Japanese high school (Min 26). This phenomena is not limited only to children.

Many Japanese Koreans who succeed in businesses and entrepreneurial enterprises in Japan still hide their Korean names and identities. This is because it is much easier for Japanese Koreans to build paths of success like that. They are forced to cooperate or participate in building a pseudo homogeneous Japan, and an idealistic doctrine that Japan, is only for Japanese people with Japanese blood. And minorities like Japanese Koreans are automatically perceived through Orientalist views that make them out as inferior, dangerous, dirty and less than Japanese people.

Kaneshiro depicts the Japanese police discriminating against Japanese Korean children in a public space. The narrator, Sugihara recalls a scene when he was a second grader at his ethnic school.

One day, some friends and I just left the ethnic school on the way home. Suddenly the patrol car came to us from behind. Some of my friends were walking along the sidewalk. The police woman did not let us just go by, but she used a megaphone from the patrol car and shouted at us: “Scams like you, trash of society, go to the edge, don’t walk here.” But we did not even think, “what a horrible thing to say,” because
we were used to this kind of situation. So many propaganda trucks came and shouted all sorts of even more horrible things around the school. But to be honest here, even though I was used to it, it made me angry (54).

Yuji Iwasaki claims that after World War II, approximately 680,000 Korean resident (registered under the Alien Registration Law) did not elect to return home, and their descendants born in Japan, and now eighty percent of Koreans residences are second or third generation Japanese, born in Japan. They have been raised and educated in Japan, most of them have never seen Korea, and many do not even speak Korean at all. Yet they are regarded as aliens, not Japanese (Iwasaki 8) and they do not have the same human rights as Japanese people. And the police, which functions under the government, discriminates and treats Japanese Koreans as if they don’t have any human rights. This kind of scene is difficult to see if one does not live in a Korean town in Japan. However, this is how Orientalist views by Japanese people affect Japanese Koreans. In or around Korean towns, it is common and accepted to curse Koreans as scams. Likewise, all sorts of right wing propaganda trucks come and say even more horrible things, which subject Japanese Koreans to a great deal of psychological violence. In Japanese society, however, and outside of Korean towns, they strictly require minorities to be exactly the same as Japanese people, because they do not want to deal with any problems. Japanese Koreans are under severe oppression and violence, and have no recourse to avoid it or fight against it through legal means. They are locked in a country where people perceive them unequally, and without human rights—just as in Edward Said’s Orientalist view.
Kaneshiro points out Japanese Orientalist bias in *Go* with vivid expressions in the narrative. “Dirty blood (179)”, “Chon-kou チョン公(136)”,14 “Korean hunting (64)”15 are clear discriminative expressions that Kaneshiro uses symbolize and describe simile of Japanese Orientalist bias towards Japanese Korean people. The dictions and tones of these expression are extremely humiliating, harsh and are used against Japanese Koreans since the rise of Japanese Orientalism. In the narrative, Sugihara, the main character responds to these negative verbal expressions with physical violence. In the Japanese point of view, with respect to the view on Japanese Koreans, Kaneshiro supports the claim that Sugihara is aggressive and violent rather than quiet and intellectual. Japanese audience perceives Sugihara as a stereotypical Oriental. And Sugihara rebels much quickly with his physical power by being violent towards Japanese Orientalism. The author Kaneshiro depicts Sugihara from the protagonist point of view—fighting against the severe prejudice, not remaining silent under the oppression, and reflecting that this ongoing minority bias continues into the present. Many Japanese Koreans suffer from this discrimination in Japanese society through in the novel, *Go*.

14 Wikipedia Japan, チョン（蔑称）https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E3%83%81%E3%83%A7%E3%83%B3_(%E8%94%91%E7%A7%B0), Chon-kou is a cursing nickname for Japanese Korean. In Japan Broadcast Association, this word is considered a discriminative word and is prohibited to use in the media.
15 Japanese bullying especially targeting Japanese Koreans
4. Minorities in their national culture

When minorities return to or participate in their national culture, outsiders often expect that they will finally feel safe, satisfied, and happy or fulfilled in their identities, because they are returning to their origins. However, their realities can be very different than the appearance. Attempting to return to their native culture does not automatically resolve the complexities endemic to their identity. Instead, according to Franz Fanon, colonized people find that their identities remain in a “rediscovery stage” — re-identifying, realizing and re-adjusting to their national culture. The three stages of development in reclaiming one’s national culture are assimilation, rediscovery and fighting stage (Fanon 59:627-644). He points out that minorities often show their culture through the struggle for freedom — not by trumpeting the culture of the past, but rather in expressing the present national culture.

