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Identity, Translation and Embodiment in Migrant and Minority Women's Writings in Japan, English Canada and Québec

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Résumé de la thèse

Dans cette thèse nous examinons la formation de l'identité et le rôle de la traduction, de la corporéité et de la migrance dans la littérature des femmes au Japon et en Amérique du Nord, plus précisément au Canada anglais et au Québec, dans les années 1980 et 1990.

Dans le premier chapitre, nous étudions les œuvres de deux écrivaines japonaises, Tsushima Yûko et Tawada Yôko. Dans leur récits sur la migrance, ces écrivaines traduisent le folklore et la littérature classique du Japon ou les légendes de la minorité indigène Aïnou dans le contexte contemporain. En créant une autre version, féministe et contemporaine, de la littérature orale et des récits de la littérature classique, qui transcende les limites du temps et de l'espace, elles nous montrent la signification d'un "troisième espace," ou un espace interculturel où elles vivent et écrivent leur œuvres. C'est surtout à travers cette dimension interculturelle et migrante que Tsushima et Tawada articulent leur identité en tant que femmes et en tant qu'étrangères, autant dans leur culture japonaise d'origine que dans les pays étrangers où elles ont vécu, ou qu'elle ont choisi comme pays

d'adoption.

Dans le deuxième chapitre, nous examinons le rôle de l'ethnicité dans la formation des "identités à trait d'union" ("hyphenated identities, les immigrants naturalisés et leurs descendants comme les Japonais-Américains, Italo-Canadiens, etc,) dans les œuvres de quelques écrivaines "Nikkei" (d'origine japonaise, dans ce cas japonaise-canadienne) en Amérique du Nord et écrivaines "Zainichi" (résident(e) du Japon d'origine coréenne) au Japon. Hiromi Goto, une écrivaine Nikkei et Yi Yang-ji, une écrivaine Zainichi décrivent le processus de formation des "identités à trait d'union" à travers les habitudes de consommation et la mémoire du corps de leurs personnages. Même si les personnages de Goto et Yi construisent leurs identités ethniques quelque part loin de leur pays natal, elles montrent que leur ethnicité joue un rôle très important dans ce processus. Il est aussi intéressant d'observer que la conscience de l'ethnicité dans les romans et nouvelles de ces écrivaines n'est pas transmise de façons directe, mais plutôt indirecte, à travers la culture culinaire et la mémoire du corps.

Dans le troisième chapitre, nous analysons le développement du féminisme et du bilinguisme au Québec après les années 1960s. De plus, nous examinons l'influence de ces facteurs sur les œuvres d'écrivaines migrantes au Québec dans les années 1990. Par exemple, dans les premiers romans de Ying Chen, écrivaine chinoise qui émigra au Québec en 1989, ces influences apparaissent comme une critique très prononcée du statut des femmes dans la société chinoise. En même temps, l'altérité que Chen revendique à travers son immigration devient une interrogation de la culture québécoise. Régine Robin, qui est d'origine juive , a appris la langue française en France et est venue au Québec en 1977, est une sociologue et une écrivaine migrante au Québec. À travers ses œuvres littéraires et critiques, elle suggère une idée de " Hors-lieu" qui caractérise le statut des (im)migrants au Québec et qui ne se place ni à l'intérieur ni à l'extérieur de la culture québécoise.

De plus, dans leurs œuvres récentes, ces écrivaines migrantes ne se définissent plus comme immigrantes, mais comme Québécoises qui participent pleinement à la culture québécoise contemporaine. Nous pourrons donc dire que ces écrivaines ont essayé de montrer une voie singulière pour dépasser leur ethnicité, et pour forger des nouveaux

horizons pour la littérature et culture québécoises contemporaines.

Comme hypothèse de travail, il est possible d'utiliser les théories du postcolonialisme, du féminisme, de la traduction et des études cinématographiques pour analyser les œuvres des écrivaines migrantes et des minorités ethniques au Japon et en Amérique du Nord. Traditionnellement, leur rôles comme femmes et minorités ont été négligés. Cependant, dans la culture contemporaine, ces écrivaines ont commencé à parler dans l'avant-scène de leurs sociétés respectives. De plus, nous maintenons qu'à travers leurs différents récits, nous pourrons nous interroger sur les enjeux de propres identités dans les sociétés postmodernes et multiculturelles.

Mots clés: Féminisme, Identité, Migrance, Minorité, Traduction

Abstract

The present dissertation examines the identity formation and the roles of translation, embodiment and migrancy in women's writings in Japan and North America - more specifically in English Canada, Québec - in the 1980s and 1990s.

Chapter One examines the works of the Japanese writers Tsushima Yuko and Tawada Yoko. Tsushima and Tawada's writings on migrancy translate Japanese folklore and Ainu (aboriginal people living in northern Japan, Hokkaidô) legends into a contemporary context. In the process, they give new meanings to oral traditions and classical literature, transcending the limits of time and space and questioning the meaning of the "third space" where they live and which they describe in their migrant texts. By so doing, they reveal the construction of their identities as women and as migrants.

Chapter Two examines the role of ethnicity in the formation of hyphenated identities in the works of Nikkei authors in North America and of Zainichi authors in Japan. Hiromi Goto, a Nikkei (Japanese Canadian) author in Canada and Yi Yang-ji, a Zainichi (resident Korean in Japan)

author describe the formation of ethnic identity through a specific culinary culture and through the memory of the body and the senses. Though the process of identity formation is detached from the original homeland of the protagonists, ethnic culture plays a central role. In the work of these writers, ethnicity becomes a vehicle for transforming the host culture, in contrast to culinary culture and embodied memories whose impact remains confined and personal.

Chapter Three traces the impact of the feminist movement and of bilingualism on the work of contemporary migrant women writers in Québec.

The early works of Ying Chen, a Chinese migrant in Québec, avail themselves of feminist discourses to critique women's position in China. Her "otherness" as a migrant also serves as a platform for articulating a strong critique of Québec culture. Régine Robin, who is Jewish and learned French in France, came to Québec in 1977. She is a sociologist and a(n)(im)migrant writer. Throughout her literary and critical works, she suggests an idea of "Hors-lieu," which characterizes the status of (im)migrants in Québec and which situates them neither inside nor outside of Québec culture.

These characteristics of migrant Québécois women writers' works address the need to question a certain isolationism or self-sufficiency in contemporary Québécois culture. Furthermore, in their recent works, these writers no longer address the question of migrant identity and minority politics, but rather write as Québécois who take an active part in their adopted culture. Thus, Ying and Robin seem to question the value of ethnic identification, suggesting new and productive directions for Québécois culture.

The participation of women and minorities in culture has historically been neglected. Since the advent of second wave feminisms and of civil and minority rights movements - particularly since the 1980s and 1990s - women and minorities have been both visible and vocal, claiming for themselves a speaking position at the very centre of mainstream culture. My analysis posits that the work of these migrant and minority women writers allows readers to question their own identities in a postmodern and multicultural society.

Key Words: Feminism, Identity, Migrancy, Minority, Translation

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For my parents

Introduction

1. Objectives of the Dissertation

This dissertation examines the formation of identity and the role of translation, embodiment and migrancy in women's writings in Japan and North America - specifically English Canada and Québec - in the 1980s and 1990s. Several factors, most of which derive from earlier social movements, contributed to the preeminence of themes such as migrancy and cultural diversity in the media, and in literary and academic cultures in both Japan and the West in this period. The feminist movement in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as multiculturalism and postcolonial studies in the 1980s had aimed to reverse cultural hierarchies and to reevaluate cultural productions that had been considered marginal or of negligible value. These movements have succeeded in securing a visible and stable place for the literature of women and minorities in dominant, national canons, and in provoking an unprecedented interest for this type of writings. The present dissertation examines these ground-breaking shifts in late twentieth-century writings by Japanese, English

Canadian and Québécois women. Before tracing the aspects addressed above in a close reading of several contemporary texts, a survey of the methodology and the main themes developed in this work is in order.

2. Methodology and Terminology

This dissertation consists of three chapters, each of which develops an interdisciplinary argument on the issues of identity, migrancy, the body and cultural translation in texts by Japanese, English Canadian and Québécois women writers which were published in the 1980s and the 1990s. This argument is grounded in theories of identity, especially those stemming from feminism and postcolonial studies, as well as in translation studies, recent film theory and theories of the body. I shall also review the historical, social and cultural background of the texts under consideration.

Chapter One examines the role of fantasy, folk legends, and cultural and linguistic translation in the writings of two Japanese women writers who have lived abroad for extended periods. Chapter Two

examines the intervention of "native food products" of the native homeland's culinary culture, and of bodily senses in the process of construction of ethnic identity in Nikkei (ethnic group of Japanese origin) and Zainichi (resident Koreans in Japan) women's writings.[1] Chapter Three discusses the role of ethnicity, the body and cultural translation in (im)migrant women's writings in Québec.

My analysis focuses on two main themes in each chapter. However, this focus is not meant to imply that the issues discussed in each chapter are unique characteristic features pertaining to either the work of the particular women writers I consider - such as Tsushima and Tawada in Chapter One - or to the literary cultures these writers are identified with (such as Québécois, English Canadian or Japanese literatures). The texts examined in the following chapters clearly share common concerns across national, cultural and ethnic boundaries. For

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[1]See section 2.5 (pp. 15-17) for definitions of the terms "Nikkei" and "Zainichi."

instance, the awareness of the differences between Japanese and Indo-European languages articulated in the texts of Tawada and Tsushima examined in Chapter One may be linked up with the acute sensibility to French as dominant language in Québec, described in the fiction and essays of the migrant Québécois women writers discussed in Chapter Three. Thus, my aim is to explore both the similarities and the differences between these literatures through these themes.

The most salient themes, terms and concepts in this thesis are presented in the following section:

2.1 Migrancy

Migrancy is an important thematic concern in this thesis. My understanding of the notion of migrancy is based on the definitions proposed by Québécois literary critics, by theorists of intercultural cinema, such as Laura U. Marks, and by recent postcolonial theory. These theories do not foreground the act of migrancy itself, but rather the creative process and new meanings it generates.

For instance, Pierre Nepveu defines migrancy in *Ecologie du réel* as follows: "l'écriture peut être dans beaucoup de cas, presque trop naturellement, typiquement post-moderne...la possibilité d'une convergence entre la montée des écrivaines migrantes et la fait que l'écriture québécoise dans son ensemble n'ait jamais été autant cosmopolite et pluri-culturelle" (*L'écologie du réel* 201-2). Another Québécois literary critic, Lucie Lequin, claims that migrants are "[women] writers who immigrate and who describe their intercultural experiences." She further explains that a migrant writer "participe du va-et-vient entre deux lieux, du concept de re(dé)- territoriali-sation, d'une certaine dérive" ("L'épreuve de l'exil" 31). Such an act of creation between the migrant's native culture and her culture of adoption is not limited to Québécois literature, but may be seen wherever individuals experience migrancy. Iain Chambers points out that: "migrancy and migration... involve a complex transformation" (26). He also emphasizes the creativity of migrancy beyond the displacement it involves. Salman Rushdie claims that migrants' creations are "roots, language and social norms." Since

these three elements are the "most important parts of the definition" of the migrant's identity formation, "the migrant, denied all three, is obliged to find new ways of describing himself, new ways of being human" (278). This dissertation shows that the cultural production of migrants describes the new identities, new skills and new roles adopted by the latter in their culture of adoption. My discussion demonstrates that the concept of migrancy, which is used mostly with respect to postcolonial and diasporic literatures, is illuminating also in the context of late twentieth century literary production by Japanese, English Canadian and Québécois women.

The notion of migrancy definitely resembles other influential terms in postcolonial theory, such as diaspora, exile and nomadism. Diaspora, however, focuses on the formation of cultural and spatial communities, whereas exile and nomadism's central questions are related to notions of homeland and homelessness. My use of the concept of migrancy in the present work implies a creative process, a text or work of art produced in the intercultural space between the migrant's native

homeland and her country of adoption. This concept is similar to the term "émigré," as explained by Alena Heitlinger:

> Caught between different systems of values, beliefs, languages, discourses, and identities, émigrés who are feminists can develop a distinct capacity of translating feminist ideas and practices across cultures (3).

Diaspora, exile and nomadism have been at the center of scholarly debates in the 1990s and the 2000s. The terms are perceived as partly overlapping, if not as wholly interchangeable. In a recent study of diasporic and exilic cinema, Hamid Naficy proposes the term "accented" in his work (see *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking,* 2001). In Naficy's view, all film and video productions by exiled, diasporic, minority and migrant media makers are "accented." He also traces the considerable impact of such filmmaking on contemporary national/transnational media culture. Naficy's concept of "accented cinema" (or accented cultural production) is, however, problematic in that it unifies under an overarching term experiences of displacement and migration, cultural legacies and politics that may be widely divergent or

even opposite. I prefer to use a concept of migrancy which calls attention to the creative process spawned between cultures, while deconstructing binary distinctions between "accented" and "non-accented" works. My understanding of the notion of migrancy is related to film critic Laura U. Marks's definition of the notion of "intercultural" (cinema or art):

> "Intercultural" means that a work is not the property of any single culture, but mediated in at least two directions. It accounts for the encounter between different cultural organizations of knowledge. (*The Skin of the Film* 6)

Marks also refers to films, artworks and commodities created in intercultural encounters as "transnational objects," which she describes as "objects that are created in cultural translation and transcultural movement"(78). Her description of "intercultural" works shares common features with Lequin's concept of migrant fiction/literature, yet I do not intend to discuss the differences between the two terms. Rather, I am interested in writings produced by women's "cultural translation and transcultural movement," and in the impact of the intercultural work of

such writers on the mainstream or dominant cultures.[2]

2.2 Identity

In contemporary multicultural, multiethnic societies, identity formation has become a highly complex process. Identity is the product of a multiplicity of factors, among which gender, class, race, sexual orientation, education and migrancy play an important role. Stanley Aronowitz describes identity building as follows: "identity can be apprehended only in relation to its own space/time and the space/time with which it intersects. 'Identity' is the name we give the product of this intersection" (Aronowitz 115). The elements in the process of construction of identity, therefore, are diverse. I will be examining the function of ethnicity and migrancy in this process. Chapter Two, for instance, traces in detail the role of ethnicity in the formation of the

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[2] My discussion in this dissertation insists on the differences between "migrant" and "immigrant," and on the adequacy of the former term in descriptions and analysis of intercultural work. The notion of migrancy clearly designates the creation of new values in migrants' host countries. The term "immigrant" may have discriminatory connotations in certain situations.

protagonists' identities in a selection of texts by Nikkei (Japanese Canadian) and Zainichi (resident Korean in Japan) women writers. I will show that ethnic food and culinary culture (in this case, Japanese and Korean), as well as memories inscribed on and in the body are important factors in the characters' self-perception and view of identity in general.

My readings also call attention to the impact of feminist thought and feminist movements on the representation of identity in the works of migrant and minority/diasporic women writers. For example, Morwenna Griffiths defines the construction of feminist identity as the manner in which "[women's] self-identity is to be understood as a kind of web, the construction of which is partly under guidance from the self" (93). Griffiths also insists on the role of embodiment in the formation of women's identities. In the case of migrant women's identity, however, this web becomes more problematic because migrant women interweave their experiences as women in their respective home countries with their status as migrants in the host culture. Alena Heitliger notes that the identity of

women in exile is often largely defined by, and interwoven with, multiple oppressions in the homeland they were forced to leave: "Women who choose exile often do so in order to escape from oppressive nationalist, religious and patriarchal discourses and laws" (5). My discussion in the following chapters examines the representation of women's complex intercultural webs of identity in Japanese, English Canadian and Québécois women's writings.

2.3 Language and Cultural Translation

Trinh T. Minh-ha explains the function of language in women's writings as follows: "[l]anguage is primarily a tool... for transmitting knowledge... the writing woman cannot address the question of difference and changes without reflecting and working on language" (44). The work on and of language plays a crucial role in migrant women's writings that question identity in the interplay between the first language/mother tongue and a second language, which more often than not is the official language of the host country. The blurring of distinctions between reality and

nonreality is yet another central question in migrant women's writings due to these writers' ambivalent position between several languages and cultures. The dense, plural texture of migrant identities is often expressed through cultural translation. The process of translation subverts the idea of the original, integrating the text of the translation with outstanding features of the society and culture into which that original, or "source" text, is translated. In other words, a translation will never be an exact replica of the original. Instead, it becomes a "creation" that blends the original (reality) with imagination (nonreality). The plural experience of translation - the fact that it participates in, and transforms both "source" and the "target" language/culture while being inevitably informed by loss - has been described by Lawrence Venuti as "an inevitable domestication, wherein the foreign text is inscribed with linguistic and cultural values"(9).

Sherry Simon describes the working of gender and of cultural translation in migrant women's writings as follows: "women 'translate themselves' into the language of patriarchy, [just as] migrants strive to 'translate' their past into the present" (*Gender in Translation* 134). Simon

goes on to argue that "for those who feel they are marginal to the authoritative codes of Western culture, translation stands as a metaphor for their ambiguous experience in the dominant culture" (*Gender in Translation* 135). My analysis of migrant and minority women's texts will show that cultural transformation in these writings is often based on a feminist agenda, and that it may be regarded as a metaphor for writers' experience in the dominant culture. In addition, translation in migrant and minority women's texts seems to assume a function similar to that seen in postcolonial literature, where it is defined as a "never-ending transaction between the uncertain poles of cultural differences" (Heitlinger 165).

2.4 Fantasy

In contemporary literature by women, fantasy expresses, more often than not, women's dissatisfaction with, and critique of, the realities of their experience in an unequally structured, male-dominated society. Fantasy in women's fiction may thus be regarded as a particular form of

self-expression. Charlotte Spivack describes the role of fantasy in women's writings as follows: "fantasy deals with the journey to self-knowledge, speaking to the conscious...in the language of the un-conscious, symbol and archetype" (4). Hence, the use of fantasy in women's writings signifies a process of self-discovery. Fantasy does not only work on an individual level, since it is commonly used in contemporary women's writings "to transform society through the creative power of the imagination. The quest is a fantasy metaphor, but the transformation is a real goal" (Spivack 15). My analysis will show that fantasy and the revisiting of folk legends and oral lore in some migrant women's writings seek precisely to "transform society through the creative power of imagination" as Spivack suggests.

2.5 Nikkei and Zainichi

"Nikkei" is a Japanese word that signifies of "Japanese origin."[3]

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[3] The word is composed of "Nichi" (which means Japan) and "Kei" (which means origin).

In the 1990s, this term began to be used in scholarship on Japanese immigrants and their cultures, especially in North and South America (i.e. Japanese American, Japanese Canadian, Japanese Brazilian). [4]

"Zainichi" refers to Korean residents and their culture in Japan.[5] This term has not been used as extensively as Nikkei, but recently it has surfaced in English-language scholarship on the Korean-Japanese minority. This is partly due to the impact of postcolonial studies and to minority cultures in European-language studies on modern Japan. For instance, *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* (2000), a recent collection of essays on the Korean minority in Japan edited by Sonia Ryang demonstrates that the term "resident Koreans in Japan" is used by most scholars, yet two of the contributors in the collection, Koichi Iwabuchi and Melissa Wender prefer to use the term "Zainichi" when

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[4]For example, see Marilyn Joy Iwama's *When Nikkei Women Write: Transforming Japanese Canadian Identities 1887-1997* (Ph.D. Thesis submitted to University of British Columbia, 1998).

[5]In Japanese, "Zai" means Resident and "Nichi" means Japan.

referring to Korean Japanese.[6] "Zainichi" film director, Oh Duk Soo has even directed a film entitled "Zainichi." The term should indeed be employed rather than "resident Koreans in Japan." Though "Zainichi" undoubtedly has discriminatory connotations, it also describes the impact of Korean culture in Japan, just as Nikkei has become an indispensable description in contemporary American culture and society. The term Nikkei has both positive and negative connotations. In a positive sense, Nikkei refers to a participant in the multicultural culture of the United States; in a negative sense, it designates a war victim, or a Japanese-American who endured discrimination and/or internment during the Second World War. The use of Zainichi in this dissertation implies that Zainichi, or resident Koreans in Japan, are actively taking part in contemporary Japanese culture. My analysis will demonstrate that the cultural production of Nikkei and Zainichi women can serve as a source

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[6]See the following articles: Koichi Iwabuchi's "Political correctness, postcoloniality and the self-representation of 'Koreaness' in Japan," and Melissa Wender's " Mothers write Ikaino," in Sonia Ryang's *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin.*

of empowerment for minority communities elsewhere, and that it should be reevaluated as a central and valuable component of the "dominant culture" in both North America and Japan.

2.7 Food and Culinary Culture

The role of food and culinary culture in the process of construction of ethnic identity through bodily memories has been a central concern in anthropology, postcolonial and ethnic studies and in feminist theory since the 1980s. For instance, Peter Farb and George Armelagos argue that the "eating habit produces various human relationship[s]... Eating, in short, is inseparable from the behavior and the biology of human species and from the adaptation that humans have made to the conditions of their existence on the planet" (3). Thus, "eating habit[s]" are passed down from generation to generation, eventually becoming part of wider networks of relationships. Such relationships in their turn become the base of communities that eventually lead to the creation of nation states. Among particular ethnic groups, eating habits are very diverse

and change according to certain cultural and social conditions. The diversity of eating habits certainly helps to establish and consolidate a sense of common identity in ethnic communities. The relationship between eating habits and ethnic identity has been amply explored by antholopologists. Susan Kalicik, for example, writes that: "In many cases the struggle to keep or give up ethnic food habits continues into the succeeding generations as they struggle to adjust their sense of ethnic identity and their relationship to the larger unit"(41).

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, an antholopologist of Japanese and Nikkei culture, has focused her analysis on the relation between the "Japanese and rice," arguing that "the Japanese notion of the self has taken on a different contour as a different historical other has emerged, ... Rice and rice paddies have served as the vehicle for deliberation" (5). My analysis will show that the process of constructing ethnic identities through food, the sense of smell and memories related to food looms larger in the writings of Nikkei and Zainichi women - and by extension in minority communities that are geographically separated from their

homeland - than in the work of migrant Japanese women writers.

2.7 Memory, Gender and Embodiment

The narrative produced by bodily senses and by cultural or ethnic memory is an important theme in recent migrant women's writings. The body has become the focus of a constantly growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship, which has historicized and theorized its manifold expressions, its function as object of representation and its signifying practices. Elizabeth Grosz, for instance, argues that "the body is commonly considered a signifying medium, a vehicle of expression...its effects can be taken into account and information can be correctly retrieved" (9-10). My discussion will draw out the role of the body and the senses as a unifying medium of articulation and interpretation of various types of memory in the texts examined in the following chapters. The constitution of the gendered subject through citational, repetitive, performative acts that are grounded in the body has been re-conceptualized by Judith Butler, who argues that " [g]ender norms are the

criteria of intelligibility for the enactment of gender, for the constitution of a gendered subject through bodily enactment" (*Bodies That Matter* 55). Elaborating on Butler's notion of "performativity," Theodore R. Schatzki writes that Butler "interpret[s] the soul as something signified by bodily activity; it is a 'surface' of social signification inscribed on the body... Different components of individuality such as mind, gender, identity, personhood, and subjecthood can be understood as dimensions of existence expressed by the active body" (69). Butler's theorization of the performative construction of the gendered subject and of performative agency will be used in conjunction with other feminist and postcolonial theoretical work on the body to highlight the representation and function of embodiment in migrant and minority women's writings.

