

Fissured Languages of Empire:  
Gender, Ethnicity, and Literature in Japan and Korea, 1930s–1950s

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## ABSTRACT

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This dissertation investigates how Japanese-language literature by Korean writers both emerged out of and stood in opposition to discourses of national language, literature, and identity. The project is twofold in nature. First, I examine the rise of Japanese-language literature by Korean colonial subjects in the late 1930s and early 1940s, reassessing the sociopolitical factors involved in the production and consumption of these texts. Second, I trace how postwar reconstructions of ethnic nationality gave rise to the specific genre of *zainichi* (lit. “residing in Japan”) literature. By situating these two valences together, I attempt to highlight the continuities among the established fields of colonial-period literature, modern Japanese literature, and modern Korean literature. Included in my analyses is a consideration of literature written by Japanese writers in Korea, transnational media and publishing culture in East Asia, the gender politics of national language, and the ways in which *kōminka* (imperialization) policies were neither limited to the colonized alone nor completely erased after 1945.

Rather than view the boundaries between “Japanese” and “Korean” literature as fixed or self-evident, this study examines the historical construction of these categories as generative discourses embedded in specific social, material, and political conditions. I do this through close analytical readings of a wide variety of primary texts written in Japanese by both Korean and Japanese writers, while contextualizing these readings in relation to the materiality of the literary journal. I also include a consideration of the canonization process over time, and the role literary

criticism has played in actively shaping national canons.

Chapter 1 centers around the 1940s “Korean boom,” a term that refers to the marked rise in Japanese-language works published in the metropole on Korea and its culture, written by Japanese and Korean authors alike. Through broad intertextual analyses of major Japanese literary journals and influential texts by Korean writers produced during the “Korean boom,” I examine the role played by the Japanese publishing industry in promoting the inclusion of Koreans in the empire while simultaneously excluding them from the privileged space of the nation. I also deconstruct the myth of a single “Korean” people, and consider how an individual’s position within the uneven playing field of colonialism may shift according to gender and class.

Chapter 2 deals with the ideologies of *kokugo* (national language; here, Japanese) and *kokumin bungaku* (national literature) during the latter years of Japan’s imperial rule. The major texts I introduce in this chapter include Obi Jūzō’s “Tōhan” (Ascent, 1944), first printed in the Japanese-language journal *Kokumin bungaku* based in Keijō (present-day Seoul); a comparison of the *kōminka* essays written by Yi Kwangsu in Korean and Japanese; and the short story “Aikoku kodomo tai” (Patriotic Children’s Squad, 1941), written by a Korean schoolgirl named Yi Chōngnae. Through these texts, I show how *kokumin bungaku* depended upon the inclusion of colonial writers but simultaneously denied them an autonomy outside the strictures of the Japanese language, or *kokugo*.

In Chapter 3, I move to Occupation-period Japan and the writings of Kim Talsu, Miyamoto Yuriko, and Nakano Shigeharu. While Koreans celebrated Japan’s defeat as a day of independence from colonial rule, the political status of Koreans in Korea and in Japan remained far from independent under Allied policy. I outline the complicated factors that led to the

creation of a stateless Korean diaspora in Japan and highlight the responses of Korean and Japanese writers who saw these political conditions as a sign of an imperialist system still insidiously intact. In looking at Kim Talsu's fiction in particular, I am able to examine both the continuities and discontinuities in definitions of national language, literature, and ethnicity that occurred across 1945 and map out the evolving position of Koreans in Japan.

Chapter 4 compares the collaboration debates that occurred in post-1945 Korea with the arguments over war responsibility that occurred in Japan in the same period, focusing on the writings of Chang Hyökchu and Tanaka Hidemitsu. Although the works of both individuals have been neglected in contemporary literary scholarship, I argue that their postwar writings reveal how Korean collaboration (*ch'inilp'a*) and Japanese war responsibility (*sensō sekinin*) emerged as mutually constitutive discourses that embodied – rather than healed – the traumas of colonialism and empire. Finally, in the epilogue of this dissertation, I introduce the writings of the self-identified zainichi author Yi Yangji in order to consider how all of the historical developments outlined in the previous chapters still exist as lived realities for many zainichi Koreans even today.

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## BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & A NOTE ON NAMES, TERMINOLOGY, AND TRANSLATIONS

With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Japan officially embarked on an enterprise of territorial expansion. Acquisition of Taiwan occurred in 1895, soon followed by the annexation of Korea in 1910.<sup>1</sup> The start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 saw the full-scale launch of *kōminka* (imperialization) policies in the colonies in an attempt to escalate assimilation efforts; in Korea, such policies included educational restrictions, enforced use of Japanese in public, and wide-scale censorship of all media forms. In the years following Japan's war defeat in 1945, critics and scholars from former colonies came to retrospectively schematize the literary texts produced during this *kōminka* period into the dichotomy of “collaborationist” and “resistance” literature. Meanwhile, the term *zainichi* (lit: “residing in Japan”) came to be applied to the Korean diasporic community in Japan, and *zainichi* literature roughly defined as those texts written in Japanese by ethnically Korean writers living in Japan.