Israeli Arabs and Japanese Koreans also struggle to define and express their national culture. This is especially true for those who have access to the cultures of both the oppressor and of the oppressed, and who thus experience deep identity struggles — assimilating, rediscovering and adjusting between two national cultures. Murray A. Straus states that conflict is an inevitable part of human association, a so-called “conflict of interest” where the members of a social group, no matter how small or intimate, each seek to live out their lives in accordance with their own personal agenda (Straus 41). In both Israeli and Japanese minority literatures, as represented by Kashua and Kaneshiro, the rediscovery of identity—
their experiences of minorities returning to their national cultures— are depicted as full of the agony and struggles associated with conflict and political violence, rather than happiness or satisfaction in their identities. What is interesting is that these conflicts, political violence and the accompanying struggles are actually part of their current minority national culture. This is Fanon’s description of minorities fighting against their oppressors.

In *Let It Be Morning*, the Israeli government deprives Arab communities of resources, services, communication and information in the days leading to the Second Intifada. Kashua depicts the sudden halt of banking services in Tira, the unusually high traffic, shortages of basic groceries, electricity blackouts, and eventually water supply cuts as the Second Intifada proceeds. However, nobody in Tira knows what is going on and why all these resources are blocked, and this lack of information in turn makes their situation more chaotic. The Jewish government and authorities suddenly cut resources, communication and information amongst the Palestinians due to their perceptions of stereotypically dangerous Israeli Arabs. Ralf Dahrendorf points out that when oppressed groups are allowed the right to organize and voice their grievances, the chances of violent conflict are decreased (Dahrendorf 237-240). In this novel, the group violence of Arabs in Tira only continues to increase, contrary to Dahrendorf’s claim, since the basic human rights are violated and everything is chaotic, with no organized outlet for Arabs in Tira to voice their grievances. The vivid scenes depicted in the story of people fighting for money, food, and water, and eventually threatening
each other through, burglary and violence, become commonplace within the village. They are
the expressions of present Israeli Arab national culture in the language of Fanon.

The main character attempts to navigate between multiple identities, in which he is
an Arab, a Muslim, a husband, and a father, as well as an educated and assimilated Israeli
citizen. Now that he is back to his home town, and feels the need to re-assimilate into the
Arab culture and Arabness he has avoided for a long time, he struggles through the grueling
process of rediscovering his identity. Yet the main character shares this struggle with other
Arabs in the village. Kashua depicts this rediscovery stage through the inner struggles of the
community, including the fighting, aggression and violence among Arab neighbors in Tira.

His neighbors attack the narrator’s house because he hides food.

“Get the hell out of here, you lunatic,” I shout, and push her backward, but she tries
again. More people are approaching the door now, trying to get in as well. My heart
is pounding. My brothers block the entrance as the number of trespassers grows. I
can’t keep them out and they’re going to break into the house. I feel stifled and
flushed. With one hand, I push away the ugly neighbor and hate her more than
anything in the world. I clench my fist, lower my right hand and shove it as hard as I
can into the neighbor’s stomach. She recoils in pain, grasping her middle, and I can
hear myself scream…They wave their weapons high in the air and shout, “What’s
going on here? Enough!” And the crowd, ready to obey the new forces in control,
shout out, “They have food!” (Kashua 222-223)

Groups of people in Tira fight against the narrator and his brother in an attempt to obtain food
and water in the midst of the Second Intifada, attacking, rioting, stealing and threatening each
other, despite the fact that they share a common nationality and struggle against the dominant
Israeli culture. Fanon’s theory on stages of national struggle help us to understand what is
happening here. Arabs in Tira are not just fighting against their Jewish oppressors: they also
desperately fight among themselves to fill basic human needs. As Fanon claims, minorities re-
discover their identity not through peace but in struggles; it does not matter against whom
they fight. This means that minorities have not yet melded a common national culture, and
have not yet reached concretion in their identity in one common culture. Thus, this scene of
struggling national culture is, in reality, a real Arab national culture in Israel. In *Let it Be
Morning*, the conflicts and fighting among people of the same ethnicity are the present reality
in Israeli Arab national culture, and they impel the main character to rediscover in his own
identity. In my literary analysis, the narrative has a very serious and realistic tone that depicts
the Second Intifada from the Israeli Arab perspective. It portrays the allusion that Israeli Arab
minorities are fighting in order to simply survive, not to attack their enemy to achieve the
victory over the Jews.