The role of the body and of embodied memory has also been intensely scrutinized in Japanese, Korean, Indian and other non-Western feminisms. Japanese feminist critic Oka Mari describes the working of embodied memory in women's writings and political activism as follows: "Bodily memories are not simply used to recall events in the past. The

events conveyed through memory occur in the present. [Remembering] is an experience where one retrieves feelings and senses through one's body and soul" (*Kioku/Monogatari [Memory/Narrative]* 6). This description will be used in my analysis of migrant women's writings where the narrators / protagonists in these texts recall lived feelings and experiences in their homeland through their bodily senses.

2.8 Women's Autobiography and Feminist Studies

Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson argue that the role of autobiography is like that of a mirror. They explain that "by reading other women's autobiographies, women find their unvoiced aspirations in their own experiences" (*Women, Autobiography, Theory* 5). Women's relationships to others are diverse. Some women built their identity through the observation of their grandmother and mother. In *Remembering Wei Yi Fang, Remember Myself*, the African-American video artist Yvonne Welbon examines the formation of her identity by relating it to the culture of Taiwan, where she spent six years, and

subsequently by integrating her new sense of identity with the memories of her mother and grandmother. Memory is not only generational or ancestral though, but can also stem from experiences with or through others. As Paul John Eakin notes: "Sharing memories with others is in fact a prime social activity" (*How Our Lives Become Stories* 109). This "other" does not only refer to people, but can also mean sensory experiences such as smell and touch. Autobiographical authors record their memories through their senses and impress them on their body. Hence, women's autobiography often evokes embodied memories and memories of the senses. Laura U. Marks points out that (women's) memory is "located in the body" (142), and that "memory might be encoded in touch, sound, perhaps smell"(129). The body is, therefore, "a political witness"(201). These characteristics of women's autobiography, as a witness of their experiences and of their memories, can be seen in migrant women's writings, especially from the 1980s and 1990s. I shall therefore argue that these characteristics of migrant and minority women's writings should be reevaluated in an interdisciplinary context.

2.9 Other Feminisms

As feminism began to established itself in academic culture in the 1980s and 1990s, many different forms of feminist discourse emerged.

Feminist movements during this period are often described as "third-wave" or "postfeminism." These recent developments should not be seen as an entirely "new" wave, as they grew out of previous feminist movements and were influenced by various contemporary cultural theories. One of the salient characteristics of third-wave feminism is the diversity of its participants, whereas previous feminist movements had been composed mainly by white women, in third-wave feminism, participants come from various ethnic backgrounds (i.e. black, Asian, etc). Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake define third-wave feminism as "a group of young, conservative feminists who explicitly define themselves against and criticize feminists of the second wave "(1). They forge their identity not only against previous feminists, but also by questioning the role of "gender" in society, another idea that had also been discussed

among earlier feminists. In recent discussions about feminism, however, gender is not a ready-made construction. Instead, it is performative and fluid, and depends on the social situation.

Such active women's voices appear in a variety of feminist artistic expressions in the 1990s. For instance, in feminist films, there do not seem to be stereotypical images of women and feminists; such films often humorously deconstruct the ways in which women are stereotyped in advertisements. These characteristics of feminist films are rooted in a feminist aesthetics, which accoding to Maggie Humm is an "aesthetic [which] focuses on women's social subjectivity, not simply on visual imagery, while feminist art aims to transform the social, sexist values of traditional aesthetics" (10-11). Therefore, women's films take on the role of making the invisible visible. This means highlighting issues of women's gender identification, and the repressions and tensions contained within women's identity.

2.10 Parody and Irony as Postmodern Strategies

Parody and irony are prominent techniques and strategies of representation in postmodernism, as well as in women's literary and media production since the 1980s. The use of these strategies in literature is, however, not a recent phenomenon; the lineage of parody may be traced as far back as the period of Aristotle. Hegemon seems to have been the first to introduce parody in the theater in the 5th century B.C. The techniques of parody, however, have transformed the meaning and effect of a literary text throughout literary history. For example, Linda Hutcheon describes postmodern parody as follows:

> Parody... is usually considered central to postmodernism ...the postmodern is said to involve a rummaging through the image reserves of the past in such a way as to show the history of the representations their parody calls into attention...this parodic reprise of the past art is...always critical. (*The Politics of Postmodernism* 93)

Hutcheon firstly defines the use of irony in postmodern contexts as follows: "Irony makes...intertextual references into something more than simply academic play or some infinite regress into textuality (95). For

example, Japanese Canadians have a sad history of discrimination, marginalization and internment during World War II which they were not allowed to disclose for a long time. Hiromi Goto, a Japanese Canadian writer, uses parody and irony in her works to inscribe Nikkei's history in literature. This use of irony to critique Canadian society is not limited to Nikkei writings. Hutcheon, who is an Italian-Canadian writer, underlines the specific use of irony in Canadian literature, as she sees similarities between irony and Canadian culture. She explains this idea as follows: "There is a structural and temperamental affinity between the inescapable doubleness at the base of irony as a trope and the historical and cultural nature of Canada as a nation" (*DoubleTalking* 12). Hutcheon is here referring to the doubleness of English and French Culture in Canada. However, contemporary Canadian culture is characterized more by multiculturalism than by such a cultural duality. Thus, in contemporary Canadian literature, irony displays multiple meanings. This transformation of irony in Canadian context is explained by Arun P. Mukherjee, an Indian Canadian critic, as follows: "It seems to me that ironies based on radical

differences are always a reactive response to the dominant, white society" (Mukherjee 166). To explain this idea, Mukherjee analyzes the use of ethnic body and embodied memories in the works of immigrant Canadian writers. She notes that the work of South Asian Canadian and African Canadian writers critique dominant white Canadian culture and its discriminatory or racist attitude toward ethnic minority groups through the use of irony.

3. Outline of the Work

Chapter One examines writings of Tsushima Yuko and Tawada Yoko, migrant women writers in Japan, in the 1980s and 1990s.

In the early 1980s, Ôba Minako, considered the pioneer of migrant women's writings in Japan, published *Oregon yume jûya (Ten Night of Dreams in Oregon,* 1980) and *Kiri no tabi (Journey Through the* Mist, 1980). The poignant, often ironic scrutiny of the migrant experience and the incisive critique of traditional Japanese patriarchal culture articulated in these texts impacted on the representation of similar

experiences in the work of younger writers such as Tsushima Yuko and Tawada Yoko in the 1990s.

Tsushima Yuko lived in Paris for a year and spent some time in the United States in the 1990s. Her sojourn abroad is described in two works, published in 1999: a collection of autobiographical short stories, *Watashi (I),* and a collection of essays, entitled *Ani no yume watashi no inochi (Brother's Dreams, My Life).*

Tawada Yoko lives in Germany and writes in both German and Japanese. This bilingual situation allows her to fully develop her creativity. My analysis focuses on three of Tawada's works on migrant experience, "Inu muko iri" (The Bridegroom Was A Dog, 1993), "The Gotthard Railway" (1996) and "Kakato wo nakushite" (Missing Heels,1989).

Chapter Two examines the process of construction of hyphenated identity in Nikkei and Zainichi women's writings, in particular in the work of Japanese Canadian author, Hiromi Goto and in two texts by Korean writer Yi Yang-ji. My discussion focuses on Goto's first novel *The*

Chorus of Mushrooms (1994) and on Yi Yang-ji's short stories "Yuhi" (1989) and "Kazukime" (1984). While ethnic food and the sense of smell play a major role in all these texts, the works of Zainichi writers such as Yi Yang-ji show that the construction of identity also involves a temporary, or permanent rejection of ethnicity.

Chapter Three examines the work of migrant women writers in Québec, where an emergent tendency points beyond the established categories of ethnic identity and ethnic writing. I propose to analyze fictions by Ying Chen, who immigrated from China in 1989, and by Régine Robin, a Jewish writer, who was educated in France and came to Québec in 1977.

In *La mémoire de l'eau* (1992) and *Les lettres chinoises* (1994), Chen translates Québécois feminism in a migrant context, and produces incisive critiques of Chinese and Québécois cultures from the view point of an estranged (im)migrant.

Régine Robin is a Jewish migrant writer. As her identity is diasporic, she posits that the (im)migrant writer's location is neither inside

nor outside Québec society. She also questions the relation between literature and society. Such issues are addressed in Robin's *La sociologie de la littérature: Un historique* (1991). The questions of identity and migrancy are central also in Robin's autobiographically-inspired fictional writings: *La Québécoite* (1983) and *L'immense fatigue des pierres* (1999). Throughout her fictional works, Robin questions not only the category of ethnicity, but also the ability of specific literary genres to express her ideas as sociologist, migrant and feminist.

Chen, Robin and other women writers in Québec commonly describe their experience of immigration in their contemporary works. The more recent works of these writers, however, address concerns of a larger, post-ethnic imaginative scope, implying that these authors now see themselves as an integral part of contemporary Québécois culture. My discussion examines the aesthetic, thematic and conceptual trans-formations of (im)migrants and the shifts away from ethnic consciousness of minority culture in Québec.

Chapter I

Fantasy, the Rewriting of Oral Narratives (Folk Legends) and Translation in Japanese Migrant Women's Writings

1. A History of Women's Literature in Japan

Chapter I examines the function of fantasy, translation, folk legends, and/or oral literature in recent texts by the contemporary Japanese women writers, Tawada Yoko and Tsushima Yuko. While these writers are not self-identified feminists, their texts are clearly permeated by a feminist consciousness. To contextualize the work of these writers, I will begin by offering a brief survey of Japanese women's literature since the 19th century. I will rhen go to examine the relationship between feminism (or women's status in society) and Japanese women's writings.

Kano Ayako, a Japanese feminist critic, characterizes Japanese feminism after the Meiji era as aiming "to achieve equal status for and liberate women, and to improve women's status in society" (Ehara 196). She also points out that the category of "women" began to be recognized after this period. Then, at the end of this period, circa 1911, early Japanese feminists, such as Yosano Akiko and Hiratsuka Raicho, started

the first group of Japanese feminists " Seitô" (the Bluestocking). This was the beginning of the first wave of feminism in Japan.

Hirasuka Raichô (1886-1971) contributed to the emancipation of women who did not have opportunities to realize their potential, as women were supposed to be "good wives and wise mothers" and devote their lives to their family. Hiratsuka appealed to Japanese women to be conscious of "women's self and sexuality" (Ehara 207) and her claims were to "give voices to women and lead them to the center of (their) community and culture" (Ôgoshi, *Feminism nyûmon* 108). Raicho's call to women to realize their potential, and to awaken to their role (and oppression) in (Meiji) society became a central tenet in the 20th century, as well as a guiding principal for the first wave feminist movement in Japan. First wave feminism as advocated by Hiratsuka's and the Seito group thus rebelled against the Meiji patriarchal nation state which constructed the Japanese social system of this period.

It was a period of transformation of women's status as well as their education; in 1875, only 18 percent of women completed the four-year primary education, however, this figure had reached 97 percent by 1910. It was during the Taishô period (1912-26) that women's literature acquired its modern meaning, which aimed to encourage women in society and to question their traditional gender role. Women's writings in modern Japan are often described as "Joryû bungaku" (female literature, or literature in women's style), a derogatory term which most women writers reject. Recently, "Josei bungaku" (women's literature, or literature by women) has come into use instead of "Joryû bungaku" to avoid the discriminatory categorization of women's writing. Even though these obsolete categories may still be seen in bookstores in Japan, I believe that such designations reference the traditional male domination and masculinist orientation in modern Japanese literature, in which male-authored works enjoy considerable more authority than women's texts. Thus, my dissertation does not aim to situate migrant writings by Japanese women in an essentialist, oppositional category of women's

literature, but rather to examine the former as legitimate textualities articulating a specific politics in a specific style.

In the 1920s, women writers from the Proletarian school began to write works within the broader literary and political framework of the time. For instance, Miyamoto Yuriko (1899-1951) became a member of the Japanese Communist Party after her stay in the Soviet Union (1927-30). In 1932, she married a leader of the party, Miyamoto Kenji (it was her second marriage). During World War II, she was repeatedly arrested and forbidden to write, on account of the leftist orientation in her writings, which drew on her Russian (also European and American) experience. In these countries she found people were freer, women were livelier, and children were happier. In her major work, *Nobuko* (1924-27), Miyamoto examined herself as well as contemporary Japanese society. Her political and literary essays are also a tool to convey her knowledge and thoughts to the masses. Although she did not advocate Marxist theories, she hoped to induce the reader to think critically about Japanese politics and

society. Hirabayashi Taiko (1905-1972) was also active in various women's and social movements and wrote numerous articles that clarified her political stand as an anarchist. In works such as *Chitei no uta* (Song of the underground, 1948), Hirabayashi expresses her belief in political rebellion. Miyamoto and Hirabayashi were important women writers whose work seriously questioned and envisioned alternatives to the contemporary Japanese political and social system.

Women's writings in this period were not merely political. For instance, Hayashi Fumiko's (1903-1951) autobiographical novel, *Hôrôki* (Diary of a Vagabond, 1928-30), describes the travels of a talented young woman who aspires to become a writer and her turbulent relationships with men. In the postwar period, Hayashi emerged as a popular writer who churned out a great number of stories. However, two months after finishing her longest novel, *Ukigumo* (The Drifting Clouds, 1945-51), she died of a heart attack. As a prolific writer with the skill to convey human emotions, Hayashi described women who tried to live with remarkable

tenacity and endurance under adverse conditions and who migrated and traveled a lot.

After World War II, especially in the 1950s and 60s, women writers questioned the role of gender, the women's body and sexuality throughout their writings. For instance, Enchi Fumiko's (1905-1986) career has three aspects: as novelist, as dramatist and as classical scholar. She was awarded the Women Writer's Prize in 1946. Afterward, she explored women's psychological and physical conditions and described women's sexuality in her writings. As a writer and classical scholar, her works often rewrite Japanese classical tradition and literature. For instance, *Onnamen* (Masks, 1958) contains significant references to the *Tale of Genji* and the Nô theatre. Takahashi Takako (1932-) is also a feminist writer who has mostly published short stories in the 1970s. She became a catholic nun and moved to Paris in 1975, where she stayed until 1988. Her fiction shows her interest in Roman Catholicism. Her religious experience is described in works such as *Hone no shiro* (Castle

of Bones, 1972), while her stay in Paris formed the background to *Ikari no ko* (Child of Rage, 1985). Her stories often depict sado-masochistic relationships and fantasy worlds, as well as show her focus on gender issues.

These writers' works display unequivocal feminist features even though Enchi and Takahashi do not explicitly identify with feminist movements and ideas. The work of these writers impacted on the writing of the younger generation of women writers, who deny traditional women's roles in Japan and who begin to explore another possibility of women's lives through their migration to foreign countries.

Thus, migration in women's writings is another salient characteristic in contemporary Japanese women's texts, especially after the 1970s. Owing to their experience of migration, women authors began to notice the gap between the reality of their lives in Japan and the often fantastical or unreal feel of their experiences in foreign countries. This is the space wherein they inscribe, and describe their emotions and

experiences as women in Japan and as migrants outside of Japan.

Ôba Minako (1930-) is normally considered a pioneer of migrant woman writings in Japan. In 1959, she moved to Alaska and lived in the United States and in European countries for more than 10 years. Ôba's short story collection *Oregon yume jûya* (1980) and novel *Kiri no tabi* (1980) draw on her experience in these countries. Following Ôba's precedent, Japanese women writers began in the 1980s and 1990s to describe their sojourns abroad and their experiences between languages and cultures. Feminist writer Tomioka Taeko's (1935-) recent novel *Hiberunia tou kikou* (A Travel Journal in Hibernian Island, 1999), she interweaves her real visit to Hibernian Island with an imaginary journey modeled on Gulliver's travels.

It is against this background that the feminist inflected writings of migrant authors began to assert itself. In the 1990s, the fantastic elements in their writings have developed, as migrant women's writings

tend to demonstrate the value of an intercultural in-between space for Japanese women. In what follows, I examine the work of Tawada Yoko and Tsushima Yuko. Tawada migrated to Germany and writes in both Japanese and German. On the other hand, Tsushima, who spent a year in Paris writes about her migrant experience only in her mother tongue, Japanese. Even though they have different attitudes toward the Japanese, and other languages and cultures, both these writers locate much of their work in an intercultural in-between space. Before beginning my analysis, I shall introduce these Japanese women, Tawada Yoko and Tsushima Yuko, and their migrant works written during the 1980s and 1990s.

Tawada Yoko was born in Tokyo, Japan in 1960. After studying Russian literature at Waseda University in Tokyo, she traveled to India, Italy and Germany. It was in Germany that she decided to stay. After several years, she received an M.A. degree from the University of Hamburg, where she began to write literary works in German and Japanese. Her works were first well-received in Germany and she won

several literary awards in the 1990s. Consequently, she was awarded quite a few important literary prizes in Japan, namely, the Gunzô New Author's Award for "Kakato wo nakushite (Missing Heels)" in 1990 and the Akutagawa Award[7] for "Inu muko iri (The Bridegroom Was A Dog)" in 1992. Throughout her writing, Tawada Yoko seeks to understand her culture from another's point of view and questions Japanese identity. Of her works, I focus my analysis on migrancy and the construction of identity in her novellas " Inu muko iri" (The Bridegroom Was A Dog,1993), "Gotthard tetsudô" (The Gotthard Railway, 1996) and "Kakato wo nakushite" (Missing Heels, 1989).[8]

Tsushima Yuko was born in Tokyo, Japan in 1947. She was born as the daughter of Dazai Osamu, one of the most renowned writers in the history of contemporary Japanese literature, and Dasai and his mistress drowned themselves in a canal of the Tama River in June 1948.

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[7] The Akutagawa Award is one of the most important literary awards in Japan and is given to the best new author of the year.

[8]All citation of these works are from English translations by Margaret Mitsutani.

After studying an M.A. in French at Meiji University, Tsushuma began working as an editor at *the Bungei Shuto (The Capital of Literature),* a literary coterie magazine. In 1969, she made her writing debut in *Mita Bungaku (Mita Literature),* another literary magazine, with the publication of a short story, "Requiem for a Dog and Adult."

At the beginning of her literary career, Tsushima described the complicated nature of family relationships. She later went on to explore the experiences of single mother of a son and a daughter, and came to represent a form of feminist revolt against the institution of marriage and family.

In 1991, Tsushima stayed in Paris as a lecturer of Japanese Modern Literature at INALCO (Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales). In 1998, she published *Hino Yama:Yamazaruki*, which won the Tanizaki Junichiro Literary Prize and the Noma Literary Prize. My analysis of Tsushima's works will focus on a collection of her recent short stories, *Watashi* (I, 1999) and a collection of essays *Ani no yume, watashi no inochi* (Brother's Dreams, My Life, 1999). It is in these works that the

strong influence of her migrant experience in Paris and other countries appears.[9]

In the 1990s, quite a few migrant women writers, explored their lives as migrant through their in-between spaces. These writers translate legendary stories and folklore in carrying them over to a contemporary context and describe their own status as migrant women. The following analysis will examine their creations as an act of translation of this imaginary space into reality.

When migrant women are caught between languages, Japanese and foreign language, they begin to communicate by having to rely on translation of their own language into the language of their host country. It is during these movements that they discover the gap between themselves and language. This gap offers them the possibility of distancing themselves from reality, that is, they begin to live in the space

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[9] All citations from Tsushima's works in this thesis are my translations.

of in-between, which is situated between their languages and cultures. This is an act of self-translation, which, however, can never be an authentic version of the original story, being rather an act of creation. In my analysis, I shall examine these creations through translations and the process of the identity formation that takes place through the translation in this in-between space.

2. Tawada Yoko and the Rewriting of Japanese Folklore

Feminist literary scholars have produced a wealth of subtle, informed discussions of the discourse of fantasy and the effect of rewriting of legends in contemporary literature. Rosemary Jackson, for example, defines the role of fantasy as follows:

> A critical term, "fantasy" has been applied rather indiscriminately to any literature which does not give priority to realistic representation: myths, legends, folk and fairy tale ...Literary fantasies have appeared to be "free" from many of the conventions and restraints of modern literary texts. (1/13-4)

Tawada Yoko, a Japanese migrant writer who lives in Germany, effectively uses this technique in her writings, especially in "Inu muko iri" ("The Bridegroom Was A Dog"; 1993) for which she awarded the Akutagawa Prize.

The story of "Inu muko iri" is a story about Mitsuko who lives in the suburbs of Tokyo and who is a teacher at a private school for primary school students. One day, a man named Taro comes to her place and begins to live with her. He is a quiet man who likes smelling and licking Mitsuko's rectum. He cooks and takes care of Mitsuko and they live as a couple. At the end, Taro goes away with his boyfriend and Mitsuko leaves the city suburb with her girlfriend.

Most critics analyze this story as a rewriting of the Japanese folk tale "Tsuru nyôbô" (A Crane Wife). Commenting on Tawada's work, Ôe Kenzaburo claims that "by adopting Japanese folklore and foreign legends in modern context, the author produces a 'different' literary style. In this way, the author can create her own style. The symbol becomes the reality" (419). By adaptating Japanese legend to a modern context, she

expresses instead the reality through the symbol. My next analysis, therefore, examines Tawada's technique of rewriting of Japanese folklore and the role of parody and irony in her works. I also examine the elements of feminism and postmodernism in Tawada's migrant works.

2.1 Japanese Folklore and the Tradition of Rewriting

The original story of "Tsuru nyôbô" is as follows:

> One day, a man helped an injured crane. After a couple of days, a woman who was a disguised crane came to his place and asked him to marry her. She wove *kimonos* (Japanese clothes) for him and he made a fortune by them. (One day, even though she asked him not to see how she wove, driven by his curiosity, he looked in her loom and he found that she was the crane which he saved.) As he broke the promise, the crane flew away. (Inada 243; my translation)

Certainly, as Ôe and other literary critics claim, Tawada rewrites this story in contemporary context. Japanese oral literature and folklore offer several similar narratives, such as "Kaeru nyôbô" (A Frog Wife), "Neko nyôbo" (A Cat Wife), to name a few. These stories are basically about a female animal which comes to a man's place and asks him to let her stay

as his wife. There is also another version of these stories, in which it is a male animal which comes to a woman's place and asks her to marry him, such as "Inu muko iri" (A Dog Husband), and "Hebi muko iri" (A Snake Husband). For example, the original story of "Inu muko iri" is as follows:

> A mother told a dog that if he disposed of her daughter's stool, he could marry her. So, he came to dispose of it every day. However, the dog was killed by a hunter and the hunter married her. In the mean time, the daughter gave birth to seven babies. One day, when she was shaving his beard, he told her that it was he who had killed the dog and she killed him with the razor. (Inada 215; my translation)

In Tawada's rewriting (translation), I see characteristics from both "Tsuru nyôbô" and "Inu muko iri." By interweaving two different stories and translating them into contemporary context, Tawada creates a new variant of these stories.