A perpetual issue that confronts scholars who write in English about colonial-period and postwar Japanese language literature by ethnically Korean writers is the romanization of names. The majority of Korean writers who wrote in Japanese between the 1930s and the 1950s, the time period covered in this dissertation, published under Korean names rendered in Chinese characters but without any glosses, leaving the question of pronunciation open. A few authors I discuss, including Yi Kwangsu (1892–1950?), published under their “Japanese” names created through *sōshi kaimei* (The Name Change Act) starting in the early 1940s but reverted back to

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<sup>1</sup> The history of the Japanese colonization of Korea is often broadly demarcated into three phases: oppressive military subjugation during the years 1910–1919 (*budan tōchi*); an atmosphere of relative cultural accommodation following the March First Movement in 1919 (*bunka tōchi*); and, finally, an age of forced assimilation and war mobilization between the years 1931–1945 that culminated in the imperialization movement (*kōminka*) starting in 1937.

their Korean names after 1945. Other authors, such as Chang Hyökchu (1905–1997), wrote under a number of different pennames; still others used the Chinese characters of their Korean names but insisted on using the Sino-Japanese readings.<sup>2</sup>

When romanizing the names of ethnically Korean individuals, I follow the precedent set by other scholars in using their Korean names, using the McCune-Reischauer method of romanization. However, I make an exception when it is clear that the individual had his or her stated preference of pronunciation or when that individual has become known to an English-language audience under a different romanization. In such cases, I write the individual's preferred or widely known romanization first and follow that with the McCune-Reischauer romanization in brackets. An example of this would be “Syngman Rhee [Yi Sŭngman].” Alternative readings/pronunciations of names are given as footnotes when deemed relevant. Additionally, I have included an appendix listing the Chinese characters, Sino-Korean reading, and Sino-Japanese reading of the names of major authors discussed in this dissertation. Hyphens are avoided except in cases when clarification of spelling is necessary.

The transliteration of names from Japanese-language literary texts presents another set of complexities. Because the majority of the texts I discuss were published in journals based in Tokyo, as a general rule I have transliterated character names according to the Sino-Japanese readings expected by the journal's target readership, which would have been primarily Japanese speakers from the metropole. However, in order to acknowledge the possibility of a multiplicity of readers and reading practices, I have included the Chinese characters and Sino-Korean readings of names in brackets whenever relevant. In the instances when the reading of a name is made deliberately ambiguous, as in Kim Talsu's 1942 short story “Gomi” (Trash; discussed in

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<sup>2</sup> Kin Kakuei (1938–1985; Korean name, Kim Hagyoŋ), a prominent zainichi Korean writer from the 1960s and 1970s (and who therefore falls out of the immediate scope of this dissertation), is one such example.

Chapter 3), I explain my rationale for romanization in a footnote.

Japanese names and terms have been romanized according to the Revised Hepburn system. However, macrons have been dropped from names familiar to English-language readers, such as Tokyo, Osaka, etc. Korean place names have been romanized using the McCune-Reischauer method, except for Seoul (instead of Sŏul). No other issue captures “the confusions and contradictions”<sup>3</sup> of postcolonial subjectivity than this issue of names, both of the self and other. Therefore, while the treatment of character names and places (especially in the case of self-identified *zainichi* literature) may seem inconsistent across English-language scholarship, I believe it is less important to determine some kind of standard model than to understand and interrogate the circumstances that have led to these confusions and contradictions.

The same may be said of my use of Japanese and Korean terminology. Although many words in Japanese and Korean share the same Chinese characters and have intertwined histories, this is not to say that the “hypothetical equivalence” between them is inevitable, transparent, or total. One pertinent example is the Japanese word *minzoku* (民族) versus the Korean word *minjok* (民族), which uses the same Chinese characters but has been mobilized for very different political purposes by very different historical actors.<sup>4</sup> As my borrowing of her term may make clear, here I am indebted to Lydia Liu’s formulation of translingual practice and her warning that “a cross-cultural study must examine its own conditions of possibility. Constituted as a translingual act itself, it enters, rather than sits above, the dynamic history of the relationship

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<sup>3</sup> John Lie, *Zainichi (Koreans in Japan)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the specific histories of these words, see Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing “Korean” Origins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) and Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires, 1895–1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

between words, concepts, categories, and discourse.”<sup>5</sup> Rather than provide a Japanese word followed by its Korean “equivalent,” then, I have chosen to present foreign terminology according to its context. In other words, when quoting words that appear in a Japanese-language text, I use the Japanese reading; the Korean reading, in Korean-language texts. However, I do provide both readings in cases where I believe the author or editor is using a term in a transcultural context or gesturing towards the simultaneity of a historical phenomenon, for example with the “pro-Japanese” (in Korean, *ch’inilp’a*; in Japanese, *shinnichiha*) discourse exemplified in the writings of Kim Sōkpōm (1925–), discussed in Chapter 4.

Due to the extensive quoting I do in my close readings of texts, I use footnotes when introducing bibliographic information and when clarifying the source text; in all other instances, I indicate the page number of the quotation in parentheses in the body of the dissertation. Foreign words are only italicized on first occurrence within each chapter. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the Japanese and Korean are my own.

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<sup>5</sup> Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 20.