In Kaneshiro’s *Go*, the identity struggles of the narrator Sugihara in regards to his
Korean national culture and a minority identity as Japanese Korean, are demonstrated through
violence, brutality and bullying within the Japanese Korean community. John Lie suggests
that we can find contemporary counterparts in Japanese Korean literature, which is replete
with violence, sexual violence, family dissolution, gambling addiction, substance abuse,
alienation and anomie, murder and mayhem, to parricide, pederasty and incest (Lie 83).
Kaneshiro writes the scene of the battle almost like a professional boxing match, which
begins with a quarrel between Sugihara and his father in the park. They beat each other up till
one of them is unable to get up.

“Come on, Rookie,” said father.
What the hell! I bent my knees and I put my whole body weight into my toes and kicked at the ground with full speed. I flew into father’s stomach…I got three strong punches on my face. They were like a piece of crushing cement. I heard my back pop from massive crush. The second punch broke my front teeth. I tried to guard my face with my arm but it was too late. I got another punch in my side, so I lowered my guard. Then I got a final punch on my left cheek. I saw a light blue flame, then disappeared. In the next second, I fell on the ground. The earth was shaking, going round and round. I felt as though I were drunk. Somebody, stop this earth shaking. Damn it, Damn it, Damn it. (Kaneshiro 215)

Sugihara’s father is a former pro-boxer, and Sugihara has practiced boxing with him since childhood. He learns that being strong and beating each other up is no something bad, but rather a kind of power or wisdom. Sugihara believes this is influenced by Malcom X’s philosophy: “Violence for self-defense is not called violence, it is called intelligence” (21). As Seiji Takeda argues, the violent father is one of the enduring motifs in Japanese Korean literature (Takeda 14-16). Sugihara’s father plays on this motif, he is strong and violent. No matter what, Sugihara cannot beat his father. Instead, Sugihara’s father beats him till he is unconscious. This violence intermixed with love within the Japanese Korean family represents the current Japanese Korean national culture. In Fanon’s words, they are struggling, conflicting among minorities seeking their own national culture apart from the oppressive majority. It symbolizes the complexity of the minority’s psyche and irresolvable identity issues they face—the self-hatred, guilt of self-hatred, rejection by Japanese society, ethnic discrimination, cultural assimilation and so forth.

The main character tries work out his national culture in the violent environment
among minorities. The narrator Sugihara goes to Korean ethnic school, where all the
education revolves around history, culture and love for the homeland in Korean language, till
he decides to switch to Japanese high school.

One day in the class “The evolutional history of Kim Jong-il,” I fell asleep because I
studied till late the night before for an entrance exam to Japanese high school. Then I
woke up with a slap on my face from the teacher. He stopped class and made me sit
on the floor and said, “Criticize yourself!” I did not have anything to say, so I
remained silent. Then he gave me another strong slap, and my ear made a funny
noise.
He kicked my thigh with his shoe. He strongly pinched my nose five times, pulled
my ear, and dragged me on the ground. By this time, the school knew that I was
leaving to attend Japanese school, so their bullying was becoming worse.
“You, traitor!” He kicked my stomach. “You cannot succeed in anything!” He hit my
head. “You, collaborator!” He slapped me again (72).

Because Sugihara decides to quit the ethnic school, he experience not only physical violence
but also political violence from the teachers at the ethnic school. Eric Hobsbawm helps
explain this phenomenon. He regards China, Japan, and especially Korea as “among the
extremely rare examples of historic status composed of a population that is ethnically almost
homogeneous” (Hobsbawm 56-57). Koreans, in the mainland as well as in Japan, feel a strong
sense of unity and homogeneity, as well as pride and love for their homeland. Yet if one of
their own goes against them, as Sugihara does, their rejection can be severe and strong
because of their strong loyalty and nationalism. Thus, the ethnic school considers that
Sugihara is a traitor to Korea, rejecting his origins, his own people and Korean culture and
homeland. The teacher deeply abuses of Sugihara for his decision to attend Japanese high
school. And for Sugihara, it is as if he has committed some crime in choosing to attend
Japanese school, so he is bullied and beaten by his teacher. This is an extreme example of
Fanon’s claim that the violence among oppressed does not always manifest toward oppressor, it is more the way that the oppressed work out and display their present national culture.