The rewriting of folk legends and of canonical classical and modern texts is an important aspect of postmodernism. This technique, however, has been widely used throughout literary history, not only in

Asian, but also in European countries.

In Japan, "Tsuru nyôbô" has been repeatedly rewritten throughout its literary history. This story appears in *Hitachi koku hudoki* (713-718?)[10] in almost the same story and style. In the 18th century, the crane is replaced with a clam in *Hamaguri no sôshi.*[11] That is, through its rewriting, a Japanese folklore was transformed into a different literary genre. Kawai Hayao, a Japanese literary critic, points out this characteristic of rewriting in Japanese literature as follows:

> Recently, not only scholars, but also readers began to pay attention to Japanese folklore. I think that it is because they consciously and unconsciously hope to identify their Japanese selves in modern international society through their traditional literature. (1)

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[10] It is a collection of regional legends in Hitachi (a region in the north of Tokyo). The editors are unknown. It contains many legends and folklore of this region.

[11] Sôshi is a literary genre in Muromachi (1333-1573) and Edo (1603-1867) era. "Hamaguti no sôshi" appreared in its history in Muromachi era. The story is almost the same with "Tsuru nyôbo," however, the crane is replaced with a clam.

Furthermore, "Tsuru nyôbô" was adapted to a piece of drama by Kinoshita Junji as "*Yûzuru*" (The Twilight Crane) in the 1950s. The technique of rewriting transformed Japanese oral tradition into folklore and finally into the performance art.

The technique of rewriting is also used to reverse the traditional values in culture, especially in the contexts of feminism and post-modernism. In these contexts, legendary stories (tales) and folklore share the characteristics of fantasy. Anne Cranny-Francis explains this role of fantasy as follow:

> Contemporary feminist writings of the tales reveal their co-option by hegemonic ideologies and their role in the construction of the patriarchal subject, in the process constituting a feminist reading position which is fundamentally subversive of the subject position of patriarchal capitalism. (105)

This role of fantasy as subversion in feminist literature is adopted in Tawada Yoko's rewriting. The following analysis will reevaluate this role of Tawada's rewriting in contemporary Japanese literature.

2.2 Tawada Yoko's *Inu muko iri* and the Technique of Rewriting

Tawada's rewriting of the Japanese folklore concerning the metamorphosis of (usually female) animals into humans achieves an interesting subersion of traditional gender roles. At the same time "Inu muko iri" also proposes a unique version of feminist fantasy.

In "Tsuru nyôbô" and other folktales, it is usually a woman who comes to a man's place and asks him to adopt her as a wife. In Tawada's "Inu muko iri" (or "The Bridegroom Was A Dog"), however, gender roles are reversed as it is the man who comes to the woman's place. In Tawada's rewriting, the bridegroom has the characteristics of female protagonists in traditional Japanese folklore, that is, of a woman who is very discreet and works hard for her husband:

> ...Mitsuko put her shorts back on and went into the kitchen to find a meal ready, the table neatly set with plates and bowls for rice and soup, all looking doll's dishes in the man's big hands. He'd been sitting there waiting for her, ... (27-28)

In Tawada's story, it is the bridegroom who manages the house keeping, because the woman in this version works outside of the home, as she is described as " She[=Mitsuko] didn't type at all" (18).

The reversal of gender roles is used to emphasize a reversal of traditional gender roles in various other works and media used by feminist artists. For instance, a similar example can be found in Sally Potter's *The Tango Lesson* (1996), where the traditional partnership between sexes in a tango dance is deconstructed using the technique of filmmaking: the woman directs the man and the man becomes the object of the woman's gaze. This trend in feminist artists' works of the 1990s shows how the ideas of the feminist movements in the 1980s came to fruition during the 1990s. Tawada's discourse also questions the traditional role of gender in Japanese society. Using the technique of the reversal and an unconventional example, Tawada offers another point of view in this narrative.

In theories of feminist fantasy, gender is defined by John Clute as follows:

> (In fantasy) the standard patriarchal bias imposes limitations which are seldom subverted or even questioned...Fantasy looks to the past, seeking out patterns and archetypes. (*Encyclopedia of Fantasy* 349)

Tawada uses these techniques in her writings especially to question the "seldom subverted or questioned patriarchal bias" in Japanese society. Thus, her use of fantasy has a distinctly feminist character, resonating with Rosemary Jackson's well known definition of fantasy fiction:

> (Fantasy) characteristically attempts to compensate for a lack resulting from cultural constructions: it is a literature of desire, which seeks that which is experienced as absence and loss. (*Fantasy* 3)

This "unrealistic" desire is accomplished and reality is subverted in Tawada's writings. For example, in traditional Japanese folklore, female protagonists more often than not stay at home and work for husbands and wait for them. However, in Tawada's "Inu muko iri," her protagonist Mitsuko is described as a woman who has eccentric characteristics:

> She dressed in shabby farming trousers with stylish sunglasses, and after seeing her sitting under the cherry tree happily reading a novel in Polish, no one could tell what kind of family she came from. (18)

This image of an emancipated woman is reminiscent of the character of *Yamanba* (mountain witch) in Japanese folklore. The characteristic of *Yamanba* is completely different from a female character in "Tsuru nyôbô." The former is estranged and represents an image of horror in women. The protagonist Mitsuko in "The Bridegroom Was a Dog" is similar to Yamanba, a wild woman with supernatural powers who devours travelers.

Mitsuko also resembles female characters in contemporary fantastic stories. Patricia Waugh, for example, explains this image as follows:

> In "fantastic" texts...the feminine subject is fragmented, dispersed, in an attempt to rupture or deconstruct the "fixed" ego formed doubly in alienation...The alienation and estrangement from their bodies experienced by the female protagonists as a consequence of their gender positioning releases a desire for transformation not simply of the body as an individual corporeal unit, but of the whole social structure.

(*Feminine Fiction* 169-170)

Thus, this transformation of images of female characters has been accomplished by subversion of traditional texts and the rewritings of folklore posits another way of viewing women's lives in contemporary society.

2.3 The Role of Parody and Irony in Tawada Yoko's Writings

The salient techniques in feminist fantasy used to critique society and its patriarchal structure are parody and irony. Moreover, they are both commonly used in postmodern literature. Linda Hutcheon, for example, explains their role in postmodernism as follows:

> A certain use of irony and parody may play a role both in the critique of ideology...postmodernism offers precisely that "certain use of irony and parody." (*The Politics of Post-modernism* 100-101)

The initially strained relationship between postmodernism and feminism has often been discussed by feminist critics: parody and irony are central strategies in both postmodernism and feminist literature and art. In

Tawada Yoko's writings, these strategies are used to explore women's sexuality which has seldom been explored in traditional literature. This role of parody in feminist postmodern writings is explained by Patricia Waugh as follows:

> This "release" function [of women's sexuality] is central to parody ... certainly what Freud argued for the release potential of joke could be argued for parody. (*Metafiction* 77)

Thus, Tawada's use of parody as a medium to explore women's sexuality in her writings represents her consciousness of feminism. I propose to examine the following citation of "Inu muko iri" from this perspective:

> He flipped her over and, easily grabbing her thighs, one in each hand, raised them up and began licking her rectum, now poised precariously in midair. The sheer size of his tongue, the amount of saliva dripping from it, and the heavy panting were all literally extraordinary. ("The Bridegroom Was A Dog" 26-27)

In Tawada's original Japanese version, the last sentence is described rather as "it was not a performance by a human being" ("Inu muko iri" 434). This explains more clearly Tawada's idea, because in this erotic scene, Tawada parodically describes a sexual relationship between a

woman and an animal which could not be explicitly articulated in traditional folk tales. Also, in the description of the dog husband's sexuality in her rewriting, she pokes fun at male sexuality while attributing a more positive role to the sexuality of female characters than is the case in Japanese folk tales.

This technique also apprears in another story by Tawada, "The Gotthard Railway." She parodically describes her protagonist's friend, Reiner's penis as follows:

> The night before Reiner's liver operation, I had a dream. His moist, red-black belly, exposed to view, was filled with penises —like a selection of neatly packaged salamis. (163)

Also, the nurse advises her that this symbol of masculinity is exchange-able, even with Japanese femininity:

> "With this many stored away, you've nothing to worry about," a nurse said reassuringly. The surgeon grimly stuck a Japanese doll in among those serried penises, which were all about the same size as it. (163)

Through these techniques of parody, Tawada demonstrates that the role of gender is not fixed, but fluid. She thus critiques the male-centered

patriarchy and phallocenterism in Japan and points out that their symbols are "exchangeable."

Tawada uses parody as well as irony to critique and deconstruct Japanese patriarchy. I also see her use of feminist translation in this work. For example, when seeing Japanese culture from foreign countries, her protagonist shares her discoveries by describing the following experience:

> As I stared at the Swiss flag, my vision gradually blurred, and the design began to change...Before I knew it, I was looking at the Japanese flag. Until that moment, I'd never noticed how closely the two flags resembled each other: the cross of Christ and the sun of Amaterasu... two sacred islands, standing alone. Isolated, yet brash enough to plant themselves in the center of the world before anyone notices. (138-9)

This also explains Tawada's own discovery about Japanese culture because she did not think that the Japanese flag symbolized such isolation when she was in Japan. Leaving Japan offers her the possibility to question the myth of Japanese uniqueness. Leaving Japan, she notices that this myth stems from Japanese insularity. As she looks at

the mountains in Switzerland, for example, the protagonist begins to see Mt. Fuji in a different way: "Why do postcards with 'Nippon' on the stamps always have a photo of Mt. Fuji in the middle of them? As though Fuji were one of Japan's parents, with Mother Nature the other" (136). When her migrant experiences evoke her memories of Japan, she parodically and ironically uses her memories to criticize Japanese insularity as she relocates herself writing within a foreign context. Irony is commonly used by migrant authors to critique their own culture from another's point of view. A migrant Canadian critic, Arun Mukherjee, for example, draws attention to the role of irony and explains how this technique emphasizes the meaning of difference and otherness: "Irony is experienced by those who bring a different perspective" (*Double Talking* 75). Because Tawada has a different perspective on Japan, her technique is often ironic. By so doing, she is also questioning the value of her migrant experiences.

3. Ainu Oral Narratives in Tsushima Yuko's Autobiographical Writings

3.1 The Use of Ainu Legends in Tsushima Yuko's Writings

Ainu is an ethnic group in the North of Japan (in the island of Hokkaido). According to its folklore, its culture began at the period when the humans were ignorant of the hunting and fishing rituals. After this period, Ainu ethos was formed in Hokkaido. From 10th to 16th century, Ainu began to form a single culture, developing cultural forms such as heroic epics (yukar). It was also in this period that the two great heroic figures of the Ainu tradition were formed: the cultural hero and the yukar hero. After this period, Ainu began to decline and lost its independence, mainly due to Japanese political domination. During the Meiji era (1868-1911) Japan began to regard Hokkaido as Japan's "new frontier" and destroyed traditional Ainu culture. It has been only since the 1970s that the question of Ainu culture and language began to be raised. Thus, there has been an effort to revive Ainu culture and language in the late 20th century.

Although the Ainu have no written language, their epics, songs and stories have been orally transmitted from generation to generation, preserving classical forms of speech, which have disappeared from the colloquial language. The "yukar" (heroic epics) form the essence of Ainu literature and are told in the first person as the narrator identifies himself with one or more beings, not necessarily humans. Furthermore, "yukar" has three categories depending on the hero in the story, "Kamui-yukar," "Oyna-yukar," and "Heroic-yukar": first, "Kamui-yukar" is epics about animal gods, such as bears, wolves and whales; second, "Oyna-yukar" is about a human god, who dominates the Ainu; third, "Heroic-yukar" is about a human hero and has variants depending on the region.

In Tsushima Yuko's collection of autobiographical stories, *Watashi* (1999), she often cites the first category of Ainu legends, the legends of "Kamui-yukar." Tsushima describes in *Watashi* the difference between heroic poems and legends which includes "Kamui-yukar" as follows:

> In Ainu legends, the sacred songs, Kamui-yukar, have been sung by women and the heroic poems by men... In Yamato legends also...sacred narratives were by women, lyric poems about heroes were by men. (66-7)

Tsushima uses the songs of "Kamui-yukar" to narrate her auto-biographical stories, as she narrates her unconscious with memories of her dead son and brother. The use of fantasy to explore the unconscious in contemporary women's writings is often discussed in recent scholarship. Patricia Waugh, for instance, claims that the figures in fantasy reflect one's real self as it appears unconsciously (168-9), while Cathi Dunn MacRae understands that "Fantasy...comes from and appeals to the unconscious" (5). By replacing the sacred narrator of Ainu legends with her own voice, Tsushima creates another series of sacred songs by interweaving her own experiences in these writings. This process enables her to transcend the sadness caused by the absence of cherished beings such as her son and older brother.

Tsushima's rewriting of Ainu legends, epic songs and oral narratives is conspicuous in the stories: "Tsuki no manzoku" (The Moon's Satisfaction) and " Tori no namida" (Bird Tears), included in the collection of autobiographical novellas, *Watashi*.

"Tsuki no manzoku" begins with the following quote taken from an Ainu legend:

> A boy was kept captive on the moon and could not come back to earth as long as the moon shone in the night sky. (33)

The opening of the story features the protagonist and her friends talking about Ainu legends under the light of full moon. One of the protagonist's friends begins to narrate an Ainu legend "The moon and the boy." (This tale appears in the anthology of Ainu legends and folk tales edited by Tsushima, which was published in French translation in 1996.) This particular story may be regarded as an educational fable about a boy who is ordered to fetch water. Because he did not enjoy his work, he tells everyone that, "[he envies them] because [they] need not go to fetch water." Ultimately, as a result of his laziness, he is taken to the moon and

never returns. Before the conversation with her friends, the protagonist couldn't perceive anything on the surface of the moon, despite the fact that other people were able to make out shapes such as rabbits or crabs, both of which are holy figures in Japanese folklore. The conversation forces the protagonist to review the moon as she decides to look at the moon through a telescope. She then perceives the shadow of a boy on the moon, which she identifies with her dead son. After this discovery, the protagonist continues to do research on Ainu literature. During this research, she comes across the legend of "The boy on the moon":

> [I found] a book about Ainu legends, which is like an encyclopedia and which includes legendary songs... The song continues as follows " *I* ask him to bring water in a bucket ... As he refused, *I* was bewildered... He was killed by *Me* and he will continue to upset *me* as long as *I* live." (43)

This quote demonstrates the protagonist's configuration of the real I and the fictional *I*. She thus invents a third *I* in her narratives, which has the characteristics of both the real and the fictional I.

This same technique is used to narrate another sad experience as the I and *I* are reconfigured in another short story, "Tori no namida." The protagonist in this story traces her childhood memories using her mother's bedside story " Kubi no nai tori" (A Bird Without Head). There are quite a few Ainu legends on birds. Sarashina Genzô notes in this connection: "those who believe what birds say are saved; those who don't believe are doomed" (Sarashina 13; my translation). Thus, birds in Ainu legends are related to sacred symbols. The protagonist goes on to reveal that her mother often compares such fictional Ainu birds to her dead husband. The protagonist, however, compares this sacred symbol to her dead brother. As with the protagonist in "Tsuki no manzoku," this protagonist interweaves real self with a fictional self by recalling her dead brother:

> I used to play with my brother and his friends. "Brother! Brother!" As I always talked about his stories, all of my friends knew him.... "Sister! Sister!" I also cried, "I am here!" At that moment, the bird without head soared up to the sky... (133)

Interweaving her sad stories with the fictional ones, Tsushima's protagonist narrates the story between I and *I*. In this way, she reflects her unconscious self in her autobiographical narratives, which she could not speak in her reality and in her fictional works. Thus, seeing the self from different perspective, Tsushima's autobiographical "I" began to explore the way to live by women in Japan.

In a novella "Rumoi kara" (From Rumoi) included in *Watashi*, Tsushima describes two women's lives who have commonly lived in Rumoi in Hokkaido. Even though they have different experiences in this region, they use the same technique to narrate their stories: they use the narrative "I" in their stories of Rumoi, as if they are narrating an Ainu legend which is always narrated by the first person. That is, in Tsushima's protagonists' narratives, they narrate stories of Rumoi as if telling tales from the oral tradition in this region. By so doing, Tsushima implies that Ainu oral tradition, which is thought to have been handed down from an ancient period, can be a rewriting or a modified version of an original story

in the contemporary context. Thus, whenever it is narrated, it creates another epic story and meaning in contemporary literature.

Futhermore, Tsushima's use of in-betweenness of the real and the fictional "I" in her autobiographical narratives and her rewriting of Ainu oral narratives demonstrate the ambiguity of identity in contemporary society. That is, the first person in Ainu tradition is replaced with the real "I" and the boundaries between Ainu legends and autobiographical narrative become unclear. It also represents women's ambivalent status in contemporary society: Tsushima's female protagonists often question their identity through their life stories and autobiographical narratives by rewriting Japanese and Ainu folk legends in the contemporary context where the boundary between real I and narrative *I* is very ambivalent.

3.2 The Characteristics of Feminist Fantasy in Tsushima's Works

After her stay in Paris, Tsushima came to perceive Ainu literature in a new, different way. This discovery had a noticeable impact

on her later works. The role of fantasy in Tsushima's writings of the 1980s has already been examined by literary critics. However, the interweaving of Ainu epic songs and oral narratives as fantasy in the writer's recent work has received relatively little critical attention. The following section examines the role of Ainu intertexts and feminist fantasy in Tsushima's recent writings.

Another important characteristic in Tsushima's works is "the absence of father figure." For example, her recent novel, *Kazeyo, sora kakeru kazeyo* (Wind, Thou Wind Soaring In the Sky, 1998) which was awarded the Tanizaki Junichirô Prize in 1998, describes the lives of women who are divorced and live on their own, or who are single mothers living with their daughters, etc. These characteristics of her female protagonists seem to reflect her childhood, because her father committed suicide with his lover when she was two years old and she grew up in a house without a father figure. This experience contributed to her tendency towards the "exclusion and absence of father." This idea can be seen in

feminist fantasy as a way to criticize male-centered society. In feminist fiction and art, we often encounter female characters who strongly reject, or attempt to fight against their subordination in a male-dominated culture. Female characters in Tsushima's stories often identify their selves through the act of rejection/refusal of dominant patriarchal conventions and practices. Tsushima often attributes unrealistic characteristics to her female protagonists. By the use of unreality, women in Tsushima's novels reject or transcend traditional roles, models or images provided by contemporary patriarchal cultures for the construction of women's self. Livia Monnet points out that in Tsushima's short fiction, it is fantasy that offers to women the possibilities of an alternative world or life course:

> All manifestations of the fantastic imagination attempt to... seek that which is perceived as absence or loss...the variations ...between the characters in Tsushima's story, reveal alternative economies of desire that are like magic-filled hologram projections of the present traditional moment. ("Connaissance délicieuse" 343-5)

Female characters in Tsushima's writings are, therefore, those who transcend an "unsatisfied reality" (Waugh, *Feminine Fiction* 168) through

fantasy.

Tsushima's encounter with Ainu legends gave another characteristic to Tsushima's writings, which is the question of the subject in narratives. As an oral tradition, Ainu legends are always narrated in the first person. However, in Tsushima's rewriting, the boundary between protagonist and the narrator is ambiguous.

The subject is problematic in fantasy as well as in metafiction. Patricia Waugh analyzes the characteristics of metafiction in her critical work *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (1988). As this subtitle shows, it is a literature which deconstructs the partnership between authors and readers. This specific characteristic of metafiction, especially in feminist metafiction, is also explained by Sara Ahmed as follows:

> Meta-fiction is most often understood...as an extreme form of self-reflexivity within literary texts. The first person narrator, named only as "I," is self-consciously involved in writing and producing a fictional world. (151)

In *Watashi*, Tsushima creates a third *I* in her writings which combine the real I and the fictional *I*. In fact, Tsushima does not explain the specific gender identity of her third *I*. That is, the third *I* is free from gender roles generally, and specifically of the gender role allotted to women in patriarchal societies. Ahmed explains this characteristic in metafiction as: "The 'I' here, as an inventive 'I,' appears unsexed, unlocated and disembodied...The shifts in narrative ...call into question the stability of the fictional 'real'" (151).

Tsushima questions her identity in her autobiographical work, *Watashi*, where she uses two types of I (I in regular type, and an italicized *I*). As the title of the collection demonstrates, the stories are about Tsushima herself and she invents various techniques to express herself: for example, her real image is sometimes hidden behind the legendary stories. She also gives different meanings to I and *I* : she narrates her actual stories by using I and her fictional stories inspired by Ainu epic and oral literature using *I*. Hence, the real I is often compounded with the fictional *I*. This indicates that she does not see a distinction between the

real I and the fictional *I* in her narratives and interweaves her sad experiences and stories inspired by Ainu epic songs and folk tales into one meta-(auto-) fictional story.

Her migrant experience allows her to critique Japanese culture and it was the place she lived and a space where she was free from woman's roles in Japanese partriarchy. That is, this space allowed her to critique Japan form a feminist point of view. This is why the narrative by Tsushima's third "I" often has feminist characteristics, as metafiction it is a technique used to question women's lives through fictional and self-conscious narratives. Patricia Waugh notes that this particular characteristic of feminism in metafiction "helps us to understand how the reality we live day by day is similarly constructed, similarly written" (*Metafiction* 18).

Tsushima's use of fantasy is often interpreted as a feminist strategy. In the autobiographical stories included in *Watashi*, by inventing the third *I*, she involves readers in her narratives and asks them to

question their "real" lives through her unrealistic (fantastic) narratives. This characteristic of metafiction in Tsushima's narrative is borrowed from a similar technique found in Ainu legends. As she uses this technique to question women's selves in society, it gives her another role as a feminist migrant writer in Japanese literature.

The role of legendary stories in these migrant women's writings seem to work differently. Tawada Yoko, who left Japan to live in Germany, writes in Japanese and German and creates another value by reversing the traditions, a technique that has similar characteristics to other feminist artists. Tsushima Yuko finds the third *"I"* to narrate her sad stories between reality and fantasy. However, through their particular narrative style, these writers question women's lives and status in Japan. Thus, these Japanese migrant women express their creative possibility of the third space operated by their migrant experiences and by their feminist point of view to critique Japanese culture and women's status in society.

4. Translation and Creation in an Intercultural In-Between Space

The feminist critiques by Japanese migrant women which I examined in the previous sections are effected through the act of translation, which derives from their positionality between two or more languages and cultures. Ôba Minako, for example, who is considered a Japanese women's migrant writings, often focuses on translation in her writings. In an autobiographical work, entitled *Oregon yume jûya*, we read:

> When we say in Japanese without subject "Ame desune (It's raining)," it's different from the English, "It's raining.". If I dare to explain the differences, in Japanese expression "I," "you"and the universe coexist (because there is no subject). However, in English, "I" is different from the fact, "It's raining." The rain is falling, for some reasons, with God's will, in the different situation from "I." (841)

Ôba thinks that when the Japanese speak English, they invent a new space between the two languages. When the Japanese say the word "I", it is not a translation of the Japanese "I" to English, but the invention of another "I" which gives a universal meaning to the Japanese " I". This

analysis will examine this particular space between Japanese and other languages in the works of Tsushima Yuko and Tawada Yoko, where they began to question themselves and construct their identities as Japanese women.