## INTRODUCTION

*The Japanese words Yuhi had written tangled around my heart, binding it fast. It was as if the sheaves of paper I cradled had become an incarnation of Yuhi herself. Lines of characters unfurled before me like a scroll, scorching themselves into my eyes.*

– from *Yuhi*, Yi Yangji

In 1989, the young *zainichi* (lit. “residing in Japan”) Korean writer Yi Yangji (1955–92)<sup>6</sup> was awarded the prestigious Akutagawa Prize for her Japanese-language novella *Yuhi* (Yuhi, 1988), making her the first female *zainichi* Korean to win the prize. Through the course of a single evening in Seoul, the unnamed Korean narrator in *Yuhi* delves into six months’ worth of memories of her friendship with the eponymous Yuhi [Yuhūi], the *zainichi* Korean woman at the heart of the novel. Like a “small, restless knot,”<sup>7</sup> Yuhi exists in the narrator’s recollections as someone who is paradoxically both inscrutable and transparent; present in memory although physically absent; impossibly childish, and impossibly mature. The dichotomies of her personality, in turn, reflect the dichotomy of her split nationality. Although Yuhi struggles to find a balance between the two words that make up her identity – *zainichi* and Korean – she ultimately fails. She flees back to Japan, unable to carve a niche for herself in Seoul, and the bereft and bewildered narrator is left to wonder why.

In *Yuhi* as in her other writings, Yi Yangji takes care to highlight the conflicted, often deeply ambivalent struggles of her protagonists (whether *zainichi* or not) to reconcile the contradictions between a mother tongue and fatherland linked through blood but not by birth.

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<sup>6</sup> Yi Yangji has also been romanized as Lee Yangji by Kōdansha, publisher of her collected works *Lee Yangji* [Yi Yangji] *zenshū* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1993). In this dissertation, I use the romanization Yi Yangji, which is more widely used in English-language scholarship. Hence her collected works will hereafter referred to as *Yi Yangji zenshū*. (In Japanese: 『李良枝全集』.) The novella was first published in the literary journal *Gunzō* in November 1988. Page numbers refer to the Kōdansha collected works volume. Yi self-identified as *zainichi Chōsenjin*, which in English-language scholarship has been translated as “resident Korean” or simply “Korean in Japan.”

<sup>7</sup> Yi Yangji, *Yuhi* in *Yi Yangji zenshū*, p. 416.

Yi's short essay "Watashi wa Chōsenjin" (I am Korean, 1977),<sup>8</sup> for example, showcases an early preoccupation with the tangle of identity politics that would inform her later fiction. In the essay, written before her rise to literary acclaim, Yi reminisces about her experiences growing up as one of the only Korean residents of a rural town in Yamanashi Prefecture. Naturalized as a Japanese citizen at the age of nine and given the name of "Tanaka Yoshie," Yi was encouraged by her parents to embrace her new nation of allegiance: master Japanese, excel at school – and hide your Korean origins. "There wasn't a single thing that would have made any of the Japanese people around me suspect I was Korean" (p. 585), Yi writes of her childhood years. "Not wanting their children to experience the same hardships they had, my parents raised us as Japanese; not once did I question them."

In a section of the essay entitled "Sokoku, Chōsen no saihakken" (Rediscovering My Fatherland, Korea) Yi identifies an incident in high school that changed her outlook on identity irrevocably. One day, boarding the city train she always took to school, Yi caught sight of just over ten high school girls riding in the same train car. The remarkable thing about these girls was that they were markedly Korean:

The girls were wearing the traditional *ch'ima chōgori* and talking loudly in Korean. Their words were those of my grandfather, lingering somewhere deep within me; they were the words that slipped out from my father, and from my mother, whenever they quarreled with each other. I shrank back. The girls were unquestionably Korean. Didn't they feel any shame? Wearing traditional clothes that identified them immediately as Korean, speaking a language that identified them immediately as Korean . . . I felt as if something had struck my chest, and I blushed bright-red. As soon as I heard a voice announcing the name of my stop, *Kōjin-guchi*, I fled from the train. (p. 588)

Recent scholarship on Yi has tended to present the above passage in biographical terms, as a definitive moment in Yi Yangji's personal development into a writer concerned with issues

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<sup>8</sup> Yi Yangji, "Watashi wa Chōsenjin" in *Yi Yanji zenshū* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1993). First published in 1977 in the collection *Kangaeru kōkōsei no hon* 6.

of ethnic identity. The scholar Carol Hayes, for example, sums up the moment as Yi's confrontation with her own "sense of shame and her inability to face up to her ethnicity" and then goes on to describe how the incident rekindled Yi's interest in Korean language and culture.<sup>9</sup> Here, however, what primarily interests me about the anecdote is its uneasy pairing of the visual with the verbal: the sight of "the traditional *ch'ima chŏgori*" perceived simultaneously with the sound of "loud voices in Korean." Hayes' use of the phrase "face up" takes on a surprising new dimension when considered in this context: after all, this is an encounter where a girl racially indistinguishable from her Japanese classmates is brought *face-to-face* with the ethnicity she had felt compelled to hide.

Intriguingly, it is the Korean language that ultimately acts as a shaky bridge connecting Yi to the schoolgirls on the train. Associating the overheard words to the Korean spoken by her grandfather and parents allows Yi to make suggestive gestures towards notions of kinship and nationhood, sanguine relations and *jus sanguinis*. At the same time, her reaction towards the girls cannot be called anything but a painful mix of shock and shame; and it is only when she hears the voice of a *Japanese* announcer that she is able to snap out of her paralysis and flee from the train. How are we to interpret Yi's complicated, conflicted responses to these two languages? What bearing do her responses have on concepts of nationhood? And, finally, how can we connect individual ethnicity to group ethnicities, in Japan and across the world?