5. Minority identity in No Man’s Land

Minorities in Kashua and Kaneshiro’s novels face complex identity struggles, in which they fit neither the Jewish nor Arab, Japanese nor Korean cultural identity. Karen Grumberg argues that identity is mapped onto inhabited spaces, and that Israeli minority identity is a kind of “no man’s land” for Arabs in Israel (Grumberg, 128), since it is unoccupied or is under dispute between parties who leave it unoccupied due to fear or uncertainty. They feel caught in a “no man’s land” of identity and belonging, in which they have not succeeded in building a united struggle for national identity.

Grumberg further claims that minorities are located in a “social, cultural, and spatial in-betweeness, which gives rise to a new identity as a superficial collage of various components identified with authentic minority identity (Grumberg 142). Israeli Arab and Japanese Korean characters in minority literature indeed occupy “between” spaces and cultures, which can cause significant disorientation in their identities. In this section, I examine how minority identities float in this “no man’s land” described by Grumberg, belonging neither to the identity of the oppressor nor the oppressed in Kashua and Kaneshiro’s oeuvres.

The main character in *Let it Be Morning* returns to his original Arab village, and in
the process goes through a rediscovery period in his identity. However this journey of identity rediscovery for him and his family is not an easy experience. Shlomo Ben-Ami sees Israeli Arabs as “torn between their loyalty to their Palestinian brethren across the border and their Israel citizenship” (Ben-Ami 19). In fact the narrator is skeptical about finding happiness by returning to his home town, even though he has already returned. He does not really trust the Arab environment he is in. The story begins with a scene at his parent’s home after returning to the Arab village. “I try to persuade myself that the change might be for the better” (Kashua 10). Because he drastically changes the environment from a Jewish to an Arab one, he is not sure if his decision is right or not. His wife is not happy about returning to their Arab hometown at all: “My wife didn’t like the idea of returning to the village. In fact, she hated the idea, and she hated me all the more on account of it” (17). It was a long time that they were away from their home, their people and culture, and they assimilated to a more Jewish identity. It seems they indeed lost their loyalties to their Arab origins and most of all, to their Arabness. Throughout the entire novel the narrator feels this kind of uncertainty, a feeling of not belonging anywhere, of no authentic identity. When the Second Intifada begins, it forces him to live in the chaos, not only of his own internal struggle, but of the larger Arab struggle for identity and acceptance.

Although the narrator does not know it is the Second Intifada, this event makes his journey even more difficult. Things for him do not go smoothly in his village. He does not
socialize well in the community and does not get along with his Arab neighbors; they even become his enemies. His work is uncertain, and he constantly feels threatened by violence, riots, and struggles. He can find no happiness or satisfaction in his return. Michael Karen analyzes Kashua’s writings and notes the strong statements about how the vulnerability of the Arab minority in Israel, eventually creates a new “Jewish Arab” identity, no longer belonging to no man’s land (Karen, 133). *Let It Be Morning* portrays an innocent protagonist and his sense of political victimhood, and by reversing his identity from an assimilated Jew to an Arab, the narrator’s minority identity switches from an Israeli Arab who lives in Jewish society to a Jewish Arab who has assimilated to become a Jew.

Eventually in the very end of the novel, the main character says to his wife, “I think we’re Palestinian now. We’ve been transferred to the Palestinian now.” (266) The novel ends with this ambiguity regarding his identity — the narrator does not know who he is or where he belongs, and he cannot decide what his identity is. Gil Hochberg writes that Kashua represents the impossibility of sustaining an Israeli Arab identity even as a chosen illusion. The separatist ethno-national imagination that renders the Israeli Arab a national threat and a demographic problem (Hochberg 77-78). Kashua portrays the main character as someone who does not feel that he is an Arab by choice, but rather by circumstance. By returning to his hometown and interacting with Arab neighbors, the main character only feels Arab through the political violence the narrator experiences. His identity gap invites readers critically to
In the case of *Go*, the representations of minority identity belonging to “no man’s land” are vivid. First and foremost, Kaneshiro uses Spanish in the title of his book to indicate that the character is neither Japanese nor Korean: he is uprooted. Melissa Wender demonstrates that Kaneshiro calls himself “Korean Japanese”—an identification no doubt genuine, but it would be imprudent to read Kaneshiro considering how he is being packaged and is packaging himself in the very carefully produced world of contemporary Japanese culture (Wender 198-201). This is similar to what Michael Karen claims for Kashua’s novel. Kaneshiro himself is and feels more Japanese than Korean, as he is second generation born and raised in Japan. He is Korean ethnically, but Japanese in his identity. This echoes ideas introduced by Sonia Ryang about the difference between first and second generation immigrants, in that the second generation are to a large extent immersed in Japanese culture, fluent in Japanese and they see their future to be existing in Japan, not in Korea (Ryang 128).