4.1 Tsushima Yuko and Translation of "Watashi(I)"

Tsushima Yuko is among a group of migrant Japanese writers who use the ambivalent space between cultures and languages to write. Learning foreign languages allowed her to see the distance between herself and language. She describes the process of this discovery in her essays, *Ani no yume, watashi no inochi* (1999). My analysis of language and translation in Tsushima's works traces her discovery of different languages in this collection of essays. Tsushima begins to understand her mother tongue differently as a result of her life in Paris:

> For me, who could not speak fluently the language of the foreign country where I was living, the meaning of my native language was not ambiguous, but rather it became clearer, urgent and brilliant. My native Japanese language became pristine. (121)

Even though she was offered the possibility of writing novels in French during her stay in Paris, she never accepted to do so. However, her life in Paris gave her the opportunity to examine the reasons why many foreign writers in France wrote in French, their other language. She outlines the reasons as follows:

> "Joseph Conrad, who was from Poland and immigrated to England, wrote his works in English, even though he wasn't good at speaking in English. Such a distance between himself and English allowed him to create unique English sentences." I found this critique in an article in a French newspaper, and I was really impressed...Now it's not rare that foreign writers write a somewhat strange and brand-new French. French people seem to know, from their long experiences, that they can keep regenerating their language through the contact with others. (123)

Tsushima also found a new and strange form of the Japanese language as she taught her courses at INALCO (Institute national des langues et civilisations orientales) in Paris. Tsushima says that "[she] was impressed by their [Tsushima's French students'] Japanese which [she] found interesting... the gap which they created in Japanese brought a movement

to my native tongue" (124). This experience allowed her to see the distance between herself and the Japanese language. Had Tsushima remained in Japan, she would have never noticed this distance. Ôba Minako also finds a similar distance between language and her usage of it in foreign country and expresses " [how she is] surprised to find out how I was attached to Japanese" (Ôba "Essays" 108). This is the space that foreigners notice, where the culture of the in-between is fostered beyond national borders. Tsushima also found that it was mostly these migrant people who are conscious of this space:

> I remember that the people who advised me to write in French were an American who immigrated to France, a Swedish person, and a writer whose parents were English and French, and was married to an Arab woman. (*Ani no yume* 125)

These foreigners in France advised her to write in French because they understood Tsushima's potential for adding another dimension to contemporary multiethnic literature. The experience of her translation of the Ainu legends to the French and her status as a migrant in France offered her the possibility of seeing the space that emerged through

linguistic and cultural translation.

Tsushima describes the discovery of this gap through the translations found in her collection of short stories, *Watashi (I)*. In her short story, "Mahou no owari" (The end of magic), Tsushima observes the gap between an English original and a Japanese translation. The protagonist in this story reads William Faulkner's *The Sound and The Fury* in English, however, upon reading the same story in its Japanese translation, she is unable to find the protagonist Benjy:

> In Japanese translation, Benjy speaks in Japanese. This novel begins with Benjy's voice. I, however, didn't want to continue to read. No!No! .../ moved. / went. / saw ..., he doesn't speak in such a way. Then, I read this part in English. I found that Benjy English also uses "I"... As this word was not familiar with me, I ignored "I" and regarded it as just a line. I can read in that way in English. However, in Japanese, "Watashi[=I]" is more than a line and its meaning is too heavy. (204-5)

Reading the novel in English, she translates the "I" by herself into Japanese. As many theorists have pointed out, translation adds another meaning to the original, thereby creating a new story. Homi K. Bhabha, for example, claims that: "[t]ranslation is also a way of imitating, but in a

mischievous, displacing sense...the 'original' is never finished or complete in itself" (*Identity* 210). In the protagonist's translation, Benjy in Faulkner's story is replaced with her own experiences as she compares this character to her handicapped brother:

> I don't remember how much I could understand the novel in English. I remember, however, the impression which Benjy gave me... it was related to my brother's memory. (201-2)

Since the protagonist's handicapped brother speaks an awkward Japanese, she comes to understand him and communicate with him by translating his Japanese. As the title of Tsushima's short story, *Watashi*, indicates, the author herself might have found the real meaning of the Japanese "I" through her various experiences. That is, the discovery in the space of in-between always becomes a form of "alienation and of secondariness in relation to itself" (Bhabha, *Identity* 211).

By seeing the distance between the self in Japan and the self in France and the United States, which emerged from her in-betweenness of languages and cultures, Tsushima began to describe the differences between Japanese and foreign cultures. For instance, in "Semi no koe"

(Chorus of cicadas) included in *Watashi*, her protagonist stays in Northern Canada, yet doesn't hear cicadas during summer:

> One hot summer day, I felt I was almost choking on the cry of cicadas, which filled up my ear, my eyes, my mouth, my nose. Stop it. I cannot breathe. (80)

By experiencing a summer without the sounds of cicadas, her protagonists noticed that they inscribed memories in Japan through the auditory as well as bodily senses. It is always this lack of bodily senses which allow us to see the self: as Ôba and Tsushima, or other migrants began to see the distance between Japanese and other languages when they were deprived of languages. Thus, Tsushima's protagonists also began to retrieve memories in Japan by experiencing the lack of certain bodily senses. By using this technique, Tsushima demonstrates her discoveries of Japanese culture from her third space.

4.2 Tawada Yoko and Cultural / Femininist Translation

Tawada Yoko often expresses her ambivalence as a migrant through languages whether the language is German or Japanese. As

Wada Tadahiko points out: "Tawada is, in fact, enjoying this situation in which she lives in the midway of two languages "(219; my translation). Tawada describes the ambivalence of her situation as a migrant steeped in two languages, yet belonging to neither one: "It seems that we do not see the relation, but the gap between languages...It must be really difficult to keep away from one's native language" ("Kotoba" 109-110; my translation). She consciously tries to "keep away" from her native language in order to create a space between languages where she can give free play to her imagination. Writing fiction in German and translating it into Japanese permits Tawada to create an ambivalent and imaginary space not often found in traditional Japanese literature.

Because Tawada lives in Germany and translates from German into Japanese, the act of translation gives her the opportunity to understand the tension between languages. She uses this tension to write her works. The following analysis of Tawada's work will focus on the space that emerges from the act of self-translation, for the reason that

Tawada seems to engage in this act in a conscious manner.

Tawada expresses her linguistic consciousness during a conversation with an American-Japanese writer Levy Hideo, who was born in Taiwan, but grew up in Japan and who writes in his "step-mother" tongue, Japanese. Tawada claims that writing in both Japanese and German has enabled her to give shape to the gap, or intermediary space between these two languages. She understands that many of her German readers enjoy this gap making her works very successful: "Even though I write in German, I am not German... I would rather write for Japanese readers" ("Bokokugo" 142; my translation). She writes about her migrant experience for a Japanese audience and transforms such experiences by sharing the discoveries she made. She also emphasizes the importance of learning foreign languages, because this is how she was able to re-discover her mother tongue:

> Learning foreign languages is learning the sense of the culture. Also, it is to recognize that there is a gap between the sense of languages and that of our body...when I encounter a foreign language and hear its sound, it [=the language] seems to be alive and separated from the actual meanings of words. That's

> really interesting ("Bokoku" 145-151; my translation).

Her encounter with foreign languages therefore is reflected in her writings.

Tawada's migrant writing, "The Gotthard Railway" begins with the protagonist analyzing a German word from an outsider's or a stranger's viewpoint:

> I was offered a chance to ride on the Gotthard Railway once. I've never actually met anyone called Gotthard. "Gott" means "god" and "hard" is, well, hard. It is a very old name, so it may have died out by now. (131)

Because she is a foreigner, she understands the words differently than the native speakers. She feels the word either through its sound or by using her bodily senses. This arouses a peculiar feeling of longing in the protagonist:

> The words "Gotthard Railway," transformed into the color of rusty iron, the cold, hazy April air. And the subtle vibrations of the rail, heard only by lonely passengers sitting by themselves gazing out the window, made my throat sore with longing. (132)

When the protagonist hears foreign words, she places the words in-between her imagination and reality. Hearing a word with an unfamiliar sound allows her to create a new space between languages. This becomes symbolic of how migrant women live in foreign countries. With regards to the sounds of foreign words Tawada says, "Speaking a foreign language in a foreign country is an act of both concealment and exposure. It is because I touch the sound and the word itself. I can no longer remain hidden and invisible" (" Kotoba " 119). Hiding behind the words and being exposed by them offers the creation of a new meaning in the space of in-between. This creation through self-translation is common to migrant women who go beyond national boundaries. For example, Eva Hoffman, who is of Polish origin and who immigrated to Canada, and then moved to America, also writes about the ambivalence between languages. She explains how she creates another space between Polish and English as follows:

> I write, in my public language, in order to update what might have been my other self...When I write, I have a real existence that is proper to the activity of writing - an existence that takes

> place midway between me and the sphere of artifice, art, pure language. This language is beginning to invent another me (121).

Hoffman explains how her new language "invents another self" and how she is able to exist midway between herself and her new world. This is what Tawada might have felt living with a new language. This invention of another self is often referred to as an act of "translation." Homi K. Bhabha explains that " Translation is the performative nature of cultural communication ... And the sign of translation continually tells, or 'tolls' the different times and spaces between cultural authority and performative practices" (*Location of Culture* 228). Bhabha's theory of the performativity of translation is emphasized in the theory of translation. Translation is thus "an inevitable domestication, wherein the foreign text is inscribed with linguistic and cultural values"(Venuti 9). Through the act of translation, the authors add another meaning to the original story and invent a new one. Tawada explains that "The Gotthard Railway" was invented through her own self-translation:

> "The Gottthard Railway," which appeared in *Gunzo*, was first published in a Swiss journal in German. When I translated the story into Japanese, I changed some parts and added new meanings. I have never written in that way. ("Kotoba" 138)

This creation through translation is similar to her rewriting of folklore in "The Bridegroom Was A Dog." Hence, this is a characteristic feature of translation and recreation of an original context in an inter- or multicultural space. This is usually accomplished by interweaving different elements to create a new hybrid form. This particular act of translation in migrant literature has already been discussed by certains theorists.[12] The creation and translation in the ambivalent space by Japanese migrant women therefore should be reevaluated within a larger context.

It is also possible to create new values in Japanese culture by translating foreign cultures, especially feminisms, within and into a Japanese context. For example, Tawada sees foreign women's status from a Japanese point of view. By describing it in Japanese, she

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[12]For example, Bhabha also claims that" all forms of cultures are continually in a process of hybridity" ("The Third Space" 211).

translates foreign feminisms into Japanese. In this way, she implicitly critiques women's status in Japan. In "Kakato wo nakushite" (Missing Heels; 1989), for example, she uses this technique of feminist translation as follows:

> A tall woman dressed in the height of fashion approached, walking very fast in spike heels that made her seem about to stumble forward, her body pulled in all directions-hips up, chest forward, shoulders thrown back-so that appeared to fill up more space with every step she took. (110-111)

In this country the protagonist does not know, new experiences in the lives of women are possible since "people are beginning to recognize the value of the single woman. Such lives seem lonely, but they are not, if they have professions" (112-3).

Cultural translation by feminist writers involves not only the transformation of foreign women's status and feminism into Japanese literature, but also plays a role as a clue to women's identity in Japan. This role of feminist translation is explained by Sherry Simon as follows:

> What feminist theory had added to this understanding is the sense that translation engages many of the same kinds of

> active identity-forming processes as other language activities (*Gender in Translation* 164).

Not only is Tawada describing the status of women in foreign countries, she is also asking Japanese women to question their lives and status in Japan, because "[she is] writing to Japan [and Japanese women]" ("Bokoku" 142).

The writings of Japanese migrant women provide important new insights into both Japanese culture and the host culture where they live. This is achieved as they experience a gap between themselves and their languages. Ôba Minako was able to find the space between herself and the Japanese language by leaving Japan and by living in an American environment. This same cultural distancing was also experienced by Tsushima Yuko in Paris and Tawada Yoko in Germany. This particular role of language is explained by Deleuze as the fact that "it is never a matter of 'trafficking' in language or of mishandling it...but of essentially proposing a new way of using it...language is the instrument *par excellence* of that destratification" (xvi). Because of the new meanings

found between cultures, these writers' own language became newly significant for migrant women. Ôba explains this role of language by stating that "Suddenly, [her] familiar language began to talk to [her] in a different way. It is as if the second thoughts began to dance by fumbling" ("Kiri no tabi" 262). Thus, Japanese women's migrant writings between languages create new (or "different") values through their acts of translation in contemporary Japanese literature.

Chapter II
Hyphenated Identity and Embodied Memory in Nikkei and Zainichi Women's Writings

The advent of multiculturalism and postcolonial discourses helped to draw attention to marginal groups, such as women and minorities. These movements, however, made invisible the differences between various ethnic/minority groups, and women of various backgrounds. For instance, in *Immigrant Act*, Lisa Lowe analyzes the impact of Asian American culture in the United States by lumping together the histories of Asian Americans in one category, even though each Asian community has a quite different history. In *Imaging The Nation*, on the other hand, David Leiwei Li dwells at length on the differences between Asian communities and their histories in the United States. He explains that these differences are based on the traditions and cultures from their native countries and it is these differences which construct the ethnic groups beyond national boundaries. I examine the cultural characteristics and the process of construction of ethnic identities in Nikkei (or persons of Japanese descent) and Zainichi (or resident Koreans in Japan) literature. I will focus on the works of Hiromi Goto, a

Nisei (second generation) Japanese Canadian author; and of Yi Yang-ji, a Nisei (second generation) Zainichi author. Through my analysis, their works are reevaluated in light of the feminist, postmodern and postcolonial strategies they use. Since Hiromi Goto, though Japanese born, is considered a Nikkei, a brief overview of Nikkei immigration and culture in Canada is in order.

1. A History of Nikkei Immigration to Canada

The immigration of Japanese to America began at the end of the 19th century, and their host countries were diverse: North America (United States and Canada), Central America and South America (Peru, Brazil, etc). Immigration to Canada began at the end of the 19th century, mostly to British Columbia. At first, Japanese came to Canada to work temporarily or to immigrate to the United States. However, in the 1880s, the exclusionary movements toward Chinese (and Asian) immigrants became strong and Japanese also became a target of exclusion, even though the Japanese had always considered themselves as separate

from the Chinese. Then, in the 1880s and 1890s, with almost every year new regulations to exclude Asian immigrants were legislated in the provincial parliament of British Columbia, though these discriminatory regulations were defected by the Federal Government. These regulations attest to the particularly intense discrimination toward Japanese and Asian immigrants during this period. This situation was aggravated when the steamer *Kumeric,* sailing from Hawaii entered Burrard Inlet with 1189 Japanese on board. This incident caused the so-called Vancouver riot of 1907. While nobody was injured in this riot, Japanese and Chinese district in Vancouver was attacked by an anti-oriental mob. After these events, the hostilities toward the resident Japanese in British Colombia increased, especially between the 1910s and 30s. The movement of Japanese exclusion was accelerated when World War II broke out in 1941. It was the beginning of the tragedy of the internment of Japanese Canadians, and "the beginning of 10 years' humiliation of Japanese Canadians" (Iino 105).

After 1941, all people of Nikkei origins, which include Japanese, Japanese immigrants and Japanese Canadians, were regarded as "enemies." All Japanese schools were closed and Japanese journals suspended. In March 1942, the deportation of Nikkei began and Nikkei in British Columbia were forced to move to concentration camps in Alberta. The situation of Nikkei in Canada was worse than the situation in the US; in Canada, their belongings were forfeited. Also, the civil rights of Asians in Canada were very limited and they did not have suffrage rights. On the other hand, Japanese Americans had the same legal status as other Americans. This difference of legal status between the Japanese Americans and the Japanese Canadians caused differences after the war: in the U.S., the deportation came to an end in 1944; in Canada, however, it came four years later.

Owing to the policies of the Canadian Government, the rights of the Japanese in British Columbia were restricted, and more Japanese moved and settled in Eastern Canada, especially in Ontario and Quebec.

Because of this policy, it took a long time for Japanese Canadians to reconstruct their communities. Even though the redress movement began in 1946 in Toronto, it did not become a strong voice demanding compensation from the Government of Canada. It was only after 1977, which was the centennial year of Japanese immigration to Canada that Nikkei communities pushed the redress movement forward. The regulation of the Multi-culturalism Act of the Government of Canada in the same period also largely contributed to the development of this movement. It was against this background that Japanese Canadians began to demand compensation from the Government of Canada. In 1988, Nikkei communities organized the "Ottawa rally" in which other ethnic groups also participated to support the Nikkei's demonstration. The redress movement was thus combined with the question of human rights in Canada. Then, in September 1988, the Government of Canada finally admitted that injustice had been done to Japanese Canadians and promised compensation for individuals as well as Nikkei communities.

The redress movement was finally accomplished with the help of the Multicualturalism Act in Canada. Throughout their history, Japanese Canadians were forced into hard lives in order to be Canadians. Such hardships can be clearly traced in the works by Japanese Canadian writers. For example, Joy Kogawa is a Nisei[13] writer and describes her experiences at a concentration camp in South Alberta in her first novel *Obasan* (1980) and that of her participation in the redress movement in her second novel, *Itsuka* (1992).

This situation is changing for the Sansei (third generation). As Kurokawa Shôzô explains: "[It is because] the Sansei (third generation) were educated by the Nisei (second generation) who were forced to deny their Japanese identity" (Kurokawa 46). Even though the Sansei were deprived of Japanese language and culture, and forced to assimilate to their host countries, they ironically began to have strong interests in

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[13] Joy Kogawa often uses the terms, Issei (first generation), Nisei (second generation) and Sansei (third generation) in her works. In recent critiques, these terms are commonly used: for example, in Traise Yamamoto's *Masking Selves, Making Subject: Japanese American Women, Identity, and the Body* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1999).

Japanese culture. Hiromi Goto, a Sansei Japanese Canadian writer, for example, published her first novel *Chorus of Mushrooms* in 1994, in which her protagonist Murasaki constructed her ethnic identity through her grandmother's memories of Japan. Such a transition of Nikkei women's attitude toward Japanese culture is arguably influenced by Multiculturalism in Canada; it requires the differences from others to construct their own identities. The following analysis of Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushroom* examines this process of the construction of identity through culinary culture. In this novel, Goto critiques the discrimination, racism and inequality that occurs in contemporary Canadian society.

2. Ethnic Identity and Cultural Critique in Hiromi Goto's Writings

2.1 Nisei and Sansei Japanese Canadian Writers

Japanese Canadian writers began to be visible in Canadian literature in the 1980s. Joy Kogawa is thought to have pioneered this genre and is considered one of the most important Japanese Canadian

writers in its history. She began, in the 1980s, to write about the discrimination experienced by Japanese Canadians. Kogawa is a second generation Japanese Canadian and was born in Vancouver, B.C., in 1935. In the 1960s and 70s, she wrote several volumes of poetry, such as *The Splintered Moon* (1967), *A Choice of Dreams* (1974) and *Jericho Road* (1977). In her first novel *Obasan* (1981), she conveyed the experience of the interned and their life of persecution during World War II. Kogawa allowed Japanese Canadians to speak out about their oppressed history through her use of silence in this story. She also published *Itsuka* (1992) where she described the redress movement of Japanese Canadian and *The Rain Ascend* (1995) where she questions ethnicity in contemporary society by masking the protagonist's ethnicity throughout the story.

Another Japanese Canadian writer who participated at the political movements is Roy Miki who was born in Manitoba in 1942. Even though he is a Sansei (third generation) Japanese Canadian, he actively participated in the redress movement with the Nisei, especially in the

1980s. Thus, his poems are mostly political and throughout his writings, he questions the racism and discrimination in Canadian society. He published *Justice in Our Time: The Japanese Canadian Redress Settlement* (1991) and *Broken Entries: Race, Subjectivity, Writing* (1998).

The Sansei (third generation) writers whom I analyze in this thesis have a different perspective on their ethnicity. For instance, Hiromi Goto describes Nikkei (Japanese Canadian) women who construct their identities through Japanese culture in *Chorus of Mushrooms* in 1994. Goto was born in Chiba, Japan, in 1966. When she was three, she immigrated to Vancouver, British Columbia with her family and moved to South Alberta. She received a B.A. in English from University of Calgary. She now lives in Calgary and writes literary works. In *Chorus of Mushrooms,* her first novel, which she published in 1994, her Sansei protagonist, Murasaki, traces her grandmother's memories of Japan and searches for the roots of her ethnic identity through her bodily memories. Goto has also published several poems, such as "The Body Politics" (1994) and "Anatomy" (1997), to name a few.

Kerri Sakamoto is also Sansei Japanese Canadian and was born in Toronto. She received her MA in English with a concentration in Creative Writing from New York University in 1992. She has written essays on visual art, and worked in independent film as a screenwriter and story editor. Sakamoto has collaborated with visual artists, filmmakers and writers on projects in Canada and the U.S. Based in Toronto, she has written on art for the Walter Phillips Gallery, the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her first novel, *Electrical Fields,* which was published in 1998, was awarded the 1999 Commonwealth Prize for Best First Book, as well as the 1999 Asian Canadian Excellence Award, and the 2000 Canada-Japan Literary Award. In this work, Sakamoto describes a Japanese Canadian girl who lives in the suburb of Toronto and who begins to construct her identity through her relation with her Japanese and Canadian neighbors. The complexity of the story must be a reflection of herself, as a Japanese Canadian in a multi-ethnic city and as a multi-talented woman artist.

The following analysis examines the Sansei Japanese Canadian woman's identity formation and her relation with Japanese culture especially as depicted in Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*.

2. 2 The Construction of Ethnic Identity though Culinary Culture

In Goto's works, the role of culinary culture in the construction of the self is very important and is composed of three steps: first, Nisei's (second generation) refusal of Japanese culinary culture and assimilation to new culture; second, Issei (first generation)'s attachment to Japanese habits; finally, Sansei (third generation)'s retrieval of Japanese eating culture and their identification of Japanese ethnicity through Issei's memories.