This dissertation seeks to answer the above questions by examining how the interlocking systems of national language, ethnic nationalism, and literary production shape colonial histories and haunt the postcolonial present. Rather than treating "Japanese," "Korean," and "zainichi" literature as static or absolute categories, I ask how and why they emerged as predominant modes

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<sup>9</sup> Carol Hayes, "Cultural identity in the work of Yi Yang-ji" in *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* ed. Sonia Ryang (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), p. 121.



of literary discourse in twentieth century Asia. My project is twofold in nature. First, I examine the rise of Japanese-language literature by Korean colonial subjects and Japanese writers in Korea during the *kōminka* (imperialization) period in the late 1930s and early 1940s, reassessing the sociopolitical factors involved in the production and consumption of these texts. Second, I trace how postwar reconstructions of ethno-linguistic nationality contributed to the creation of new literary canons in Japan and Korea, which were now configured along national, instead of imperial, borders. Although the majority of the Japanese-language texts that I discuss from the *kōminka* period were condemned or suppressed in both countries after the war, I argue that these texts continued to be constitutive of the newly reconfigured literary canons precisely through their excision, as a structural aporia that both disavowed and appropriated the memory of the Japanese language as a language of imperialism.

In this sense, this dissertation presents a discursive history of modern Japanese literature, using close readings of key literary texts and media images in order to uncover the fissures embedded in the seemingly monolithic concept of national literatures. In other words, I examine the historical construction of “Japanese” and “Korean” literature as generative discourses embedded in specific social, material, and political conditions. In doing so, I draw upon Michel Foucault’s conceptualization of discourse as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” within shifting matrixes of knowledge and power.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, I am keenly aware that the archives of written discourse that form the foundation of my research are often all too dominated by the intellectual elite who had the means and ability to make their subject positions known. I therefore take care to also listen to what Aaron Gerow has called “the curious silence” of discourse production, as it is in this silence “that one can discern alternative

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<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 54. First published in French as *L’Archeologie du savoir* in 1969 by Editions Gallimard.

visions.”<sup>11</sup> The role of the imperial metropole in shaping and authenticating literary canons may have been hegemonic, but it was by no means total or uncontested; and even in the contestations made by colonial writers “writing back” against empire, one may still find traces of other, marginalized voices who present radically different possibilities of national belonging and subjectivity.

My decision to focus primarily on literary texts written in the Japanese language starting from the 1930s is based in part on this desire to open up new spaces in which to explore media culture in East Asia and the production of literary canons not necessarily confined by national borders. As I will detail in Chapters 1 and 2, language policies in colonial Korea and Taiwan consistently employed the term *kokugo* (national language) and not *Nihongo* (Japanese language) to refer to Japanese. Koreans speaking Japanese, in other words, were said to be speaking the “national language.” The distinction between *kokugo* and *Nihongo* is an important one, because it reveals one of the ideological lynchpins behind Japan’s colonial strategies. As many scholars have argued, one of the justifications put forth for colonization was the claim that Japan was combating the threat of Western imperialism. In order to set itself apart from Europe and the U.S., then, the colonies had to be made both *part of* and *one with* Japan, at least on the level of discourse.

By the time the *kōminka* movement was launched in 1937, Korea had been a colony of Japan for almost three decades, giving rise to a young generation of Koreans who had been educated entirely or almost entirely through the colonial education system. Many of the elite

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<sup>11</sup> Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity* (University of California Press, 2010), p. 16. Gerow’s articulations echo earlier work done by postcolonial and post-structuralist theorists, most notably Gayatri Spivak. In her groundbreaking essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” Spivak calls attention to the need to reconsider and challenge the supposed transparency of the colonial archive, digging deep into the “silence, silenced center” that comprise the subaltern classes. Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* eds. Carry Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 283.

intellectuals mentioned in this dissertation completed their higher education in Tokyo and read and wrote fluently in Japanese. The Government-General of Korea (GGK) increasingly encouraged Japanese-language publications by Koreans through sponsored contests, journals, and literary organizations. This push towards the Japanese language was accompanied by a concomitant suppression of Korean, through educational measures restricting and then finally abolishing classes on the Korean language in 1938 and 1941, respectively, and the forced shut-down of a number of independent presses that published Korean-language newspapers and journals starting in the late 1930s.

It can be said that the existence of a Japanese-language canon in Korea was essential to maintaining the logic of Japanese imperialism, which positioned Korea as part of “Japan” in spirit if not in civic equality. And yet colonial writers were always still differentiated from “Japan proper” through the very means of their inclusion: through the Japanese language. Those who wrote in Japanese had the power to speak against to their colonizers, it is true, but the ways their words were edited, marketed, and sold only too often ended up reinforcing the very divisions they had sought to erase. The same holds true for the postwar writings of so-called *zainichi* authors, to whom the Japanese language was no longer *kokugo* but *Nihongo*. As I will show in Chapters 3 and 4, writers such as Kim Talsu (1919–1997) sought to create a new Korean literary canon free at last from the binds of colonialism, but their task was complicated by the fact that the very concept of literature had been born out of the colonial experience and was inseparable from it. The same could be said of Japanese, the language Kim Talsu used to lambast the legacies of colonialism but which itself perpetuated these legacies, even into the “post”-colonial period.