Kaneshiro depicts minority identity belonging nowhere by criticizing the homogeneous nationality issue in Japan. In Japan, dual citizenship or nationality is not allowed. If one possesses Japanese nationality, he or she is not permitted to claim any other nationality. This angers Sugihara.

If I were born in America, I would receive the status of “Korean American.” At the same time, I would have the same rights as an American citizen. I would be treated as a person. But this country is different. No matter how good I am, even better than all the Japanese, if my nationality is Korean, I am not treated like a human (Kaneshiro 201).
Then, Sugihara rejects the whole concept of nationality. He was given Korean nationality in his childhood. Thus, he owns a foreign ID card in Japan. He criticizes this policy.

In Japan, the law is intended to manage “foreigners who reside in Japan.” It sounds beautiful, the word “manage,” but it actually means “let’s put leashes on all foreigners because they are like criminals.” All foreigners must carry this card, and if they don’t, if they are unleashed, they are simply forced into a cell. What am I, livestock owned by a country? I am not, so I don’t put any leash on me, not now and not ever (186).

In another scene, his girlfriend claims that “Chinese and Korean blood is impure” (179). He is hurt by her words, and in fact he is terrified to find himself discriminated against by her after revealing his minority nationality. He cries out.

I don’t care anymore. If you want to call me Japanese Korean, just go ahead. You Japanese are scared of me, aren’t you? I am like a lion, am I not? Lions don’t think they are lions. You guys categorized them lions, that’s all. You keep calling me a lion, and should you come closer to me, I will just bite your neck and kill you. You are the one who will be killed as long as you call me a lion. Stop pushing me into the corner. I am me. I am not Japanese Korean, nor Korean, nor North Korean nor Mongoloid. I will just go somewhere that will let me forget who I am. If I don’t find a peaceful place in this country, then I will go as you wish. You can’t do that, huh? You will die tied to tradition, culture and nationality. You see, I don’t have any of that to begin with, so I can go anywhere I want anytime. Aren’t you jealous of me? (234)”

Sugihara’s voice as a minority is bitter and critical towards all Japanese—as a country, a history and a people. He criticizes the severe discrimination and oppression that the Japanese society has inflicted on Japanese Korean minorities. John Lie analyzes Kaneshiro’s writing as a reflection on existential and ontological questions of Japanese Koreans towards Japanese society: “Who am I?” “Where do I come from?” “Where am I going?” (Lie 97). And such questions are irresolvable, which merely makes them all the more urgent. They are especially pressing for people whose place in society is challenged and whose belonging is unsettled.

Thus, Sugihara chooses not to believe in any nationality and calling himself uprooted: No soy
coreano, ni soy japonés, Yo soy desarraigado (I am not Korean, nor Japanese. I am just an uprooted). And Sugihara says “That’s it, I decided, I am uprooted” (222). And this painful belief is based on countless experiences of political violence and oppression. Kaneshiro uses Sugihara’s voice in Go to criticize Japanese society and its discriminative, homogeneous culture, where its politics and bureaucracy are tightly connected to homogeneity. Membership in that community is restricted, and only those of Japanese blood can receive Japanese nationality, human rights and real privilege.

7. Chapter Conclusion

Minorities in both Kashua’s Let It Be Morning and Kaneshiro’s Go are stuck in a “no man’s land” identity complex, in which they lose not only their sense of belongingness in their identity, but also go through the shocks and trauma of rediscovering their identity as they attempt to return to their origins. Minorities as portrayed in this literature need to survive in two societies. Thus, they are oppressed and forced to assimilate themselves or to remain neutral, due to their need to come and go between the societies of the oppressor and of the oppressed over long periods of time. This results in a complex identity struggle, and in a sense of belonging nowhere—in a kind of “no man’s land.” Their identities do not have clear territorial markers, and thus no sense of belongingness to any certain group. Their identity and sense of self is full of confusion and ambiguity, and most acutely, the inner struggles of searching out who they are.
Both novels demonstrate a clear societal bias vis a vis minorities, which involves oppressing them through Orientalist points of view. Minorities are stripped of their national culture and struggle to assert their original identity, especially when they confront oppressive societies. This oppression often causes colonized minorities to become aware of their desire for self-determination and independence of identity, but yet it also exposes them to difficulties or challenges in achieving ethnic unity.