Goto's protagonist is a Sansei (third generation) Japanese Canadian. Her mother, Keiko, is a Nisei (second generation) Japanese Canadian who constructs her identity by denying Japanese culture. Keiko, for example, tries to exclude every element of Japanese culture from her house in order to educate her only daughter, Murasaki. Keiko

forbids her daughter from speaking Japanese language and from eating Japanese foods. Therefore, Murasaki has never eaten Japanese foods in her childhood and the dishes which her mother cooks are all western: "She still cooked her lasagna and roasted chicken, her blocks of beefs" (191). Murasaki's ethnic identity formation during her childhood was sustained only through the packages of Japanese dried foods so cherished by her grandmother, Naoe. Naoe does not like Keiko's cooking and she prefers eating dried Japanese foods in her small room:

> But she[=Naoe] hardly ever ate what Mom had cooked for her. Obâ chan (grandmother) ate treats she had hidden in her dresser drawers and threw the dry meat out the window for the coyotes who waited every evening. (178)

For Murasaki, Naoe's room is a special space where she can touch and feel her native culture. It is the role of Murasaki to go to the post office to pick up her grandmother's parcels from Japan. Without having ever experienced Japan, she is connected to her country of origin through the dried foods and memories of her grandmother:

> I [=Murasaki] have a piece of dried salted squid in my pocket and I tear a bit off. I must chew and chew. Like beef jerky, but much tougher. I chew and the juices begin to fill my mouth. It gives me energy, this squid, the more I chew, the tastier it gets ...She[=Murasaki] brings the packages and we crumble the *osenbei* (Japanese rice cracker) together in my narrow bed. (14-15)

Her mother Keiko cleans up the house everyday, as if trying to expel all smell or trace of Japanese culture. Keiko's attitude toward Japanese culture derives from the Nisei's experiences of exclusion in Canada. The Nisei, the second generation of Japanese Canadians, experienced internment in concentration camps in their childhood. These memories are inscribed on their bodies and, at the same time, these sad memories remained repressed, unvoiced for a long time. Thus, most Nisei protagonists in Nikkei literature are often described as untalkative (or quiet) characters. For example, in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, Naomi is a Nisei Japanese Canadian and she rejects Japanese culture and identity:

> And I am tired, I suppose, because I want to get away from all this. From the past and all these papers, from present, from the memories...I want to break loose from the heavy identity, the

> evidence of rejection...unable to scream or swear, unable to laugh, unable to breathe out loud. (183)

The Nisei Japanese who have by and large rejected Japanese identity are usually described as "Westernized Japanese" (Masson 42) . The following citation by Joy Kogawa illustrates the Nisei's disavowal of their Japanese identity: "I hated to be Japanese Canadian. If I could choose, that is, if I could change my name and my skin color, I certainly would have done so" (Tsuji 54).

At some point in Goto's narrative, grandmother Naoe disappears; it is not clear whether it means her death in this story. After her disappearance, however, Murasaki begins to hear Naoe's voice from somewhere. Even though Naoe does not exist any more in Murasaki's house, this voice takes over the role of Naoe, which consists in cheering up Murasaki and in handing down Japanese culture to the Sansei's generation. On the other hand, Keiko, who cannot hear this voice, falls ill. Because of her mother's sickness, Murasaki begins to look after her and cook for her. At first, Muraski cooked in the same way as her mother, but

her mother did not get well. At that time, Naoe's voice advises to her:

> Naoe: You must try harder. What have you been feeding her?
> Murasaki: Well, macaroni and cheese. Hot dogs. Stuff like that.
> Naoe: *Mattaku* (No way) ! Of course she won't be getting better on food such as that! (131)

Naoe knows that Keiko's (Western) food way is not nourishing and advises Murasaki to go to the Japanese grocery store in Calgary. In this store, Murasaki encounters a real Japanese culinary culture which she has never seen or tasted. Also, she discovers her relation to Japanese eating culture. Her father, for example, is a Nisei and excludes all traces of Japanese culture from the family life. However, he often secretly visits the Japanese grocery store and buys Japanese seaweed paste. Murasaki's next discovery concerning Japanese food is that of the meaning of her family name, Tonkatsu (Her name is Muriel [Murasaki] Tonkatsu). Until then, she did not know the meaning of her family name. When she finds "Tonkatsu sauce" on the shopping list which Naoe's voice dictated to her, she asks about its meaning at the Japanese grocery store:

> "Is that the same tonkatsu like my name?"
> "You mean you don't know ?" She was amazed.
> "No. I guess I don't." I felt my face glow warmer, but I had to know
> ...
> " It's a type of breaded deep-fried cutlet."
> "Ohmygod." (137)

As she finds what her family name means, she cooks "Tonkatsu" for her mother to cheer her up. Thus, Murasaki begins to experience real Japanese cuisine by losing contact with dried Japanese foods. Due to her nursing and her Japanese cooking, her mother begins to get well. This signifies that Murasaki's getting away from dried Japanese foods allowed her to reconnect with real Japanese culture. After this event, Murasaki begins to cook Japanese foods regularly, and asks her father to go to buy Japanese foods at the grocery store in Calgary. After these experiences, she reflects on the relation between food and culture:

> They are people who say that eating is only a superficial means of understanding a different culture...You haven't learned anything at all. I say that's a lie. What can be more basic than food itself? Food to begin to grow... because food is the point of departure. A place where growth begins. You eat, you drink,

and you laugh out loud. (201)

These discoveries of Murasaki resonate with recent anthropological discourses on food and culture. Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell, for example, note that "The means by which an individual maintains a sense of ethnic continuity and integrity in carrying on the food tradition becomes a way to articulate a social and cultural coming-together" (14-15).

Goto's novel also describes the relation between ethnicity and the sense of smell. In *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Murasaki's family runs a mushroom farm. Even though they do not notice that their house has a strong smell of mushrooms, Murasaki's "white" friend comments on this strange "oriental" smell:

> "What's that funny smell ?" Patricia asked... "What house smell?" I said anxiously ... Something so insidious tattooed into the walls of our home, the upholstery in our car; the very pores in our skin. We had been contaminated without ever knowing. (60-62).

Murasaki mentions that her Nisei mother pays close attention to the particular smells which are not supposed to exist in Canada, as her mother cleans up her house "to cover up over Oriental tracks" and "she'd overlooked the one thing that people always unconsciously register in any encounter"(62). Unconsciously, however, the smell of mushrooms - of Japanese culture - is inscribed in the bodies of Murasaki and her family. Laura U. Marks comments on the relation between ethnicity and smell as follows: "Foreign cultures tend to be both vilified and exoticized in terms of smell. It appears to be universal, and is certainly understandable, that every culture prefers its own world of smells to any other" (203). This relation between ethnicity and smell can be seen in other Nikkei author's works. A Nisei Japanese American writer, R.A. Sasaki, for example, retrieves Japanese culture through the smell of Japanese food. Her protagonist is a Nisei (second generation) Japanese American who was born in California and who has never seen Japan. She constructs her ethnic identity, however, in contact with the Japanese foods and smells of her childhood:

> In the beginning, it was just a smell - the smell of fresh straw mats or green tea emanating from my father's suitcase...cans of tea, packages of dried squid, delicate wrapping paper with a faint imprint of cherry blossoms. (83)

Through these souvenirs from Japan, she begins to be conscious of Japanese food and smell. By so doing, she unconsciously constructs an ethnic identity through her native country's culture - a culture which she has never seen. At the end of the story, this protagonist leaves for Japan, because she identifies herself with Japan through her contact with that country.

The relation between ethnic identity and food has also been discussed by Benedict Anderson, as well as by many antholopologists. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, for example, describes the relationship between Japanese identity (or communities) and Japanese food or cuisine as follows: "(N)ation is 'imagined as limited' in that it is within national 'boundaries.' The Japanese case powerfully argues for the importance of recognizing the symbolic importance of spatial boundaries even in the

absence of the physical or political need to do so" (133). That is, when one constructs the self and the memories of senses through Japanese food, one unconsciously participates in the construction of an imaginary nation in the space between Japan and the other country.

2. 3 Feminist/Postmodern Strategies and Embodiment in Goto's Work

The narrative of ethnic identity formation in Goto's novel is interwoven with feminist, and postmodern strategies of representaion. These strategies in their turn serve to articulate the author's stance on Japanese ethnicity in Canada .

Nikkei sansei (third generation descendents of Japanese immigrants) writers often use postmodern strategies in their works. In Goto's writings, the most salient postmodern technique is her use of irony. For example, Asians who have colored skin and were educated in Western culture are called " bananas," in a discriminatory way. Goto, however, ironically says in her writings "I hated bananas" (26). Through

her use of irony, ethnic writers are no longer the passive victims of discrimination based on racism. Throughout her works, Goto questions the reason why she was discriminated against just because of her different bodily characteristics. She explores this question in her poem as follows:

> I can never unzip my skin
> and step into another.
> I am happy with my color until someone points
> out it clashes with my costume. ("The Body Politic" 220)

Thus, ethnic Canadian writers use this postmodern strategy to accuse Canadians of discrimination, which can never be erased from Canadian society. They were discriminated against, because their skin color is not white. In Hiromi Goto's work, this discrimination is reflected in the form of Murasaki's neglected Asian body in white Canadian society. At a school opera concert, Murasaki takes the part of the main character, Alice. Her Asian body is, however, not suitable for this main "white" character. Her white teacher asks her to be a white girl as follows:

> "Well, Alice is a story about an English girl, you know. An English girl with lovely blonde hair. And strictly for the play, you understand, Muriel will have to have blonde hair or no one will know what part she is playing. You simply cannot have an Alice with black hair." (177)

Her mother Keiko easily accepts this proposal, because she tries to erase every characteristic of Asian culture throughout her life. Her daughter, however, cannot accept this proposal and she prefers giving up Alice's part to rejecting her ethnic characteristics:

> "Mom!" I hissed."Mom, I changed my mind. I don't want to be Alice anymore. I'll be the Mad Hatter, that way, I can just wear a hat. Or the Cheshire Cat! Cats have slanted eyes. That would work out. Mom?"(177)

As a Sansei, Murasaki insists on staying herself and rejects changing her identity.

Murasaki begins to be conscious of her ethnicity when she becomes the object of insistent scrutiny by others. In Goto's writings, the Asian body is not only a victim of racism, but also a medium through which to question the racism in contemporary society. To express this idea, Nikkei writers often use irony, as they are historically unvoiced as

"unfavorable immigrants" (Iino 23) in (white) Canadian culture. Their irony, therefore, aims to criticize historical "Eurocentric Canadian culture" (Mukherjee 168).

Goto's protagonist is a Sansei (of Japanese Canadian). She has only an English name, Muriel, but her grandmother Naoe gives her a Japanese name, Murasaki. The meaning of this Japanese name is not explained, but it must be because of its pronunciation which is similar with Muriel, or because it was Naoe's favorite color "murasaki" (violet), or she adopted the name from Murasaki Shikibu. Or, perhaps, this name implies all of the above.

Murasaki Shikibu is a Japanese woman writer of the 11th century. Her real name is unknown, and the primary source of knowledge about her life is a diary she kept 1007-10. Her *Tale of Genji* (completed c.1010) is a long and complex tale concerned mostly with the loves of Prince Genji and the women in his life. It is generally considered one of the world's oldest and greatest novels.

The *Tale of Genji*, in which Murasaki Shikibu appears as narrator, describes Hikaru Genji's relationships with the many female characters, including his step-mother, his lovers and his wives. In *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the first-person narrator describes Murasaki's development through her relations with her grandmother and mother. Contemporary feminist theories claim that women develop a sense of self/identity through the relation with other women such as their mothers or sisters. This characteristic, often encountered in fiction, film and visual art by women, is described as the "relationality of women's identity formation." Throughout Goto's narratives, the narrator appears between the stories of Murasaki, Naoe and Keiko. Thus, in Goto's narrative, the boundaries between author and protagonist, or author and narrator are ambiguous. Goto thus appears to invoke the *Tale of Genji*, or rewrites Japanese classical literature in a Japanese Canadian context.

Recent feminist theory also foregrounds the issue of gender. Feminist metafiction, which often questions the binary system and

patriarchy in society, is used to explain the performativity and fluidity of gender in literature. Sara Ahmed, for example, insists on this characteristic of feminist metafiction:

> Woman...is represented (ironically) as a manifestation of truth, ...the truth that woman does not pre-exist..., but is made substantial through its travels.(154)

That is, in feminist metafiction, women's subjectivity are performative and formed through narratives.

Goto uses this technique in her narratives. It demonstrates her consciousness of feminist strategies. This is a story that traces a Nikkei Sansei, Murasaki's formation of Nikkei Identity through her relationships with her family and Japanese culture. However, as the narrator says, "I'm making up the truth as I go along" (12); the boundaries between real story and fiction, narrative "I" and Murasaki are not clear. This is also a characteristic of metafiction as Patricia Waugh defines it:

> Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously draws attention to its status...to pose question about the relationship between fiction and reality. (2)

Sometimes the narrator tells her own story through Murasaki's point of view. Thus, Murasaki's story is an autobiographical fiction of this narrator. At the end of her narrative, the narrator says: "You know, you can change the story" (220). This implies that women's subjectivity is not fixed, but changeable. Such a subject is also described in postmodern fiction:

> Meaning is not given nor produced by a transcendental ego. Indeed the transcendental ego is itself an effect produced in a social context. (Worton 17)

Goto's work describes the condition of fluid, hybridized ethnic subject in contemporary Canadian society. Even though Japanese Canadians have encountered strong racial and ethnic discrimination in Canada throughout their history, in Goto's writings, they are not presented as victims, but as subjects empowered by their sense of ethnicity. Contemporary Nikkei literature may thus be said to participate in Canadian multicultural culture and to contribute to the development of contemporary Canadian literature. Thus, the authors of hyphenated identity in Canada help to develop contemporary Canadian culture. The following analysis examines the case

in contemporary Japanese literature. Before the analysis, I will briefly review the history of Zainichi (resident Koreans in Japan) and their literature.

3. A History of Zainichi and Literature by Resident Koreans in Japan

3.1 A History of Zainichi (Resident Koreans in Japan)

Korean immigration to Japan began in the first decade of the 20th century. They originally came or were brought to Japan under the Korean annexation policy of Imperial Japan.

Japan colonized Korea from 1910 to 1945. By the early 1940s, Japan had developed the colony under the slogan of "Naisei ittai," which means Korea and Japan form one nation. Not surprisingly, the majority of Koreans possess a deep-rooted anger toward Japan and a fierce patriotism and nationalism deriving from their colonial experience. During the colonial period, Korean males were classified as Japanese citizens and gained certain citizen rights. However, after the war, they lost this legal status: for example, the right of political participation as well as

educational and occupational opportunities. They received only a visa-like (i.e. foreigner's) status. Thus, like Japanese immigrants in North America, Koreans in Japan were forced to work hard with minimum salary and were strongly discriminated against. This discriminatory treatment came to the fore after the Great Kantô Earthquake in 1923. After the earthquake, a rumor began to circulate that Koreans were poisoning wells in the Tokyo area, and that they were preparing a riot. Because of this rumor, thousands of Koreans were slaughtered without reason. After this event, Koreans in Japan began to strongly distrust the Japanese government. After World War II, Japan established the present "Constitution of Japan" and proceeded with the democratization of the country. During this period, almost half of them went back to Korea, but the other half stayed in Japan and became the first generation of Japanese Korean (Zainichi). They, however, continued to be subjected to strong discrimination in Japanese society.

Throughout their history, resident Koreans in Japan have tried to assimilate to Japan by changing their legal status in Japanese society. Especially in the second generation, they regained their civil rights and began to question their status in Japan. In 1979, for example, the government of Japan ratified the *"Kokusai jinken sengen"* (the International regulation of human rights). In the 1980s, the issues of "*Ianfu*" (Comfort Women)[14] began to be discussed and the discrimination against and abuse of Korean women during the war was disclosed. In the 1990s, Korean ex-"Comfort Women" began to demand compensation and an apology from the Japanese government. This also called attention the construction of Japanese society which is based on a strong discrimination between races and between sexes. Unfortunately, ethnic,

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[14] During the Second World War, hundreds of thousands of women, about 80 percent of whom were from Korea, were forced into sexual slavery by Japanese army to serve soldiers and they are generally known as comfort women (*Ianfu*). They were virtual prisoners and subject to daily degradations such as physical and verbal abuse, repeated rapes, hard labor, and sometimes they were even murdered. However, the comfort women have been hidden victims for over half a century. See Margaret Stetz's *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II* (2001) for recent research into the topic.

racial and gender discrimination is still a tangible reality in contemporary Japan. My following analysis focuses on Zainichi culture, which still waits recognition as a vital, integral component in modern Japanese culture.

3.2 History of Zainichi Literature

Especially since the 1970s, Zainichi literature began to be discussed among Japanese academics. For example, Yim Ji-Yone's *Nihon ni okeru chôsen jin bungaku no rekishi - 1945 nen made (A History of Korean Literature in Japan until 1945*;1990) and Kawamura Minato's *Umaretara sokoga furusato - Zainichi chôsenjin bungaku ron (The Birthplace As Home: Theory and Criticism of Resident Koreans' Literature*; 1998) were published in this period. These publications examine the history of minority literature in Japan, and its impact on Japanese literature.

In "*Jihenka no bungaku (Literature of Manchurian Incident*[15]*)*" Itagaki Naoko distinguishes between "*tairiku bungaku*" (continental literature) and "*shokuminichi bungaku*" (colonial literature) as: "The former consists of writings by Japanese authors about their lives in China, while the term 'colonial literature' designates a body of work created by colonized (Koreans and Chinese) authors about their lives in Japan" (quoted in Kawamura, *Umaretara* 10). Colonial writers often denounced the oppression and humiliation experienced by Koreans under the Japanese colonial rule. Japanese colonization of Korea ended in 1945, with Japan's capitulation in World War II. The demise of the Japanese colonial empire also brought about the demise of colonial literature. However, some Koreans who chose to stay in Japan continued to write in Japanese. Their writings laid the groundwork for contemporary Zainichi literature. According to Kawamura, this literature has two outstanding

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[15] In 1931, Japanese army secretly prepared to attack the south Manchuria railway and proclaimed this attack as assault by the Chinese garrison. Using this incident as a pretext, Japan began to attack China and sent its army to Manchu. It is named as the actual begining of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).

characteristics: first, its themes are almost invariably political and are mostly about the experiences of the Zainichi. For instance, Kim Dai-Soo describes Korean society under Japanese occupation in his representative work, *Genkai nada* (1954). Also, Yi Hwe-Seung and Kim Seok-Boem describe Zainichi society in the period of Japanese imperialism in their works such as Yi's *Mihatenu yume* (1977-79) and *Kunuta wo utsu onna* (Women at the Washing Stone, 1972), which was awarded the Akutagawa prize, and Kim's *Kazantou* (Volcanic Island 1983-1996).

Zainichi women's writings also have these characteristics which I indicated above. They also critique Japanese discriminatory society throughout their writings. One of their central themes is the relationship between personal identity and the homeland between Japan and Korea. For example, Yi Yang-ji, who is a second generation Korean resident in Japan, searches for her place between Korea and Japan, or between these cultures and languages, especially in her novel, "Yuhi" (1989). Yu Miri, who is a third generation also critiques discrimination in Japanese

society in her work, *Mizube no yurikago* (A Cradle on the Riverside, 1997). However, she seldom describes Zainichi or Korean society and identity in her writings. She rather critiques social problems in contemporary Japan and the decline of traditional Japanese culture in works, such as *Full House* (1996) and *Kazoku Cinema* (Family Cinema 1997).

The main function of Zainichi literature is thus not only to demonstrate the vitality of Korean Japanese culture, but also to define Zainichi identity. Kawamura also points out that Zainichi literature is a medium used to achieve greater recognition for the cultural contribution of Korean residents in Japan.

4. Zainichi Identity Formation through Embodied Memory and Languages in Yi Yang-ji's Writings

The following analysis examines the works of Yi Yang-ji and her process of identity formation through the role of embodied memories and of ethnic (especially culinary) culture, and cultural translation. I will then move on to examine Yi's critique of contemporary Japanese society.

4.1 Yi Yang-ji

Yi Yang-ji was born in 1955 in Yamanashi, Japan. She was a second generation Korean resident. When she was nine, her parents obtained Japanese citizenship. She spent most of her childhood reading the works of Dazai Osamu, and Dostoevski.

In 1975, she began to study Sociology at Waseda University, but she dropped out after a year. In the same year, she began to learn the traditional Korean music instrument, "Kayagumu," and traditional Korean dance. She published her essay, "I am Korean" in a Zainichi magazine, *Aozora ni sakebitai* in the same year. In 1982, she moved to South Korea. After studying at the Institution of Education for Foreign Koreans Residents, she enrolled in the department of Korean Literature at the University of Seoul. Immediately after her enrollment at that university, she went back to Japan, where she published the story "Nabi t'aryong" (A Lamenting Butterfly) in *Gunzô* in this year.

In 1983, she published "Kazukime" (Diving Woman) in Gunzô. In this work, she described the life of a Japanese Korean woman who

could not accept her Korean identity. Yi also published *Koku* in 1986 and *Rai i* in 1986. She published "Yuhi" in *Gunzô* in 1988 and received the Akutagawa Prize in 1989 for this work. Throughout these works, she questions the identity of Korean residents and critiques their discrimination in Japan. In the same year, she went back to South Korea and began to study traditional dance at Ewha Women's University in Seoul. She graduated with an M.A. degree in 1992. Yi went back to Japan and re-launched her literary career. Soon after her return, she fell ill and died in the same year at the age of 37.

4. 2 The Construction of Zainichi Identity in Yi's Writings

The role of the body in women's works is one of the important themes in recent feminist theory. Specifically, they often argue about the role of women's memories in the process of the construction of women's identity. In the case of ethnic women, the role of the body is problematic: because of their skin color and physical characteristics, they are often considered as "other." Therefore, the memories inscribed into their

bodies are often the histories of experiences of marginalization. Japanese Canadian writer, Joy Kogawa, for example, describes her experience of racism in her works. Smaro Kamboureil describes the construction of the body in Kogawa's works, as follows: "[T]he radicalized body is constructed not only spatially and temporally, but also diachronically and synchronically, it reproduces what constitutes it. This double act of construction and repetition means that even when the racialized body repudiates its racialization, it cannot relinquish what it has already absorbed" (*Scandalous Bodies* 185). Even though Japanese Canadians succeeded in their redress movement, the memories in their bodies cannot be erased and these ethnic women's narratives should be reevaluated as a witnesses to the history and discrimination in Canadian multicultural society.

Recently, scholars have debated the importance of ethnic memories in the formation of multicultural society (or culture). Michael M. Fisher, for example, argues that ethnic memory lays the foundation for intercultural/cross-cultural communications: "Ethnicity is a process of

inter-reference between two or more cultural traditions... Ethnic memory is, thus, or ought to be, future, not past, oriented" (201). As he claims here, ethnicity is always a process and its formation depends on the situation, place and period in which it is situated. The writers of second and third generation of ethnic communities form identities through their ethnicity, which they gained through their bodily senses. This role of ethnicity in the construction of identities is especially emphasized in Asian American culture: they (especially Chinese and Japanese American and Canadian) form their communities and identities through their histories of discrimination and exclusion. Zainichi authors also began to disclose their oppressed history and status in contemporary Japanese society in their work. Thus, these communities will hand down their sad memories to new generations as a way to identify their ethnicity in contemporary society.

Below, I examine the role of ethnic women's bodies in Zainichi literature. I also draw attention to their strong critique of contemporary Japan, which is accomplished through their consciousness of "otherness."

In Yi Yang-ji's work, Zainichi life in Japan is symbolized by her protagonist's rejection of existence and sex in "Kazukime(1983)." About this protagonist, her sister Keiko says: "She was beautiful and intelligent" (69). She, however, hates herself and treats her Zainichi body as loathsome. It is emphasized by her abused body by Japanese men:

> She lost control of her body. She put her back on the wall and fell down on the floor. He closed the window and the noise of rain diminished. Then she fainted. Toshihiko opened her legs more violently than his brother Toshiyuki ... In a meantime, she knew that she had gotten pregnant. (83)[16]

She was sexually abused by two of her step-brothers. From these experiences, this protagonist begins to exist by denying her sexuality and body; she repeats the act of prostitution throughout this story. It is her way of denying her Zainichi woman's body in Japan.