This dissertation examines how the Japanese language facilitated the movement of texts,

whether geographically from the periphery to the metropole or temporally from the wartime to the postwar period. In “crossing borders,” however, texts can change, and never arbitrarily. The question of what texts are allowed to cross borders (whatever borders they may be) and who is allowed to assign meaning to them is a crucial one, and one that forms the heart of my research. In this way, I am indebted to the work done by Pierre Bourdieu, Lee Yeounsuk [Yi Yönsuk] and Miyako Inoue, scholars who have rigorously interrogated the social politics – including gender politics – at play in national language ideology.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, although not directly related to my research, the theoretical models provided by Raymond Williams have helped me in thinking critically about language and literary form. As Williams stresses in *Marxism and Literature*, form is “inevitably a relationship,” embedded in and constitutive of processes that are at once social, historical, and material.<sup>13</sup> I seek to analyze these processes by doing close readings of the discursive exchanges occurring between and within linguistic spaces, while also considering the material constraints imposed on a text by the medium of the literary journal: censorship laws, editorial decisions, projected readerships, advertisements, the juxtaposition of a story or essay against others in the journal, and more. I also consider the canonization process over time, and the role literary criticism has played in actively shaping national canons.

As the following chapters will prove, a study of Japanese-language literary production from the late 1930s through the early 1950s is uniquely situated to unpack the issues of literary canonization, nation (and empire) building, the formation of cultural fields, and colonial/postcolonial subjectivities. During the *kōminka* period, promoting the Japanese language became increasingly important not only for advancing practical goals, such as

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<sup>12</sup> See Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); Lee Yeounsuk, “*Kokugo*” *to iu shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996); and Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language: Gender and Linguistic Modernity in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 187.

effectively incorporating Korean volunteer soldiers into the Japanese military, but also for maintaining the ideology of inclusion and imperial benevolence. And yet it was exactly this inclusion that threatened to disrupt the seeming inviolable link between ethnic identity and national polity. The contradictions these terms presented when spoken in a colonial context could open up alternative avenues of identification, avenues that had been elided in their initial conception but never entirely erased.

Although the resurgence of ethnonationalism after 1945, aided in large part by the reordering of international borders in East Asia by the Allied Powers, may have once again covered up these contradictions on the surface, the continued presence of Koreans in Japan proved that postwar articulations of national language and literature could never be completely severed from their imperial pasts, nor could their constructed boundaries ever be completely maintained. While this dissertation is primarily concerned with exploring issues of canonization in Japan (very broadly defined) through the lens of the Japanese language, it is my hope that my research complements and speaks to existing scholarship on modern Korean literature, as well as studies of “canonical” Japanese writers. Indeed, it may be argued that the formation of distinct Korean / Japanese canons was a mutually constitutive and global process, one that is still ongoing to this day.

## **ON LITERARY CANONIZATION AND THE STATE OF THE FIELD**

What defines literary canons, and why study their formation? In recent decades, many scholars have problematized the “foundational” approach to literary canons, which holds that a literary text belongs to a canon because it has some intrinsic or universal value that makes it worthy of interpretation, imitation, or dissemination. Taking the opposite approach, theorists

such as Pierre Bourdieu and John Guillory have instead examined how the very idea of “value” is produced and maintained through various interlocking institutions and processes.<sup>14</sup> Bourdieu, for example, argues that works of art can exist (or rather, be known and recognized) only when they are “socially instituted” as such, and therefore “the sociology of art and literature has to take as its object not only the material production but also the symbolic production of the work, i.e. the production of the value of the work, or, which amounts to the same thing, of belief in the value of the work.”<sup>15</sup> In analyzing a literary text within its field of cultural production, one can not only expose dominant paradigms of gender, class, and ethnicity in a given society but also interrogate how (and by whom) these paradigms are mobilized in the texts themselves.

In modern Japan as in other parts of the world, the history of literary canonization cannot be considered apart from the history of linguistic nationalism – what Lee Yeonsuk has called the “ideology” of kokugo. During the Meiji period (1868–1912), the linguist Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937) put forth the argument that a common, single language was essential for constructing and maintaining a strong nation-state. Using a metaphor of the blood and body, Ueda emphasized the organic link between language and the nation and its indispensable relationship to the *kokutai* (国体; national polity) – a word whose characters literally join the nation and the body together.<sup>16</sup> Ueda’s formulations both reinforced and further promoted the then-emerging idea that a national canon could only be defined through the national language, a concept that was itself heavily

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<sup>14</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* ed. Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, p. 37. For a concise overview of critical issues of literary canonization in the Japanese context, see the introduction in Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki, eds. *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Ueda Kazutoshi, “Kokugo to kokka to” reprinted in *Meiji bungaku zenshū 44* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1968), p. 110. The essay was originally given as a public lecture one month before the start of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) but published two months after the war’s end in Ueda’s essay collection *Kokugo no tame*.

influenced by Western phonocentrism. By the 1920s, the intertwined relationship between national language and literature had become thoroughly naturalized, as witnessed in the launch of the academic journal *Kokugo to kokubungaku* (National Language and National Literature) in 1924 by professors in the National Language and Literature Department of Tokyo Imperial University (present-day University of Tokyo). That this journal is still in publication as of July 2013 reveals how entrenched these discourses have become.<sup>17</sup>

The announcement of Japan's surrender to the Allied Powers in August 1945 signaled not only the end of the Pacific War but also the end of the Japanese empire, as one of the conditions of surrender was the redrawing of national borders: according to the Allies, Japan was now to be a nation consisting only of "the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine."<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, Korea too found new national borders being imposed on the peninsula, as the intervention of foreign powers led to the creation of the thirty-eighth parallel in August 1945 and the establishment of two competing governments on the Korean peninsula by 1948.