The characters in Kashua and Kaneshiro’s novels struggle to find ways to discover who they really are and where they belong, as well as to forge a national identity amongst themselves, not only against their oppressors. When minorities return to their national culture and begin to rediscover their identities amidst the struggle and conflict, they are, in fact, exploring their true present culture, so to speak. These struggles and conflicts can be misunderstood as the oppressed rebelling against the oppressors. But in reality oppressed are representing their current culture, in the stage of rediscovering their identities. They are struggling with themselves because of the threat of identity extinction and the pressure of societal discrimination. However, if Fanon’s notions are any indication, this struggle within their nation offers the hope that the “no man’s land” and the struggle for identity will eventually lead to a united struggle against their oppressors, in which they achieve the goal of national unity and identity.

In my analysis, although both novels, Let It Be Morning and Go depicts political
violence and minorities, Kashua’s writing is softer overtones than Kaneshiro’s literature.

Kaneshiro expresses a greater level of brutality towards the oppressors, whereas in Kashua’s writing encompasses a more passive tone towards his destiny as an Israeli minority. However, both narratives and tones of writing have major similarities in terms of descriptions of violence and political conflicts. The backgrounds of the novels and the characteristics of the protagonists are completely different. In these novels, the protagonists are heavily influenced by the political situations in each of their respective societies. Their minority identities; Israeli Arab and Japanese Korean, are determined by unique politics and individual histories. The protagonists go back and forth between the worlds of oppressor and oppressed, and every time they swing between two worlds, their minority identities transform. This eventually results in a lack of true identity and confusion, which is comparable to other people in society that struggle with defining themselves. It is incredibly unexpected and astounding to find these characteristics in the novel of Sayed Kashua and Kazuki Kaneshiro.
Conclusion

In the minority literature of an Israeli Arab author, Sayed Kashua and Japanese Korean authors such as Yi Yang-ji and Kazuki Kaneshiro, each of their works share similar commonalities. Many scenes portray the protagonist’s life struggle with violence, oppression, discrimination, and bias in their society. The minority protagonists in all narratives used in this thesis live and suffer from violence in their environment. They incur not only physical violence but also psychological and political violence from both Israeli and Japanese society. An investigation and analysis of how these minorities are influenced by psychological and political violence reveals various similarities in their minority experience. Both of the minority characters depicted in these novels, Israeli-Arabs and Japanese Koreans experience similar identity issues relating violence with their marginalized environment. It is depicted through their personal struggles, self-repression, rebellion or silence, and as a reaction against the harsh reality they live in. Each of the authors use series of literary devices such as allusion, paradox, satire, unpredictable plots to present synesthesia, and unique characters to depict that minorities keep suffering ongoing oppression and prejudices. Each authors convey same powerful message; severe discrimination continues to exist on a global scale.

Despite the vast similarities, these works express large differences in cultural overtones. The overall tone of Kashua’s Israeli Arab literature is almost entirely the opposite
of the Japanese Korean literature. Between the dominance and oppression, and the status quo in politics, Jews and Arabs appear more antagonistic than Japanese and Japanese Koreans. However, the Sayed Kashua’s stories are laced with humor, mocking and wit when describing the serious issues of colonialism and conflict in Israel. On the other hand, Yi Yang-ji and Kazuki Kaneshiro’s stories convey darkness, sorrow and despair when describing the minority oppression and discrimination they experience. Kaneshiro’s story may offer some humorous moments as well; still the overwhelming sense from the protagonist is despair and resentment towards Japanese society.

This phenomenon leads to a conclusion that all these oeuvres share a common literary technique: they each write in tones that represent the complete opposite of their reality, so that the stories are untypical, they stand out, and provide readers with suspense. All these authors have very unique voice from the perspective of minorities that they reach and grab the reader’s hearts and never let go. They are exceptional and their overall literary brilliance, that all these authors have been awarded prestigious literature recognition prizes.

It is extremely intriguing to compare literatures which are from completely different countries—they share great similarities in outcomes and influences from violence in minority identity, yet they contrastingly differ in the usage of their literary techniques and the tone of the writings. I can conclude that minorities in these literatures experience similar oppression, which we can clearly perceive how minority identity and violence relates in society. In
conclusion, minority identities change and shift due to violent environments, and these experiences in Israel, Japan and globally are similar, despite being in very different societies—one rife with constant conflict and another with seeking eternal peace.
Bibliography