Yi describes her experience as a Zainichi woman in Korea in her "essays" as follows:

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> I unconsciously denied my Koreaness and refused to be a Korean...I don't know why I lived like that and I don't know how I can live from here on in. At any rate, I cannot live like that. (585)

She begins to live on her own by rejecting her existence as Zainichi in Japan. Yi learned through her experiences the relation between body and sexuality, which is explained by Theodore R. Schatzki as follows: "Sex, as an underlying casual and essential entity, is a conceptual innovation that transforms how people think about and act toward themselves" (55). Thus, by reflecting Yi's experiences, her protagonist "Yuhi" begins to find a place to live in Korea. Yuhi has different characteristics from the protagonist in "Kazukime." Her appearance is described as follows:

> At first, I didn't think it was the student who came to see the room to rent. She looked so young, like a high school student. I could see that she was a girl, but she cut her hair very short and wore a pair of glasses. She was, that is, a boyish girl. ("Yuhi" 405)

In contrast to the protagonist in "Kazukime," Yuhi has rather neutral or masculine characteristics and her existence in her native country is more stable than the other protagonist's:

> She was rather pale and had a lots of freckles under her eyes. She was just a young girl, but, I don't know why, I found something strong in her. (407)

However, it was not easy for Yuhi to find a place to be even in Korea. After her long life of wandering, Yuhi finally finds this narrator's house. Though it is a quiet place, she cannot feel completely at ease. As she cannot find the perfect place to be even in her native country, she begins to hide herself in a small space she made:

> Yuhi inserted her body between the desk and the wall. She seemed to place her existence in this small space ... She was there and existed in this narrow space between the wall and her desk. (428-30)

Yuhi uses her body as a medium to inscribe her memories; she hides her feelings and emotions. Such characteristics are often found in ethnic authors' writings. For instance, Sidonie Smith calls attention to the role of the body in Cherrie Moraga's *An American Childhood* (1983): "It is frightening to acknowledge that I have internalized a racism and classism, where the object of oppression is not only someone *outside* my skin, but the someone *inside* my skin" (*Subjectivity, Identity and the Body* 142:

emphasized in original). When women cannot find a place to ground their sense of identity, they tend to be conscious of internalized memories. Such characteristics in Yi's works are pointed out by Carol Hayes: "It is as if her [Yuhi's] lack of a place in the world prevents her from stopping in one place long enough ever to finish, she must always move on to the next spot in search of inner place" (126). As such, women begin to voice their internalized experiences in their writings.

Women's internalization of their experiences is also seen in contemporary Japanese women's writings. About this characteristic, Mizuta Noriko explains: "Such an internalization goes toward the depth of Japanese culture and this is the space where women's inner world can be fostered" (*Monogatari* 9; my translation). Such foregrounding of an often closed, introverted inner world appears in the fiction of Kôno Taeko, Tomioka Taeko, Takahashi Takako, Shôno Yoriko, and many other Japanese women writers.

Yi Yang-ji critiques Japanese discriminatory practices throughout her stories. However, she does this indirectly; for example, by narrating a sad life lived by a Zainichi woman in "Kazukime," Yi describes an oppressed Zainichi woman's life and demonstrates to the Japanese that they have the responsibility to save those who live in the same society as them as marginals. Thus, minority (Zainichi) women's active voices should be widely heard to truly evaluate their role in society and literature.

Culinary culture plays an important role in the construction of identity, even it is through its rejection. It is related to what Julia Kristeva calls "abjection." Kristeva argues that "Food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection" (*Power of Horror* 2). That is, the rejection of ethnic food means the abjection of obstacles in the construction of the self. In Nikkei literature, it happens when one tries to assimilate to new culture. In Zainichi's writings, it appears as the rejection of Zainichi culture and status in Japan. I will trace this process of identity formation in Yi Yang-ji's works in the following analysis.

Yi Yang-ji describes a woman who lives by denying her life as a Zainichi in "Kazukime." Her protagonist, who has no name, is a second generation Japanese Korean. Her parents are both Zainichi Issei and have already divorced. As her mother grew tired of her Zainichi ex-husband, she remarried a Japanese man. She tries to hide her Zainichi identity and lives as a Japanese woman; she always wears a Kimono which is a symbol of Japanese femininity. The protagonist spends her childhood with her mother who denies her Korean ethnicity. She, however, cannot find her identity through Japanese culture, either. She denies her ethnicity as either Korean or Japanese, and such a strong rejection of ethnicity appears in her way of eating:

> She ate greedily and picked up the food from the dishes. She put whatever she picked up in her mouth. Then, she swallowed up by scarcely chewing. (71)

She eats by cramming everything into her mouth, because she refuses to taste it. That is, her way of eating represents her rejection of Japanese culture:

> "Thanks for the meal." She stood up to leave the kitchen. Covering her mouth with hands, she rushed to the bathroom She leaned over the toilet bowl. Her stomach almost exploded and she put a finger in her throat. Her face was flushed and tears ran from her eyes. (73)

She refuses to take Japanese food into her body. The food constitutes the bodybiologically, and identity, in another way. By her way of eating, she rejects her ethnic identity as well as her existence. Even as she denies the act of eating, she refuses to cook:

> As she hated to cook, it was always me who cooks ... She rarely tasted what I cooked, I mean, she crams the foods I cooked in her mouth and she was almost coughing. (79)

Then, when she was twenty, she tries to remove her genital organs. That is, she rejects her ethnic culture as well as her ethnic body which has a role of Zainichi woman and mother:

> When I was twenty, I went to hospital and asked to remove my womb and ovary. For me, it was the ceremony of the coming age. (89)

She tries to construct the self through rejection: she rejects both her existence as a Zainichi and as a woman. By so doing, she is searching

for another self. At the end, however, without finding out what she is looking for, she chooses to reject her life itself and commits suicide.

After this work, Yi published "Yuhi" in 1989. In this work, she describes the life of a Zainichi woman who moves to Korea and tries to construct her Korean identity by accepting her existence as a Zainichi. Her protagonist, Yuhi, studies linguistics at the University of Seoul. In contrast to her protagonist in "Kazukime," Yuhi likes to eat Korean foods. She especially loves "Tubu-tchige (Tofu fondue)":

> I remember when I was cooking Tubu-tchge. Yuhi came up to me and peeked in. Then, she used to say, "Excuse me, Ajumoni," and tasted my cooking with a spoon. I told her to wait a little, but she just held me and said, "Masisseoyo (It's delicious) !!" (432-433)

By accepting the food, Yuhi finally begins to construct her identity as Korean and begins to find her place to live. At the beginning of the narrative, Yuhi is wandering in Seoul without finding a place to stay. Finally, she finds this *Onne* (Student lodge). She accepts the food as well as the smell of this place:

> "*It smells good.*"
> In the entrance, Yuhi said so. In the garden, too, my aunt and I heard her say it again. I noticed that it was in Japanese. I remember that she saied it when she entered into this house for the first time. (415)

Yuhi finally finds her place by its smell. The role of smell is characterized as "... the sense which stays longer in the body than other senses."[17] Even though the sense of smell is a relatively inferior sense in human organs, in recent women's writings, smell has a specific role to inscribe the memories in bodies. [18] Also, it seems that the role of smell in Yi's works derives from her own experiences in Korea. Yi describes her impression of Seoul in her "Essays" as follows:

> Their smells and the way of speaking, of aspiration and the words to say hello...They were quite diverse and complicated ...They scared me and, at the same time, I was attacked by my

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[17]From biological point of view, "For most of us the sense of smell plays a minor role in our lives in comparison with the contribution that our major senses play" (5) in C. Van Toller, et al's *Aging and the Sense of Smell* (Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas Publisher, 1985).

[18] Laura U. Marks underlines the role of this inferior sense as follow: "I focus on the sense of smell...senses experience is at the heart of cultural memory" (*The Skin of The Film* 195).

Japanese smell and language in me. (642)

Staying in Korea, Yi experiences Korean women's lives through the senses of smell and through language. That is, Yi finds a way to survive as a Korean and finds the meaning of her life as a Korean woman. At the same time, she reflects on her life in Japan where she tried to hide her existence, like her protagonist in "Kazukime."

In Nikkei women's writings, their ethnic body was stared at by others and characterized as "different." Whenever they encounter discrimination, they inscribe these experiences in their memories. Nowadays, however, their writings are no longer a history of victims of discrimination, but are reevaluated as elements of difference in society. These minority women's active voices should be widely heard to truly evaluate their role in society and literature.

4.3 "Kotoba no tsue" (The Cane of Language) and Hyphenated Identity in Yi Yan-ji's Works

Through her wandering travels between Korea and Japan, Yi finds her place between them. It is what Kawamura Minato calls a "twilight space," which he explains as "an ambiguous status which stands for her ambiguous center line of Korean ethnicity" (*Umaretara* 274). For instance, the protagonist in "Yuhi" tries to identify herself between two cultures and she begins to construct her identity not through a specific culture or language, but through her embodied memories and ethnic cultures which she experiences, that is, through herself as a Zainichi woman. Yi also experienced this process and she described it in her "Essay" as follows:

> Why are they so active? How can they live like that? Why aren't they ashamed of being Korean?.. on the other hand, who am I? I tried to hide my Korean ethnicity and I could never accept myself as a Korean ... I resolved that I would not continue to live as in the past. I would like to live until I find it, what it means to be a Korean woman. (588-591)

Through this observation, Yi found a way to live as a Korean woman in Japan. That is, through her feminist translation in a Zainichi context, she invented another self as a Zainichi woman in Japan. This cultural translation in feminist context has begun to be discussed by feminist literary critics. For instance, Sherry Simon explains this creation between cultures by feminists as follows:

> It is the sense of not being at home within the idiom of power, that has led many women, as well as migrants ...to call themselves "translated being" (*Gender in Translation* 135).

Thus, Yi found a way to live as a Zainichi woman between Korean and Japanese identities and her use of cultural translation gave her another possibility in Zainichi's writings.

In previous analysis, I discussed the example of a Zainichi woman who tried to identify herself though the act of abjection. However, Yi found a way to identify her ethnicity through both abjection and assimilation. This is reminiscent of Kristeva's concept of being other:

> A stability in which the individual is no longer invisible and allows himself to become lost in the other, for other... exploring the multiple possibilities of differentiation between unlike

subjects, of being other to and for another. (*Tales of Love* 4)

Yi began to identify through multiple selves, that is, a characteristic of hybridity in its process. This is an important concept not only in postcolonialism, but also in postmodernism and contemporary feminisms. This characteristic of Yi's writings is described by Livia Monnet as follows: "son récit donc tente de forger une alliance utopique entre feminisme et pensée postcoloniale"("Le devenir de la traduction" 502). As Livia Monnet points out, Yi's writings articulate a postcolonial consciousness. This consciousness is clearly expressed in a discourse on the role of language aquisition.

In "Yuhi," the protagonist studies linguistics at a Korean University. However, she doesn't speak or write in Korean except for in her studies; she always reads and writes in Japanese, because she cannot express herself in her mother tongue (la langue maternelle) which is Korean, and she writes only in the language of the mother (la langue-mère) which is Japanese. Yuhi's dilemma is explained by Livia Monnet

as follows:

> Yi réalise que cette langue, qu'elle considérait auparavant sa langue maternele (*bokokugo*), n'est qu'une langue étrangère (*gaikokugo*) et que sa vraie langue maternelle est ce qu'elle est ce qu'elle appelle "la langue de la mère"(*bogo*). (495; italic in original)

This is what Yi describes in her essay, "*Watashi ni totte no bokoku to Nihon"* (The [Meaning of] Homeland and Japan). About the selection of languages, Yi says:

> Until now, I have situated myself between my homeland [South Korea] and Japan and explored my life as a Zainichi to find out my origin and identity by asking myself "Where is my homeland? How should I recognize Japan? What is my mother tongue (*Bokokugo*)? What is the language of the mother (*Bogo*)?(649-50)

By questioning herself and wandering between languages and cultures, she begins to see the performativity of languages. In other words, she begins to understand that languages change the meaning depending on the subjects of enunciation. She found this characteristic of languages by experiencing the spaces "composed of languages, and of gestures, by

denying languages and words. That is the space I found between languages and dance" ("Essay" 649). Yi's discovery of the performativity of languages is similar to what Judith Butler calls the "performativity of gender." Butler claims this idea in her writings as "what is called gender identity is a performative accomplishment...in it resides the possibilities of contesting its reified status" ("Performative Act" 402). Also this characteristic has similarities with what theorists such as M.M. Bakhtin call "Intertextuality." This characteristic of language is explored by Yi when she invents the concept of "Kotoba no tsue" (the cane of language). Yi explains this idea in her writing and essays. In "Yuhi", for example, this is explained in Yuhi's dialogue as follows:

> "It's my 'word cane.'"
> "I think I'm trying to see if I can grab hold of my word crutch the moment I wake up."
>
> I didn't say anything.
>
> "It depends on whether it's the Korean *ah* or the Japanese *ah*. If it's the Korean *ah*, I would have the cane which continues *ya, o, yo*. If it's the Japanese *ah*, the cane will go on, *i,u, e,o*. But there hasn't been any day when I was sure which one it was...I

> cannot get hold of the cane (of words). (449-50)

For Yuhi, it must have been Korean *ah* or Japanese *ah*, and not in-between. In searching for her identity, she might finally have found the third *ah*. It is explained by *Onni* (her landlady)'s narrative as follows:

> Then Yuhi's writing appeared. The Korean letters that she had written drifted in front of me, superimposed on her Japanese writing. (451)

Ueda Atsuko describes this moment as "the beginning of new relationship between Yuhi and Onni." She goes on to argue that:

> This scene explains that her cane of language which is a fixed concept in Yuhi, began to be deconstructed with the category of languages, whether Japanese or Korean. (140)

This characteristic of hybridity and the creations of new concepts are explained in most postcolonial theories. This is a representative moment of Yuhi's realization of Zainichi identity. At the same time, it is the beginning of her consciousness of her identities with feminist and postcolonial theoretical insights.

Chapter III
Feminist Translation and the Question of Ethnicity in Migrant Québécois Women's Writings

1. The Feminist Movement and Feminist Literature in Québec

"The Quiet Revolution" was a cultural revolution in Québec during the 1960s which influenced the development of feminist movements in Québec during the 1970s and 1980s. Second wave feminism in the United States also largely contributed to the development of Québécois feminism in the 1970s. Here I intend to review the history of feminist movements in Québec from the 1970s to the present and examine recent tendencies in Québécois feminism and literature.

The development of feminist movements in Québec was relatively delayed compared to other countries. This was mostly due to the strength of Catholicism and the patriarchy before the cultural revolution of the 1960s. After the revolution, however, women began to have more opportunities to work in society. This women's development in this period is recorded in the first page of a women's journal in Québec, *Châtelaine*, which was first published in 1960 and is still a very popular

magazine. The editor described women's situation in 1960 as follows:

> Il est important que la femme cultive avec une perfecton toujours plus grande l'élégance et la beauté, ainsi que les divers arts ménagers qui perpétuent dans notre vie quotidienne les plus belles traditions françaises. D'autre part, les beaux-arts et la politique, l'éducation, la science ou les problème sociaux ne sont plus aujourd'hui une chasse gardée du sexe fort ... (Dumont 416)

In fact, women gradually began to question their lives and roles in society at the turn of the century. In the middle of the century, women began to liberate themselves and women's (feminist) movements were accelerated. These transformations of women's status and lives in Québec are reflected in female protagonists in literature. Before the revolution, for example, in Gabrielle Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion* (1945), women were often described as mothers who dedicated their lives to their children and family, or as female characters who were forced to follow the stereotypes of the time. Around 1960, however, women's images began to change in literature: in Anne Hébert's *Les chambres de bois* (1958), her protagonist Catherine chose to liberate herself from the system of

marriage; in Marie-Claire Blais's *La belle bête* (1959), Isabelle-Marie expressed openly her feelings of jealousy and hatred. These transformations of the images of women in literature correspond to the changes in women's position in society. Régine Robin, a sociologist and writer in Québec makes the following claim as to the important relationship between society and literature: "la littérature peut et doit refléter adéquatement ce réel"(*La sociologie de la littérature* 14).

In recent Québécois literature, women's autobiographical writings are quite influential. Autobiography drew attention in contemporary literatures (American, French and Japanese) and women write in various styles (diary, letters, travel journal, etc). These characteristics of autobiography as a medium used to inscribe women's experience in various styles can be seen in (im)migrant women's writings. Nicole Brossard explains this situation of Québec literature as follows: "tout ce que le féminisme a accompli en faisant du respect de la différence un principe essentiel à ses revendications aura un effet

d'entraînement positif dans la vie de ceux et de celles dont la différence raciale, ethnique, culturelle...est source de discrimination et d'humiliation" (*Globe* 13). Thus, recent Québec feminism appreciates the (cultural) differences. As Brossard writes: "on peut dire que pour les femmes, le progrès vient toujours des autres femmes" (*Globe* 15).

The feminist movement in Québec has been largely influenced by foreign (especially French and American) feminisms. These influences may be seen in two main aspects.

First, feminist writings in Québec are largely influenced by "Écriture féminine" in France. [19] In the 1970s, women writers, especially Nicole Brossard and France Théoret, discussed women's literature and writings in a Québécois literary magazine, *La barre de jour,* by transforming this French concept to "Écriture au feminin." In addition,

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[19] For example, Hélène Cixous argues that women write through their bodies and writings are critical areas because it reveals the repressed, the secret and unsaid. See especially her writing "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1976).

they theorized women's writings in their essays; Nicole Brossard's *La lettre aérienne* (1985) and France Théoret's *Entre raison et déraison* (1987).

Second, Québécois women often question women's identity in their autobiographical writings, especially in the 1980s. Feminist writings in Québec often share characteristics with radical women's movements in the United States in the 1970s, especially the slogan of second wave feminism in the United States, "The Personal is Political." This relation is explained in the following way:"Radical feminism first emerged in the United States and was the initial driving force behind feminism in Quebec" (Dumont 357). In the 1980s, Québécois women appreciated autobiographical writings as a medium to convey women's ideas in literature and in society. They developed various autobiographical writing styles; in France Théoret's *Nous parlons comme on écrit*, she created the style of "Poème en prose" and described her childhood memories in a poetic style. In the 1980s, autobiography was largely reevaluated in American literature and this tendency provoked the reevaluation of

"Journal intime" (diary writings) in Québec in the 1980s and 1990s: for example, Nicole Brossard published her diary, *Journal Intime: ou voilà donc un manuscrit* in 1984. In addition, many feminist writers and scholars in Québec discussed autobiographical writings at the 14th conference of "Communication de la rencontre québécoise internationale des écrivains tenus à Québéc." At this conference, feminist writer and journalist Madeleine Ouellette-Michalaska claimed in the panel of "La tentation auto-biographique" as follows: "Voilà le motif principal de la tentation autobiographique à l'oeuvre dans les journaux intimes, mémoires, récits de voyage, écrits historiques, historicisants, qui se veulent témoins de durées anciennes"(15). In this presentation, she emphasizes the multiple roles of autobiography to inscribe women's memories, a characteristic of autobiography which has been eagerly discussed in the United States throughout the 1980s. Before this conference, Ouellette-Michalaska had already published a diary, *La tentation de dire:Journal* in which she inscribed her feminist ideas. For example, she writes that: "Le journal intime garde la nostalgia de cette

forme de connaissance venue du dedans ... On écrit pour se nommer, se reconnaître, se constituer. On lit pour s'inventer des visages, des fusions des extases" (45). In this essay, she implies that this style can be used to question and construct women's identity and her claim reflects "Écriture feminine" in France which questions women's identity through writings. It is also evident that the women's movement in Quebec was influenced by the idea of "The personal is political" which is the motto of the American feminist movement. Karen Gould defines these characteristics of Québécois feminism as a "cultural triangle" which she explains as follows: "Québec feminism and feminist modes of textual inscription can be attributed at least in part to the unusual cross-fertilization of three distinct cultural perspectives - Québécois, French, American" (xiv). Thus, Québec feminisms have the hybrid quality that characterizes its literature and society.

2. Pluriethnicity and Biligualism in Québec

2.1 Multiculturalism in Canada and Pluriethnicity in Québec

One of the salient characteristics of contemporary Québécois literature is the reevaluation of immigrant writings. Before analyzing their writings, I will review the history of pluriethnicity (multiculturalism) and bilingualism in Québec. I believe that this review will help to understand the transformation of Québec literature since the 1970s.

The establishment of Multiculturalism in 1971 under Pierre Trudeau's Government entailed declaring Canada a multicultural nation. This notion is explained in the "Canadian Multicultural Act" as follows: "Multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" (Bissoondath 39). This concept was largely discussed in this period. The scholars claimed that it had the potential not to unite Canada in one nation with various cultures, but rather that it might take it apart. Neil

Bissoondath, a Canadian critic, claims: "The Canadian Multiculturalism Act is in many senses an ill-considered document, forced so squarely on today that it ignores tomorrow" (44). This notion is problematic in Québec, too. It might be explained by the fact that Prime Minister Trudeau mentioned only bilingualism, but tended not to use multiculturalism in his speeches. This is arguable because he was from Québec, where this notion was thought to reduce the specific cultural characteristics of Québec and its value to Canada.

In Québec, scholars avoid using the term Multiculturalism,and use "pluriethnicité" instead. This latter term is defined as follows: "Pluriethnicité devient un enjeu majeur de notre espace sociopolitique parcouru par des tensions ... entre la notion de deux peuples fondateures et les revendications des peuples autochtones ou des autres groupes qui se définissent en termes ethniques"(Labelle and Lévy 7). It is, however, doubtful whether it can be applied to actual Québec society. Before the Quiet Revolution, the discussion of ethnicity was focused on the cultural

conflict between English and French, and other ethnic groups were treated as foreigners. Therefore, the recent exaltation of pluriethnicity stems more from the desire to maintain the value of French culture in Canada than to allow for the cultural diversity in Québec. Also, this notion has a lot of contradictions in its definitions. For example, by comparing "multiculturalism" in Canada and "pluriethnicity" in Québec, Lisa Bissonnette says: "The most urgent matter is that of so-called 'multi-ethnic and French' Quebec. Quebec has failed to build a nest somewhere between angelic interculturalism and racism" (231). This failure of multi-culturalism in Québec is due to its characteristic of cultural isolation to salvage the French language and culture. Canadian critics, especially immigrant critics, draw attention to this problem in Québec. Neil Bissoondath, for example, explains this situation as follows: "The newcomer—particularly the non-white, non-francophone, non-Catholic—still occupies an uncertain place in Quebec. Integration is no easier in the streets of Montreal than elsewhere. Racial and linguistic tensions persist" (207). Futhermore, he claims that the cultural

exceptionalism in Montreal is based on the historical conflict between French and English; on the other hand, people in Québec city, writes Bissoondath, are very kind to non-francophones, because they do not feel threatened by the English language and are free from anxiety about their culture. I would like to emphasize, however, that this conflict between two cultures created another value in Québécois (especially, Montréal) literature. This tension between cultures and languages in Montréal has allowed authors to create an additional space in Canadian literature.