Japan was occupied by the Allied Powers from 1945 to 1952, a period that has come to be known as the Occupation Period (*senryōki*). Under the direction of GHQ/SCAP (General Headquarters / Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), led by General Douglas MacArthur, a new Constitution of Japan was drafted and a series of changes were implemented in the areas of land reform, labor reform, women's rights, and education. Most relevant to this dissertation are the changes in definitions of citizenship that also occurred during this time. Even as late as 1947, colonial subjects were still technically counted as Japanese nationals, as they had been

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<sup>17</sup> I discuss in detail the relationship between linguistic nationalism, imperialism, and literary canonization in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

<sup>18</sup> As outlined in the 1945 Potsdam Declaration, made available in full online by the National Diet Library: <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c06.html>

during the colonial period. With the Alien Registration Law of 1947, the Koreans who remained in Japan were forced to register as aliens. In 1952, they were stripped of Japanese citizenship and thereby effectively rendered stateless, as Japan did not have diplomatic relations with either North Korea or South Korea at that time. Although the Korean population in Japan emerged during the colonial period and was itself the result of the Japanese colonization of Korea, the term “zainichi” came to be used to refer exclusively to the resident Korean population post-1945 in response to the legal transformations mentioned above.

Japan’s unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers quickly became articulated as a break between a “prewar” / “wartime” history (*senzen, senchū*) and the “postwar” present (*sengo*). In Korea, meanwhile, the period between 1945 and 1948 – in other words, between the formal end of Japanese colonization and the creation of two competing governments on the peninsula – has been referred to as the “liberation space” (*haebang konggan*). Although Japan’s defeat was celebrated by many in Korea and elsewhere as the end of empire, the swift appearance of Soviet forces in the north and the U.S. military in the south soon belied expectations of full independence. As Theodore Hughes has pointed out, the phrase “liberation space” was used by later scholars to signal “the formation of the division system – the rapid incorporation of the peninsula into the Cold War world order by way of the twin occupations, Soviet in the North and American in the South. In short, *haebang konggan* refers to an ongoing contestation over the meaning of ‘liberation.’”<sup>19</sup> With the partitioning of the peninsula, the very terms used to indicate “national literature” also underwent fragmentation, as the literary canon was reconfigured into North Korean literature (*Chosŏn munhak*) and South Korean literature (*Han’guk munhak*).

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<sup>19</sup> Theodore Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 66.



Until recently, literary scholarship has tended to follow the national histories constructed and naturalized in the postwar/post-liberation periods. While Korean scholarship on colonial-period and “liberation space” literature is extensive, the majority of these studies have limited their focus to Korean-language texts only, and it is only within the past two decades that studies have moved beyond the collaboration vs. resistance binary. The work of literary scholar Im Chongguk (1929–1989), for example, uses the word “collaborator” in its broadest possible sense, retrospectively applying the term to individuals throughout the entire modern history of Korea-Japan interactions with little consideration of historical context, literary technique, or publishing conditions.<sup>20</sup> While recent studies of controversial colonial-period literature have shifted to emphasize nuanced issues of historiography and textual analysis,<sup>21</sup> a sustained cross-cultural analysis of Japanese-language colonial texts remains lacking.

In Japan and the U.S., debates on Japanese-language literature by colonial and *zainichi* writers have only recently been engaged. The influence of Tomiyama Ichirō’s research on the material practice of *kōminka* ideology during Japan’s war mobilization period in Okinawa may be seen in the work of scholars such as Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang and Leo Ching, who both work on Taiwanese colonial literature.<sup>22</sup> The past decade has also seen an increasing emphasis

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<sup>20</sup> Im Chongguk’s most representative work is his *Ch’inil munhak non* (Seoul: P’yŏnghwa Ch’ulp’ansa, 1966). The date of the book’s publication, coming a year after the signing of the normalization treaty with Japan in 1965, was not a coincidence; part of Im’s goal in reigniting the debate on collaboration was to shine a spotlight on the contemporary politicians and institutional systems that had benefited from the silence or historical amnesia surrounding collaboration up to that point. In this sense the book was a seminal one.

<sup>21</sup> Examples include Sin Hyŏnggi, *Minjok iyagi rŭl nŏmŏsŏ* (Seoul: Samin, 2003), Kim Chaeyong, et al., *Ch’inil munhak ūi naechŏk nŏlli* (Seoul: Yŏngnak, 2003), Ch’a Sŭnggi, *Pan kŭndaejŏk sangsangnyŏk ūi imgye tŭl* (Seoul: P’urŭn Yŏksa, 2009), and Yun Taesŏk, *Singminji munhak ūl ihta* (Seoul: Somyŏng Ch’ulp’an, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Tomiyama Ichirō, *Senjō no kioku* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 1995); Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang, “Beyond Cultural and National Identities: Current Re-evaluation of the *Kominka* Literature from Taiwan’s Japanese Period” in *Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field* ed. Rey Chow (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Leo Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

on the transcultural activities of Japanese and Korean writers in the context of empire.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, several important studies done by Isogai Jirō, Kim Hun-a, and Melissa Wender have examined zainichi texts in relation to each other, situating these texts within the literary milieu of postwar Japan.<sup>24</sup> This project is indebted to these scholars' works and will not seek to replicate them. Instead, I attempt to tease out the continuities and disruptions of the Japanese-language literary canon across generations, and consider the changes that occur in the interactions between Korean writers and their Japanese peers during this same time.

Furthermore, by focusing on the 1930s through the 1950s, I am able to spotlight a period of time that has been neglected in scholarship on modern Korean and Japanese literature(s). The Japanese-language texts produced by both Korean and Japanese writers during the *kōminka* period have until recently received very little critical attention, for the reasons outlined above. Meanwhile, contemporary scholars of “zainichi” literature have tended to focus on works written from the late 1950s onwards, which is when a recognizable body of literature began being produced and marketed by writers who self-identified as zainichi. This dissertation project therefore attempts to “bridge the gap” by looking at hitherto overlooked literary texts, but more importantly it argues that an examination of these texts is crucial for understanding how and why the established fields of colonial-period literature, modern Japanese literature, and modern Korean literature operate as they do. In doing so, I am able to offer new avenues in which to consider formations of colonial and postcolonial ethnicity, especially in the intersection of ethnic nationalism and language.

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<sup>23</sup> Examples include Karen Laura Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), Robert Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Framework* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), and Serk-bae Suh, *Treacherous Translation: Culture, Nationalism, and Colonialism in Korea and Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013; forthcoming).

<sup>24</sup> Isogai Jirō, *Shigen no hikari: zainichi Chōsenjin bungaku ron* (Tokyo: Sōjusha, 1979); Kim Hun-a, *Zainichi Chōsenjin josei bungakuron* (Tokyo: Sakuhinsha, 2004); Melissa Wender, *Lamentation as History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

## CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Chapter 1 centers around the 1940s “Korean boom,” a term that refers to a marked increase in Japanese-language works published in the metropole on Korea and its culture, written by native Japanese and colonial Korean authors alike. I examine the role played by the Japanese publishing industry in promoting the inclusion of Koreans in the empire while simultaneously excluding them from the privileged space of the nation. I also deconstruct the myth of a single “Korean” people, and consider how an individual’s position within the uneven playing field of colonialism may shift according to gender and class. I do this through broad intertextual analyses of the major Japanese literary journals of the day, such as *Shinchō* (New Tide) and *Bungei shunjū* (Literary Chronicle), coupled with close readings of two Japanese-language novellas by the prominent Korean writer Kim Saryang (1914–1950). I choose to focus on Kim Saryang for the following reasons: first, because he enjoyed popularity in Japan as well as in Korea during his lifetime; second, because he owed much of his early success to the “Korean boom” even as he wrote critically of its effects; and third, because his Japanese-language texts exerted considerable influence on the *zainichi* writers I introduce in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 2 discusses the discourse of *kokugo* and *kokumin bungaku* (national literature) during the latter years of Japan’s imperial rule. *Kokugo* policies during the *kōminka* period had a specifically political thrust: making Korean males into effective laborers (and later soldiers), and Korean females into loyal supporters. But ideologically *kokugo* also promised to transcend ethnicity, tempting its speakers with access to an essentialized, language-bound community. In doing so, of course, it shifted all responsibility of imperial assimilation to the colonial subjects while denying the entrenched legal and social barriers that stood in their way. I elucidate this

issue by discussing essays and fiction that were written by Koreans and Japanese both, in places not limited to Tokyo. Examples include an analysis of Obi Jūzō's (1909–1979) “Tōhan” (Ascent, 1944), first printed in the Japanese-language journal *Kokumin bungaku* based in Keijō (present-day Seoul); a comparison of the *kōminka* essays written by Yi Kwangsu (1892–1950?) in Korean and Japanese; and the short story “Aikoku kodomo tai” (Patriotic Children’s Squad, 1941), written by a Korean schoolgirl named Yi Chōngnae.<sup>25</sup> All three were individuals who published texts in the metropole but lived outside it, and all three attempted to destabilize the centrality of the metropole by centering the spiritual heart of “Japan” in the peripheries.

In Chapter 3, I move to the immediate postwar period of Japan and the Allied Occupation of 1945–1952. While Koreans celebrated Japan’s defeat as a day of independence from colonial rule, the political status of Koreans in Korea and in Japan remained far from independent under Allied policy. I outline the complicated factors that led to the creation of a stateless Korean diaspora in Japan and highlight the responses of Korean and Japanese writers who saw these political conditions as a sign of an imperialist system still insidiously intact. In particular, I look at the early writings of Kim Talsu, a Korean writer who is often seen as the “father” of *zainichi* literature. Kim was also an active member of the Japan Communist Party and the leftist literary organization *Shin Nihon Bungaku kai* (Society for New Japanese Literature), demonstrating how a study of *zainichi* Korean writers must also always consider the larger literary landscape in Japan, and vice versa. I therefore juxtapose Kim’s writings against the fiction and essays of fellow *Shin Nihon Bungaku kai* members Miyamoto Yuriko (1899–1951) and Nakano Shigeharu (1902–1979). While these writers wrote extensively on democratic revolution and postcolonial subjectivity, their arguments would depend on the same framework of ethnic nationalism seen

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<sup>25</sup> Dates unknown. The January 1942 *Bungei* issue that reprinted “Aikoku kodomo tai” notes in an afterward that Yi graduated from a 6-year *kokumin gakkō* (national school) in 1939, most likely putting her birth date sometime in the mid-1920s.

during the colonial period, hampering any sustained partnership between Korean writers and their Japanese peers.