2.2 Bilingualism in Québec and Montreal Writers

The official language in Québec is French, but we cannot deny the importance of English culture in Montreal. By examining both English and French literature in Québec, I find that bilingual culture and its tension in Montreal allow the authors to invent a unique culture. Elaine Kalman Naves appreciates this cultural condition in her writing, *The Writers of Montreal,* by saying: "Montreal is unique in the world in possessing a rich literary heritage in both English and French" (13).

Mavis Gallant, for example, is one of Montreal's writers. She was born in Montreal in 1922 and she has two influential elements in her birth; one is her parents and the other is her birthplace. Her father was British and had both Scottish and English origins. Her mother was Canadian, born in the United States and with both German and Rumanian origins. Thus, Gallant spoke English, French and German from her childhood. At the age of four, she entered the Pensionnat Saint-Louis-de Gonzague, which was a convent boarding school and where she was the only English Canadian and the only Protestant. That is, she was educated in an environment of a different culture and language. Thus, her multicultural origin and her experience of being a minority had fostered her sensibility as a Montreal writer. I see her strong consciousness of language and of ethnicity in her writings and would argue that this consciousness must stem from such experiences in her childhood. For example, in "The Fenton Child," she shows her interests in bi(pluri)-lingualism in Montreal. One of her protagonists is a French doctor, Dr. Marchand and "his English was exact and almost without accent, but had the sing-song cadence of

French Montreal... He understood different language and dialects... He could construe a man's background from the sound of his words" (166-69). By analyzing his patient's (Mr. Fenton) accent, he says, "His English wasn't right. It turned out his first language was some Sicilian dialect from Montreal North. Nobody in Italy could make it out, so he stayed with English. But it sounded funny"(168). This French doctor's consciousness of language reflects the linguistic diversity of Montreal and it is among the more important themes throughout Gallant's works. In the same work, her protagonist Nora says, "language was the clue to native origin"(180). Gallant's formation of identity is complex, because she experienced quite a few cultures and languages. She, however, seems to find her origin in Montreal where people speak in their own language. The main theme of this novella is the family's tie of ethnic groups in Montreal. However, she interweaves these sub-plots which reflect the cultural conditions of Montreal. By so doing, she creates bilingual and pluriethnical writings in Montreal.

Another Montreal writer, Robyn Sarah also reflects Montreal's bi-lingualism in her writings. Sarah was born in New York in 1948 and moved to Montreal. She teaches creative writing at Concordia University in Montreal. Her work often foregrounds Montreal's bilingual culture. In her novela, "Furniture," she describes a women's life in Montreal as follows:

> She left early for the office, glad that the language she worked in was French - a language he didn't speak, a way of removing herself from him (60).

Futhermore, the linguistic situations in Montreal are more complex in the writings by (im)migrant writers in Montreal.[20] Régine Robin, who is Jewish and was educated in French in France, never writes in her native language, Yiddish. She claims that she feels herself as foreigner, when she writes (in French) and continues as follows: "Pour l'écrivain juif, la langue ne va pas de soi. Mais je parle ici de la langue non

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[20]As I previously explained, I prefer to employ the term "migrant" to "immigrant" to emphasize their roles in contemporary literature. However, as "immigrant" is more commonly used in various fields, I use "(im)migrant" in certain conditions.

juive, de la division de l'écrivain juif dans les langues étrangères ou auxquelles il confère un status d'étrangeté"(*L'Amour de yiddish* 13). As she says, it is her otherness which makes visible the real image of culture. Thus, otherness and double (or triple) tensions between languages are certainly a part of the creative process in Québec literature.

The characteristic of (im)migrant (or minority)'s writings in other languages has already been analyzed by Deleuze and Guattari. They examined the works by Franz Kafka, who was a Jewish writer in Prague and wrote in German. I draw attention to their analysis on the formation of minor literature in major languages, and I believe that their analysis is applicable to Québec literature. Theorizing minor literature, Deleuze and Guattari write that, "a minor practice of major language from within allows one to define popular literature, marginal literature, and so on" (18). In minor literature, the individual is always related to its politics and communities. Thus, their writings put another characteristic in its center. When migrants encounter Québec culture, they are always creating new

meanings and new value in Québec - especially if these writers' native tongues are non-alphabetical languages. I would argue that one of the reasons why these writers more often than not express their consciousness of languages is because of the distance between their native and new languages.

2.4 Migrant Women Writers in Québec

The last section of this work explores the characteristics of (im)migrant women writer's texts in Québec. My discussion highlights the imaginary space produced by the tension between languages. First, I would like to introduce migrant Québécois writers, Ying Chen and Régine Robin and their representative works.

Ying Chen was born in Shanghai, China, in 1961. After studying French at the University of Fudan and working as a translator at the Institution of Astronautic Research in Shanghai, she came to Montreal to do an M.A. in French at McGill University in 1989. Her M.A. thesis was

partly modified and published as her first novel, *La mémoire de l'eau* in 1992. In this work, she describes the lives of women in China through the memories of her grandmother, Lie-Fei. In 1993, she published her second novel, *Les lettres chinoises*, where she narrates the lives of a separated Chinese couple, Yuan in Montreal and Sassa in Shanghai. This story is autobiographical: it explains Chen's life in Shanghai, her experiences of immigration and life in a new country. In 1995, she published her third novel, *L'ingratitude,* which was nominated for the Femina Prize in France. This work has already been translated into English, Spanish and Italian. In 1998, she published a forth work, *Immobile,* in which she established a new writing style by interweaving reality and imagination, present and past.

Chen's novels *La mémoire de l'eau* and *Les lettres chinoises* critique not only the host culture of Québec, but also Chen's native Chinese culture from the perspective of a new immigrant.

Writer, critic and sociologist, Régine Robin came to Québec in 1977. She describes her ambivalent identity between various languages and cultures. She is a writer, however she cannot write in her native language, Yiddish. When she writes in French, she feels that she is "étrangère." Robin explains, "pour l'écrivain juif, la langue ne va pas de soi. Mais je parle ici de la langue non juive, de la division de l'écrivain juif dans les langues étrangères ou auxquelles il confère un statut d'étrangeté" (*L'amour de yiddish* 13). She identifies her "étrangété" (foreignness) in a new country by her non-native language. It is the central subject which she questions throughout her critical and literary works. Her first novel, *La Québécoite* (1983), describes the protagonist's immigration to Montreal. In Robin's second fictional work, or "bio-fiction," *L'immense fatigue des pierres* (1999), Robin's question is not only migrancy through languages, but also the concepts of literary genre and of ethnicity. My analysis will examine her idea of "Hors-lieu" in her fictional and critical works (scholarly texts).

3. Cultural Translation and Feminism in Ying Chen's Works

3.1 The Translation of Québécois Feminism

Migrant women are often surprised at women's status in Québec, something which can be traced in their writings. The discovery of foreign feminisms upon their migration is arguably the reason why most migrant women writers describe women's status in their native countries.

Chinese migrant, Ying Chen describes women's lives in China through her protagonist and grandmother, Lie Fei's narratives in her first novel, *La mémoire de l'eau* (1992). In this story, Chinese women are deprived of language and cannot express themselves. Also, their bodies symbolize women's discriminatory status in the society. In Lie-Fei's narratives, the oppression of women is embodied in women's small feet. In her childhood, they said that foot binding was a symbol of beautiful women and their small feet signified a symbol of women's high status.[21]

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[21]Foot binding was an ancient custom in China, lasting from the 10th century until 1911, when it was made illegal by the government. This tradition involved tight, painful binding of the feet and toes using bandages in

Her grand mother's nurse, Ai-Fe admires women's small feet and she explains it as follows:

> Elle avait honte de ses pieds «drôlement longs ». Elle en voulait à ses parents, trop modestes pour avoir pu lui payer un luxe de ce genre. Dans la rue, on ne saluait que les femmes aux pieds rapetissés. Pour elle comme pour les autres, c'était un signe de noblesse, de richesse, de beauté, de pureté, de tout ce qui pourrait apporter le bonheur à une femme. (14)

However, this custom is in fact a torture for women. Chinese women's lives are also symbolically described by Chen as follows:

> Sur le dos des femmes, nous disait-on, il y avait trois montagnes qui risquaient de les écraser : le droit de leur père, le droit de leur mari et le droit de leur fils ... une fois libérées, ces femmes pourraient bien soulever une moitié du ciel. (46)

In this story, Lie-Fei moves from her village to the modern metropolis of Shanghai. When she moves to her new city, she is surprised by the difference in demeanor of Shanghai women. Their different lives are symbolized by their feet:

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order to keep the feet as small as three inches. Foot-binding had become a must for females because unbound girls were considered unsuitable for marriage.

> Elle [=Lie-Fei] fut surprise de voir une foule de femmes marchant à grands pas dans la rue remplie de soleil. Avec leur cheveux courts soulevés par le vent, elles donnaient l'impression de s'envoler...quelques femmes sortirent, entourées d'enfants, les pieds longs et nus dans de larges pantoufles. (57)

These new women see the small feet of her grandmother as a symbol of the oppression of women in the past. They express it as: "Tu as été une victime du féodalisme" (87). When Lie-Fei arrives at this city, she feels her "foreignness" ("elle était étrangère" [57]): by seeing these women, she finds herself a foreigner in this culture. This is her "otherness" to the traditional Chinese culture which she evokes through her experiences between cultures.

Such oppression of women still exist in contemporary Chinese society in a different way. It is explained by the protagonist's high-heeled shoes which her boyfriend asks her to put on:

> Ce qui me concerne le plus aujourd'hui, ce ne sont pas les pieds du passé, bandés ou non, ni les pieds de l'avenir, agrandis ou non, mais bien les pieds chaussés de souliers à

> talons hauts ou à talons plats. (57)

Her boyfriend would not go out with women with low-heeled shoes, because he believes that it symbolizes women's values: "Ce sont des produits moins civilisés" (105). In traditional Chinese culture, the small feet used to symbolize the women's values. On the other hand, in contemporary China, high-heeled shoes take over their role and are a symbol of a woman's elegance. As Lie-Fei admired the "long" feet of nurse Ai-Fu which were free from foot-binding, the narrator of this story prefers low-heeled shoes and she feels comfortable with them:

> Quant à moi, j'avais toujours mes chaussures en coton oû taient bordées des fleures de lotus d'un style chaque fois nuancé. (103)

Such admiration for long feet and low-heeled shoes represents their incessant desire for lives without oppression.

Chen's descriptions of Chinese women's feet share common characteristics with Québécois women's writings which often question the role of women's bodies. Karen Gould, for example, describes the latter as follows: "the recent advent of 'feminist writing' in Quebec as a writing

of the body ('ecriture du corps') in which the female writer puts her body into words in order to discover and recover herself " (44). Also, Québécois feminist writers emphasize the role of women's bodies and embodied memories in their writings. Nicole Brossard, for example, argues that: "Mes mémoires du corps me disent aussi que 'la mémoire des femmes est torrentielle quand il s'agit de la torture'... Toute memoire travaille à reconstituer la peau et les creux de l'enfance, de même que la couleur de son sexe. Toute mémoire travaille dans l'espace à produire sa forme" (*La lettre aérienne* 56-57). In Chen's writing, Lie-Fei's memory and the protagonist's childhood are reinvented in Québec. It is Chen's feminist translation that accomplishes this revision - a reviewing that questions women's lives and status in China. Even though Chinese women's movements began in the 1920s, this particular act of translation developed other characteristics in feminist movements.[22] By doing this,

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[22] For example, Wendy Larson claims: "What emerges from the intersection between the modernizing ideology and the existing culture is...a unique creation that then becomes the specific and modern cultural debate over women and writings, female style in writing(6). In *Women and Writing in Modern China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998.

they create another space in Chinese literature and quite a few scholars have already discussed this aspect in contemproary Chinese literature. By Chen's migration to Quebec, Chinese women gained another medium to express their oppressed experiences and a role as a part of pluriethnic literature in Quebec.

In Chen's second novel, *Les lettres chinoises*, she describes various women's lives in China. The narrative develops along with the correspondence of a Chinese couple, Yuan in Montreal and Sassa in Shanghai. Sassa who stays in China and hopes to leave, is described as a woman who cannot flee from the woman's role in China:

> Alors ne va pas, mon cher ami, chercher des causes qui n'existent pas si je choisi de rester à Shanghai. Je préfère ne pas partir, parce que je n'ai pas autant de courage que toi. Je ne me suis jamais vraiment habituée à cette ville où j'ai vécu tant d'années. Comment pourrais-je aller faire face à un monde presque inconnu? (132)

Throughout Yuan's letters, Sassa is also symbolically described as a weak and discrete woman. On the other hand, their friend Da Li, who

immigrated to Québec is characterized as "une imbécile gaie":

> Elle est comme une petite boule de verre qui roule facilement. Elle avance, elle glisse, elle saute parfois, et elle s'arrête rarement en chemin. Elle n'a pas besoin de le connaître pour aller jusqu'au bout ... cette légèreté de l'existence qui elle seule, selon toi, soutenait l'illusion du bonheur. (19)

Chen compares Chinese women and women in Québec who live on their own in society. Throughout this story, Yuan gradually assimilates to his new life in Québec. On the other hand, Sassa in Shanghai gradually diminishes in importance in the story. This reflects traditional women's images in China which began to be rejected after the upsurge of modernization: through various social movements, especially feminist movements, women improved their lives and status in society, which is marked by the Marriage Law of the People's Republic in China in 1950, the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 and the Economic Reform from 1976 to the present.[23] These societal movements largely helped to

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[23] This historical evolution of women's status in China is explained by Fan Hong in *Footbinding, Feminism and Freedom: The Liberation of Women's Bodies in Modern China* (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

transform the images of women in literature. Its influences can be traced in Chen's writings where she symbolically buries women's feminine images in herself: at the end of the story, as Sassa cannot flee from her country, she finishes her life in Shanghai:

> On attend tranquillement sa fin, on l'enterre dans son lieu de naissance et on inscrit des poèmes sur sa tombe, dans sa propre langue.
>
> *Sassa, Shanghai.*(133)

This comparison of women in Québec and in China seems to be based on Chen's migrant experiences. This characteristic of Chen's writings is often emphasized by literary critics. Betty McLane, for example, calls attention to this theme in Chen's writings: "The fictional transposition of the author's own experience with exile and emigration is found in both the lovers, he who emigrated and she who did not, as well as in the minor characters"(225). This particular characteristic of migrant writings between cultures can be seen in migrants' writings in Japan and in writings by authors of hyphenated identities, who are wandering and who

are creating a distinct space between cultures. Chen's migrant experience and cultural translation also voice oppressed women's experiences, and create a new space between Québec and China.

3.2 Migrancy and Cultural Critique in Ying Chen's Writings

Ying Chen's migration to Québec allowed her to be aware of the gap between cultures and to critique Québécois culture from the immigrant's viewpoint. In *Les lettres chinoises*, she describes the consciousness of language in Québec, a theme which arguably derives from the influence of multilingual culture in Québec and Chen's experience of linguistic in-betweenness.

Chen's protagonist, Yuan's immigration to Canada begins in Vancouver where he begins to experience foreignness through languages:

> C'est important d'avoir un pays quand on voyage. Un jour, tu comprendras tout cela: quand tu présentes ton passeport à une dame aux lèvres serrées, quand tu retrouves parmi des gens dont tu ignores jusqu'à la langue, et surtout quand on te demande tout le temps de quel pays tu viens. Pour pouvoir

> vivre dans un monde civilisé, il faut d'identifier, c'est cela. (10)

Everytime he is asked his origin, he identifies himself as foreigner. Through these experiences, he began to construct his identity through ethnicity. When he cannot speak his mother tongue, he is deprived of language and feels as if he is reborn in this new country:

> Le professeur n'ose plus me poser de questions de peur de mes "Pardon?" ... J'ai l'impression d'avoir rajeuni. Je vis comme un nouveau-né. Y a-t-il pour nous, les mortels, rien de plus intéressant que de renaître? (17)

Through his experiences of foreign languages, he begins to notice that the meanings of the words are different in each culture. He finds, for example, the meaning of "freedom" in Québec is quite different from that in China. The latter is explained by Sassa's as follows:

> Est-ce parce que les gens là-bas sont libres d'être en retard? Rien ne serait impossible dans un pays où le mot "liberté" n'a pas un sens péjoratif. Sont-ils aussi libres d'envoyer promener leur supérieur? (18)

Sassa implies that the definition of "freedom" in China is somehow pejorative. On the other hand, Yuan, who must have admired it in China,

finds its negative meaning in Québec. That is, he finds the limits of freedom in his immigration and he says: "La liberté a ses limites"(20). He explains it as follows:

> Ici, la liberté a peut-être un visage différent, mais elle me semble avoir le même caractère ... il est libre d'être en retard et même d'être absent. Il ne sera pas grondé pour cela. Il est de plus libre d'abandonner son patron en se trouvant un autre emploi ... Mais crois-tu que je le suis vraiment ici plus qu'ailleurs? (20-21)

He explains the meaning of "freedom" in Québec, which is not necessarily positive as he expected. In this section, Chen argues that people tend to misunderstand the meaning of the cultural concept of freedom; pluriethnicity is not pluri-"exoticism" and freedom is not disorder, but has its limit. Chen's critiques of Québec culture appear in Da Li's ruminations:

> Sur leurs ruines, des milliers et des milliers d'enfants sans parents, de parents sans enfants, de maris sans femme, de femmes sans mari, d'individus seuls avec chien ou chat. Ce phénomène, encore curieux en Chine, est devenu ici [= au Québec] un mode de vie. On [=Québécois] voulait la liberté. On l'a presque obtenue, au moins en ce qui concerne les relations sexuelles... la liberté luisante collée au front, laquelle rend leur visage pâle comme la neige. (119)

She posits that the freedom which people enjoy in this country is rather a sexual freedom which tends to disintegrate in disorder. Such a situation must be different from what people hoped for throughout their revolutionary and democratic movements since the 1960s. As Chen had experienced the series of liberation movements in China, she compares what people gained in Québec and what was expected in China. As Chen gained an/other perspective through migrant experiences, she critiques both Chinese and Québécois culture in her cultural translation and migrant writings.

Chen's experience of foreign languages allowed her to observe her language from another's point of view, which is explained in Yuan's reflections. Living in the ambiguous space between languages, he begins to be conscious of his language:

> Elle parlait un shanghaïen impeccable. Je commençais à frissoner. Tu sais, mon amour, j'ai toujours peur des gens qui parlent trop bien shanghaïen. J'ai la stupide impression que l'élégance du langue et la pureté de l'accent dénoutent une

extrême lucidité. (97)

That is, he becomes more sensitive to languages through his experiences of linguistic in-betweenness. Deprived of his language, he glimpses at the space between mother tongue and foreign language, as well as between Québec and Chinese cultures. Thus, his re-discovery of his mother tongue indicates that he begins to be assimilated to another culture. This characteristic often appears in migrant writing. Régine Robin, for example, explains this migrant creation of in-between as follows: "Une écriture qui pourrait rendre compte de ce chaos des déplacements, de ces rencontres inopinées, de ce remue-ménage, des races des langues, des cultures" ("Ce n'était pas un roman" 24). Through these experiences, migrants begin to see their native languages as well as foreign languages in a different way. In so doing, they begin to exist in new countries and to create other values in that space. During this process, for example, Yuan discovers the similarities between these two different cultures:

> La rue Si-Nan n'est pas non plus aussi loin de Saint-Denis que tu le crois. En fait, les rues de ces deux villes se ressemblent un peu. Plusieures endroits à Montréal me font penser à Shanghai

> ... De toute façon, tu verras que tu seras presque chez toi dans une ville pourtant si exotique pour nous. (110)

What Yuan discovers between the cultures always appears in the process of assimilation to a new culture. These discoveries are one of the most salient characteristics in contemporary Québec literature, which signals a new direction in Québécois literature.

4. Régine Robin As A Migrant Author in Montreal

4.1 Intertextuality and Auto-(bio-)fiction

As I mentioned in the previous chapters, intertextuality is one of the most important aspects in contemporary literature. Régine Robin, for instance, analyzes it in a Québécois context. As a sociologist as well as a writer of fiction, she has searched for the relationship between society and literature throughout her career.[24] In *La sociologie de la littérature: un*

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[24]For example, Régine Robin edit two issues of *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, which are no.13 (1989)"L'Énigme du texte littéraire: La sociologie et l'apport des réflexions" and no.26 (1996) "La sociologie saisie par la littérature."

historique (1991) she notes this relationship as follows:

> Les textes "littéraires"...ont cette potentialité d'être "autres," "ailleurs", en excès par rapport à leurs dires qu'ils touchent à la dimension esthétique et c'est parce qu'ils ont, plus encore, la fonction de redire, d'illustrer, de relayer le déjà-là qu'ils relèvent de la reproduction sociale. (39)

As she claims here, her literary texts often reflect Québécois multiethnic society which began with its bilingual culture. However, Robin calls its characteristic a " société cosmopolite" and this concept has already been explained by literary critics in Québec. Simon Harel, for example, who is also a Québécois author, claims "le cosmopolitisme n'existe qu'au prix d'un bord à bord entre enracinement et déracinement"(391).

In Robin's literary works, this social condition is represented through the complexity of literary genres in her writings. By combining autobiography and fiction, biography and her experiences, she invents a new genre in Québécois literature. For instance, she calls her second literary work, *L'immense fatigue des pierres* "biofiction." To explain this genre, the definition of "autofiction" will be useful. Lecarme, for example,

defines this genre as follows:

> L'autofiction ne s'oppose plus à l'autobiographie,...derrière l'allégation péritextuelle de "roman"... Ainsi, l'autofiction devient-elle, par l'effet d'une petit ruse transparente,une autobiographie déchaînée. (268)

Robin develops this idea of autofiction in her critical work, *Le Golem de l'écriture* (1997) and defines as "L'autofiction, c'est en quelque sorte, l'identité narrative se reconfigurant, mais se défaisant en même temps qu'elle se tisse"(24). Thus, in her invention of biofiction, she combines the characteristics of autofiction as a narrative of self identification and as biography to narrate reality. That is, in her writings, individual subjectivity and otherness always coexist. Also, her biofiction has complex characteristics not only by its genre, but also by multidimensional narratives, which travel between New York, Israel, France and Montreal. Thus, her fictional writing underlines the complexity of society in Montreal. This particular characteristic of "hybridity" and her protagonist's identity which is constructed through her relation with the mother represents Robin's consciousness of postfeminism.

I would argue that such characteristics of her writing are based on her experiences between languages (French, Québécois and other languages she speaks) and cultures (North American and European). However, she does not try to find her place, rather she stays in an "Hors-lieu (outside)." This is the space in which her protagonist in *L'immense fatigue des pierres* situates herself, and Robin explains this concept as follows:

> Elle(= her protagonist) est à la recherche d'un lieu qui ne soit pas un enracinement, mais au contraire, un hors-lieu...[Elle] cherche un lieu autre, une utopie à vivre et à revivre. (*Le roman mémoriel* 179-80)

As such, Robin looks for a genre through which she can express herself, settling on a style somewhere between auto-biography and fiction, or between fiction and biography, that is, something outside of fixed genres. She situates her first fictional work *La Québécoite*, as novel (roman). However, she explains her view of this category in the "afterword" of *The Wanderer* in English, which she learned in Montreal, as follows:

> In search of a new meaning in the past, I use false biography, false autobiography: "autofiction," the novel in the true sense.

> Autobiographical elements are inscribed in the narrative and transformed into fiction. Thus *The Wanderer* is not autobiographical in the customary sense...While the novel does contain autobiographical elements...So, if *The Wanderer* is autobiography, it is intellectual or spiritual, not factual, autobiography. (179-80)

She wrote these works as a way to express the place she found and the way to live in Quebec through her ambivalence of languages. Having finished two literary works,[25] she explained the reason why she wrote the fictional works, especially *La Québécoite* as follows:

> After writing this book [= *La Québécoite*] I understood that becoming Québécois was no longer of any importance to me. *The Wanderer* deals with the problem of finding a place for oneself ...once the book was finished, I felt that this was possible through writing,... through friendships and other relationships - and so I turned a page. (*The Wanderer* 174)

By admitting to the existance of an ambiguous space inside of oneself, migrant writers begin to construct the identity and understand the relationship between the self and their host country. This process was

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[25]The original versions of *L'immense fatique des pierres* were published in *Parole métèque* vol.2 and vol.3 (1987) and *Vice Versa* vol 24(1988), however, she did not call them "biofiction."

also inscribed in the Zainichi migrant author, Yi Yang-ji's works. In her work "Yuhi," she describes the process of identity formation of a Zainichi woman, Yuhi, who searches for her identity through her wandering trips between Korea and Japan. Explsining the reason why she wrote her migrant work "Yuhi," Yi writes in her "Essay" that, "I wrote this work [=Yuhi] to separate myself from (the protagonist) Yuhi" (647). Interestingly the same process can be seen in Québécois migrant writing, especially in Robin's works.

Futhermore, Robin expresses her identity as "Cybersoi," which nwither belongs inside nor outside of Québec. This concept is obviously influenced by Donna Haraway's feminist theories of the "Cyborg." Robin defines this concept as: "un moi hybride, Cyborg...on choisit son sexe, sa personalité, son nom et son prénom, sa forme" (*Le Golem de l'écriture* 284). Thus, she began to think of another self in modern "cyberspace" society and her writings take up these ideas. The following analysis will examine her ideas on identity in contemporary society and in Montreal's

"cosmopolitan" culture through her literary works, *La Québécoite* and *L'immense fatigue des pierres.*

4.2 Migrancy and Cosmopolitanism in Montreal

I will analyze Robin's identity formation in "Hors-lieu" through herin-betweenness of languages as well as her attempts to grapple ideas of pluriethnicity and feminism. In so doing, I would like to demonstrate that Robin contributed enormously to the development of migrant women's writings in Québec.

Though Régine Robin's mother tongue is Yiddish, she never writes in it. In her works, she often refers to Franz Kafka, who was also a Jewish writer and never wrote in his native tongue. Robin describes her language by using Kafka's discourse on " l'impossible identité" as follows:

> Ils vivaient entre trois impossibilités ...l'impossibilité de ne pas écrire, l'impossibilité d'écrire en allemand, l'impossibilité d'écrire autrement. (*Kafka* 27)

By developing Kafka's ideas, Robin characterizes her mother tongue as "Le Yiddish, c'est le tabou" and she continues as follows:

> "[La] perte réelle qui va se redoubler d'une perte fantastique ...j'écris cette perte, dans ce décalage. Il faut que cela se fasse dans une langue autre. (*Montréal: L'investion juive* 9-10)

As such, Robin writes to compensate for or inscribe what she and her ethnic identity lost throughout its history, because language plays an important role in ethnic identity formation. Thus, when one constructs one's identity through non-native languages, one's discourse tends to be "la parole nomade" (Robin, *Montréal* 48). Robin often uses this concept and she refers to herself as "une écrivain nomade" in cosmopolitan Montreal and explains as follows:

> Le cosmopolitisme. Des paumées parmi d'autre paumées, des immigrantes parmi d'autres immigrants, un lieu possible, improbable, et une écriture nomade. (*Le roman mémorial* 180)

This concept of literary nomadismis reflected in her protagonists. In *L'immense fatigue des pierres*, her protagonist, "la fille" and her mother "la mère" are both Jewish French women. After getting divorced from her

husband, "la mère" moves from Paris to New York and becomes a best-selling author. On the other hand, la fille gets married in Jerusalem and ownes an art gallery. After her husband passed away, she closes her gallery. The mother and daughter intend to meet at Roissy airport in Paris to move together to another city.

La mère, who lives in New York and constantly uses languages that are not her mother-tongue, sees herself as nomad:

> Nous sommes des errantes, des étoiles filantes, toujours à côté de nos pompes, de nos lieux, de nos langues...Tu travailles en hébreu et moi j'écris en anglais. Des langues étrangères, des langues d'ailleurs. (11)

Observing her daughter's life in Jerusalem, she finds that her daughter who learned Hebrew also feels the same foreignness through languages:

> Après tous ces efforts pour apprendre la langue, pour
> t'adapter, pour faire ton trou, pour se sentir cez toi...
> S'inventer sa propre langue
> Se lover dans l'hebreu comme toi
> Ou dans l'anglais comme moi
> Se dépandre du français ou le contraire
> Multilinguisme des errants
> ...

Encore accrochées à la langue perdue. (28/34-35)

Even after experiencing various languages (English, German, French, Polish and also Hebrew), they cannot feel at ease ("sentir chez soi") anywhere and they intend to move to Montreal, as they hope to form their identity in a new multilingual city:

> À Montréal, on serait bien. Tu crois vraiment? Mais oui! On y parle français, on ne serait plus obligées de parler une langue étrangère. (47)

This is also a city where their "lost" language, Yiddish still exists:

> À Montréal, il y a une fragilité de la langue, de leur langue, comme un tissu qui se défait, et cela leur rappelle étrangement les vieux qui parlaient yiddish avec le sentiment ...qu'il fallait être juif pour comprendre qu'on n'avait pas vraiment de la langue à soi. (47-48)

They try to discover their identity in this multilingual culture, not as either Québécois or Jewish, but as migrants:

> À Montréal, on serait bien justement parce qu'on ne serait pas tout à fait "chez soi", un tiers-lieu, un hors-lieu, un espace pour pouvoir respirer sans se sentir totalement concerné, un dedans-dehors. (48)

This is why this culture is characterized by pluriethnicity wherein foreigners are allowed to construct their identity as migrant in the space of "Hors-lieu." This is fundamentally different from Canadian "Multi-culturalism," which intends to form a unique identity combining various ethnic characteristics.

The following analysis examines characteristics of pluriethnicity and cosmopolitanism which Robin uses to describe Montreal culture. Her construction of a migrant identity through her experiences is reflected in her protagonist's discourses in *La Québeécoite,* as she claims that this is her "autofiction" in "intellectual meaning."

There are roughly four stages in her relationship with Montreal culture: a non-coïncidence; a recognition of nomad identity; a discovery of "Hors-lieu"; an identification with the foreign ("devenir étranger").

First, Robin's identity formation begins with her recognition of Montreal culture. This city is often characterized by multiethnicity or hybridity. Robin's protagonist in *La Québécoite* is Jewish and immigrated from France. She narrates her impressions of the cosmopolitan Montreal

culture as follows:

> La ville cosmopolite, la ville où l'on entend parler toutes les langues, où les odeurs de tous les marchés du monde vous assaillent...un patchawork de programmes, de cultures, de langues...hybridité des forms, des vocables, des sons, richesse de l'altérité. (208-209)

In this culture, she identifies herself through "non-coïncidence." Non-coïncidence is explained by Robin as that which "permettrait peut-être l'emergence d'un espace nomade" ("Sortir de l'ethnicité" 25). Her protagonist is a French woman, but the French of Québec is different from that of France. She describes her discovery of the differences between French and Québécois as "sa langue qui n'est pas tout à fait la tienne, ni tout à fait une autre, fouettée par ses vents du Nord et ses poudreries"(52). As her native tongue is Yiddish, she experienced a double non-coïncidence through her immigration to Montréal. From this experience, she finds a characteristic of nomadism in her identity, which refers to people who belong nowhere and who continue to live in a space between cultures and national boundaries. Robin defines this space as an "espace d'une écriture migrante qui balisera un territoire du hors-lieu"

("Sortir de l'ethnicité" 25). As her protagonist does not understand the "sense" of languages in Québec, she begins to see the gap between languages. It is such gaps that migrant Québécois writers describe in their writings, as, for example, her protagonist expresses:

> Il n'y aura pas de messie.
> Il n'y aura pas de récit
> tout juste une voix plurielle
> une voix carrefour
> la parole immigrante. (90)

As she finds her "hors-lieu" (not-place, place outside established categories), she begins to form her identity as a migrant in that space. Simon Harel calls this process "devenir-étranger." This concept does not refer to those who wander between cultures and languages, or who try to deny the categories of immigrants. Rather, it refers to those who stay in "Hors-lieu" (not-place) and who inscribe their discoveries and inventions in their writings. As Robin explains it in this novel:

> Ces écrivains venus d'ailleurs insufflent quelque chose de nouveau à la langue et des formes nouvelles à la littérature. (218)

In Québec, these migrant writers are not categorized as minority or immigrant, but they lead their cosmopolitan culture and literature in new directions. They rather define themselves as "Néo-Québécois" (*The Wanderer* 175), who identify themselves by not being Québécois and who address readers both inside and outside of Québec. For instance, these roles are explained in the writings of Ying Chen: when Ying Chen addresses Chinese women, her writings act as a source of empowerment for Chinese women; when she addresses Québec readers, her writings acquire the significance of a strong cultural critique originating from the virepoint of an "other." Furthermore, the doubleness and ambivalence of Néo-Québécois is explained by Robin as "leur imaginaire va participer d'un autre intertexte, celui de la culture d'origine, d'une autre mémoire collective...d'une autre sorte d'hybridité" (*Le roman mémoriel* 181). Thus, the Néo-Québécois create new values in Québécois culture and literature. Régine Robin is definitely one of the most prominent Néo-Québécois intellectuals, and her dynamical works create new tendencies in Québécois literature.

4.3 Régine Robin's Biofiction and Feminist Translation

Robin's biofiction, *L îmmense fatigue des pières* is composed of multiple narratives about a mother and her daughter. However, there are no narratives by a male protagonists; the mother's divorced husband, Jean-Claude, has already passed away and her daughter's husband, Simon, also suddenly passed away because of cancer. Thus, the mother and her daughter set out to restart their lives as "nomads" without males. This narrative technique which is constructed only through the mother-daughter relation is one of the most important feminist techniques and Robin explains this aspect of her writing as follows: " je fais disparaître les hommes très facilement dans ma nouvelle"(*Le roman mémoriel* 179). That is, her protagonists now have no restrictions or obstacles in their lives; they can decide on where to live and what language to speak. Also, the two male characters who never physically appear in their narrative have names. On the other hand, the two female protagonists do not have specific names in this narrative. Thus, characters seem to occupy the position of the "Cybersoi," described by Robin as a self who chooses its

sex, name and identity: "on choisit son sexe, ... son nom, son prénom....tout est choix (*Le Golem de l'écriture* 284).

This narrative also resembles a computer-generated hypertext, which Robin defines as the epitomy of an age of complexity: "l'hypertexte s'inscrit dans un âge où la complexité, la multiplicité, l'hétérogène, la confusion, l'aléatoire, l'instabilité, et la fragmentation sont...la redéfinition de...nos identités" (*Le Golem de l'écriture* 278). Robin's text is also composed of fragmented pieces and complex narratives. Two of the protagonists' biographies are composed of their stories in the past, present and future. Furthermore, the daughter is a collage artist, collage being an art which is made by the assemblage of fragmented pieces. The mother, who is a writer, describes "des passages à la télé, les honneurs du *New York Times*, du *New York Review of Books* du *Village Voice*" (12), that is, her writing career is fragmented and unstable.

This fragmentation is one of the central characteristics of both postmodernism and feminism. For instance, Magali Cornier Michael

makes the following objection about the feminist postmodern novel:

> [The feminist] novel uses its fragmented narratives to communicate forcefully to its reader the ways in which male-centered Western discourses are implicated in the violence and misogyny. (41)

Also, both postmodernism and feminism aim to create something new by reconstruction after the deconstruction of patriarchal values. Magali Cornier Michael goes on to underline the new possibilities of feminism that lie in the act of reconstruction: "the goal of feminism is...to offer possibilities for a reconstructing of social and thought systems" (38). This idea shares characteristics with Robin's techniques in her biofiction. For example, Robin's multiple and fragmented narratives appear to be the result of the deconstruction of male-centered conventions, discourses and practices. By combining these pieces like a piece of collage, she reconstructs new possibilities in Québécois literature. That is, Robin's fictional work points not only to a new direction of Québécois literature, but also to a new direction for feminism; one which is accomplished by remaining in the space of "Hors-lieu," or the not-place outside established

categories of identity and cultural designation.

Throughout her writings, Robin demonstrates a consciousness of women's language and of feminist translation. Feminist writing is described by Pamela Banting as follows:

> Women's language is simultanemous translation between language and the body, between the already spoken and the unspeakable, between the familiar and the un- and/or de-familiarized. (Godard, *Collaboration in the Feminine* 175)

In *L'immense fatigue des pierres*, Robin's protagonist, "une fille," traces her childhood memories through her bodily senses:

> Je rêve sur ces paysages, ces pierres, ces monuments, ces morceaux d'histoire figée qui sont ton odeur, ton aura.(13)

When her protagonists translate their memories, they express the space between "spoken and unspeakable," that is, they try to voice the unvoiced experiences which are embodied in their memories:

> Tu parles, tu parles et tu ne dis rien. Tu parles pour meubler le silence, l'angoisse entre nous.(13)

As such, feminists translate their oppression and anger in their silenced memories. For example, in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, her protagonists' language has feminist characteristics as they voice their silenced experiences. For instance, one of her protagonists says: "The languages of her [Obasan's] grief is silence. ..silence within her small body has grown large and powerful" (Kogawa, *Obasan* 14). Thus, feminist writings, allotted to express their unvoiced experiences and their memories (of anger and grief), are described through gendered languages, such as their bodily senses and silent experiences.

Migrants authors, such as Ying Chen and Régine Robin propose a powerful cultural critique from the perspective of a singular otherness. The cultural translations and creations in the "third space" of these authors should not be described as marginal writings, but rather must be placed at the very center of contemporary Québécois culture and society.

Conclusion

1. Japanese Women and Migrancy

As I argued in Chapter One, Tsushima Yuko begins to see a gap between herself and the other by being deprived of the languages in France. This is the place where she wanders between reality and unreality, or between her real story and Ainu legends. In this space, she could glimpse the world of her handicapped brother and narrate the stories of her dead son. It is also the place for her to compensate for the lack in her life, to express her rejection of the traditional role of motherhood and to question women's identities. She often suggests various different forms of women's lives in her writings, such as single mothers, divorced women, unmarried women who live on their own, etc. Furthermore, fathers and husbands are often absent. It seems that she objects to the traditional role of mother and of gender which prevented the construction of a woman's self under the patriarchy. Tsushima, however, does not advocate a radical feminist stance, but is much more interested in exploring various alternatives for women's lives. She also clearly critiques the continuing oppression and subordinate position of women in

contemporary Japan.

Tawada Yoko describes the process of the formation of women's identity in her ambivalent space and she seems to have chosen to stay in her in-between space to fully experience this situation.

Tawada's work is in some ways similar to Tsushima's. These similarities are not clear-cut, however, because Tawada often uses strategies, such as irony and parody, which Tsushima does not Like Tsushima, Tawada creates a space between reality and unreality through a technique of rewriting. Tawada, however, does not necessarily search for women's identity, but rather she seems to expose another Japanese value: she recreates Japanese folklore in the contemporary context and generates an alternate version of the story. For example, in *Inu muko iri* (1993), she reverses the gender role and shows us a world in which women live differently. In so doing, she provokes Japanese women to question their identity, and she critiques a Japanese society where women are not supposed to live on their own.

I analyzed Japanese migrant women's writings in which women expressed their migrant experiences through fantasy or the in-betweenness of languages. Also, I examined their process of construction of identities in the space which they found by way of migration. Scholars claim that one begins to be conscious of identity by the encounter with the other. Homi K. Bhabha, for example, writes that: "The Other must be seen as the necessary negation of a primordial identity - cultural or psychic - that introduces the systems of differentiation which enables the cultural to signify as linguistic, symbolic, historic reality" (*Location of Culture* 52). Through their encounter with the other in foreign countries, migrant Japanese women propose a critique of women's status in contemporary Japan. Their works also question their identity in the space of in-between where women are free from female stereotypes and manifest their creativity.

2. Hyphenated Identities and Hybridity

As Bhabha claims, discovering the differences between onself and the other is an essential step in the process of the construction of an identity. In contemporary multicultural literature, differences tend to be replaced with ethnicity.

Japanese Canadian writer Hiromi Goto demonstrates the different role of ethnicity in the process of identity formation between generations (Issei, Nisei and Sansei). In *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994), an Issei (first generation) Japanese Canadian, Naoe holds onto her Japanese customs even after immigrating to Canada; she speaks in Japanese and eats dried Japanese foods. These two elements, language and Japanese cuisine allow her to maintain her Japanese ethnicity in her new country. That is, she hands down her culture through taste and speech. These senses play an important role in the later generations in the process of identity formation; the Sansei (third generation) Japanese Canadian, Murasaki begins to identify with her ethnic self through the

memories of her grandmother. Even though the Nisei (second generation) tried to deny their ethnicity, their ethnic memories are nonetheless inscribed into their bodily memories. For example, even though Murasaki's father rejects Japanese culture, "the walls of the [father's] room, they were covered with shelves, filled with books, books...The books were all in Japanese" (205-206). He cannot erase his ethnicity; he secretly reads Japanese books in his office and goes to buy his favorite seaweed paste in Calgary. Also, he chooses "Tonkatsu (porc cutlet)" as his family name, in order to hold onto his origins. When Murasaki's mother, Keiko, gets sick, she is able to recover thanks to the Japanese foods which her Sansei daughter cooks. These facts are proof of the substantial part ethnicity plays in our bodies - a part which we can never erase.

Japanese Koreans also describe their bodily memories in their writings. They internalize their experiences and memories and critique Japanese discriminatory society.

In "Kazukime," Yi Yang-ji describes a Japanese Korean woman who tries to identify herself by denying her own existence. This was Yi's critique toward the discrimination in Japanese society, where Koreans were deprived of their culture and language and where Korean culture tends to be downplayed or excluded.

Yi finds a way and a place to live as a Zainichi woman through her migrant experiences between Japan and Korea. It is a place which she finds between two languages and in which she searches for "the cane of language." Futhermore, she explores Korean identity and the performativity of languages in her writings.

The writers with hyphenated identities form "imagined communities" in the process of a search for ethnic identities. Ethnicity is often discussed by the vertical relations between generations. Lisa Lowe, for example, writes that she "would conceptualize" these relations in terms of a "vertical generational model of culture" (63). However, in his theorization of imagined communities, Benedict Anderson chooses to

emphasize a horizontal relationship: "the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship" (7). This analysis showed the cross-cultural (horizontal) and generational (vertical) dimensions of communities. Also, these dimensions go beyond the borders of nationality and ethnicity. As such, an imagined community is characterized by hybridity, which is explained by Homi K. Bhabha as follows: "hybridity is precisely about the fact that when a new situation, a new alliance formulates itself, it may demand that you should translate your principles, rethink them, extend them" (*Identity* 216). This notion of a "new alliance" of culture can be applied to the relation between Nikkei and Zainichi writings and it should be discussed in a wider context to bring light to marginal cultures across the world. My analysis also examined the role of marginal culture in the United States and Japan, and their influences and impacts on the centre, or dominant culture. Thus, the writings of authors of hyphenated identities have already begun to find a certain place in multicultural society. Therefore, their hyphenated space works not just to connect two ethnicities, but rather to foster the new hybrid

creativity between cultures.

3. Pluriethnicity and Identity in Québec

One of the salient characteristics of Québécois literature is that it reflects feminist movements and the development of women's status in society. The role of women's writings as a medium in which to inscribe their movements can be seen in immigrant writings in contemporary Québec literature, especially in the 1990s. For example, in the works of Ying Chen, women's status in China is questioned by comparing it with that of Québécois women. Lucie Lequin explains this relationship between Québécois feminism and immigrant's writings:

> C'est dans le mouvement et la fusion des contraires ... qu'elles forgent leur identité d'écrivaine et de femme, car c'est comme femme qu'elles appartiennent au pays des mots. Leur interroagtion sur le pouvoir des mots est en effet toujours posée en relation avec le rôle et la place des femmes dans le pays d'origine et le pays d'accueil, rôle à maintenir dans le movement comme leur appartenance culturelle multiple. ("L'épreuve de l'exil" 38-39)

The migrant women's role is not only to create other values in literature, but also to question identity and the role of ethnicity in Québécois culture. Régine Robin, for, example, expresses her identity as an immigrant in Québec in the following terms: "on me demande, en tant que minoritaire, en tant que néo (néo-canadienne ou néo-québécoise selon les interlocuteurs) de me définir!" (*Métamorphoses d'une utopie* 27). She does not identify herself as either étrangère (foreigner) nor immigrant. Her claims are based on her theory of "non-coincïdence" by which she evaluates the creations between cultures. That is, she believes that the migrant's creations between cultures and languages form new tendencies and will be a new dynamic in society. This process of migration, from foreigner to nomad and to migrant in an "Hors-lieu" is inscribed in her fictional as well as critical works. She, therefore, concludes these ideas in "Sortir de l'ethnicité." Thus, Québécois migrant writers have begun to find their place where they invent new directions in Québec literature.

4. Migrancy and Identity

This dissertation examined cultural translation and inventions in a space of in-between in migrant writer's wrorks in Japan, English Canada and in Québec.

Theories of identity have helped to develop my ideas of cultural translation and migration throughout this work. Charles Taylor, for example, have defined identity as: "a response to the question of 'Where I stand'" (29). However, Tawada Yoko articulates another perspective on idenitity formation through migration where she writes: "A novel without heels does not imply a literature without tradition, but it signifies the literature of ambivalence, because it stands on its toes. For me, those who stand on their toes are much more interesting than those who stand firmly on their heels" (*Katakoto* 12; my translation). The writers whom I analyzed in this work inscribe their "*Ana* (hole)" (*Katakoto* 130) in this space, as an invention or a creation in their in-between space. For Tsushima, it is a "gap" and for Yi, it was a "*Kotoba no tsue*" (a cane of languages). Tawada also compares it to a trip and explains it as follows:

"Trips are like translations... By these trips, we translate not the words, but ourselves" (*Katakoto* 23; my translation). Thus, we also take apart or analyze ourselves through migrants' writings. Reading their works, we engage with the other and begin to see ourselves from another's point of view. In so doing, we discover the importance of questioning our identities. Therefore, migrant women's writings serve not merely to describe the process of their identity formation, but rather to question and construct "our" own identities through their experiences.

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