The insistence on nationhood as the defining context for evaluating the legacy of Japanese imperialism also had a major impact on the controversial “collaboration” debates occurring in Korea and Japan at this time, an issue I discuss in Chapter 4. Following Korea’s liberation in 1945, Korean was once again claimed as the country’s national language, and Japanese-language texts were purged from the canon. At the same time, these same texts were excluded from the Japanese literary canon. I begin the chapter with a discursive analysis of the national boundaries encoded in the terms *ch’inilp’a* (“pro-Japanese,” referring to Korean collaborators) and *sensō sekinin* (“war responsibility,” referring to Japanese wartime aggression). I then proceed to look at Chang Hyōkchu (1905–1997), one of the most prolific Korean writers of Japanese in the immediate postwar period; and the Japanese writer Tanaka Hidemitsu (1913–1949), who lived in Korea for several years during the late colonial period. I argue that the postwar writings of these individuals reveal how Korean collaboration (*ch’inilp’a*) and Japanese war responsibility (*sensō sekinin*) emerged as mutually constitutive discourses that embodied – rather than healed – the traumas of colonialism and empire.

Finally, in the epilogue of this dissertation, I return to the writings of Yi Yangji in order to consider how all of the discourses and historical developments outlined in the previous chapters still exist as lived realities for many *zainichi* Koreans even today. Informed by the theories of Rey Chow, Judith Butler, and others, I question the uniform classification of *zainichi* texts as “ethnic minority” literature and instead ask what it means to read *zainichi* texts *as such*. In other words, what are the discourses and social norms that enabled the *zainichi* label as a literary genre? What assumptions must be made about a work before placing it in that genre? I

believe these questions are crucial ones because they help connect the body of zainichi literature not only back to colonial antecedents but also abroad to other postcolonial diasporas, such as the multi-lingual texts of the Caribbean and of India. At the same time, the epilogue attempts to deconstruct the “white vs. non-white” binary often implicit in postcolonial theory by introducing cases where ethnic difference does not necessarily equate to racial difference, as with zainichi Koreans in Japan.

### NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

A note of clarification must be made about my use of “ethnicity” over “race.” Far from being transparent or self-evident, definitions of race and ethnicity have undergone constant redefinition from the moment of their conception in Japan, as outlined by scholars such as Oguma Eiji, Michael Weiner, and Tessa Morris-Suzuki.<sup>26</sup> When writing about how the authors of this study conceptualized their own position within and against various imagined communities, I employ the terms they themselves used – which, during the period between the 1930s and the 1950s, were most often *minzoku* and *kokumin*.<sup>27</sup> I do this not in order to suggest that these words

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<sup>26</sup> Oguma Eiji, *Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 1995); Michael Weiner, *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> There were many terms used to anthropologically differentiate between various groups of people starting from the Meiji period onwards, including *jinshu* (race), *kokumin* (citizen; national subject), *shuzoku* (tribe; race), and *minzoku* (people; ethnic nation; ethnos). While some scholars have defined *jinshu* through biological determinants such as consanguinity and *minzoku* through social determinants, by the 1930s the latter word had considerable overlap with the former. As Tessa Morris-Suzuki points out, *minzoku* was a concept that “allowed a convenient blurring between the cultural and genetic aspects of ethnicity, while emphasizing the organic unity of the Japanese people.” See Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, p. 32.

The word *kokumin* is similarly problematic. According to Kevin Doak, the concept of *kokumin* was championed by Meiji reformers such as Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957) to describe a national community oriented around the individual subject and the nation-state, but was marshaled again in the 1940s “as a bulwark against Marxist ethnic nationalism and as a logic of assimilation (or at least integration) of various ethnic nationalities that composed the Japanese Empire.” See Doak, *A History of Nationalism in Modern Japan* (Boston: Brill, 2007), p. 164. In the immediate postwar period, “the new constitution enshrined *kokumin* as the official Japanese sovereign nation, although it was frequently overwhelmed and undermined by the tradition of a cultural *minzoku* national identity that was conceived in opposition to the state” (p. 164).

are untranslatable or incommensurable but in order to retain their specific histories and to highlight their ambiguous position vis-à-vis colonial Korea and imperial Japan. When discussing these issues at large, however, I prefer to emphasize the socially constructed framework suggested by “ethnicity” over the biological determinism that haunts the history of the word “race.” Still, as Rey Chow states in her book *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, my aim is not to polarize the relationship between race and ethnicity but to call attention to its blurred borders, a “fuzziness that . . . must be accommodated precisely because of the overdetermined nature of the issues involved.”<sup>28</sup>

A second point of clarification should be made about my use of the word “postcolonial.” Although imperialism and colonialism have often been used interchangeably, I follow Lori Watt in her distinction between imperialism, colonialism, and decolonization:

Imperialism is the set of ideas of political, economic, and cultural domination of another territory, ideas that are generated primarily in the metropole, in Japan’s case, the home islands or *naichi*. Colonialism is the implementation of those ideas in the colonial setting, in Japan’s case, *gaichi*. Resistance to the word “de-imperialization” means that “decolonization” refers to the post-colonial and post-imperial processes in both the former colonies and the metropole.<sup>29</sup>

In its strictest sense, the “postcolonial” can refer to the state or conditions of newly independent nations. However, as countless scholars have pointed out, the implication of a move beyond or after colonialism as represented in the prefix “post” can dangerously elide the ways in which the political, economic, and cultural inequalities generated through colonialism live on to structure relations between the former metropole and periphery. Using the term “post-imperial” to refer to

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<sup>28</sup> Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 23-4. I elaborate on Chow’s points in the epilogue of this dissertation.

<sup>29</sup> Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 15. The “resistance” mentioned in the blockquote indicates Watt’s own position vis-à-vis “de-imperialization.”

the former metropole and “postcolonial” to refer to the former colonies is also problematic, as it only reinforces the notion that these areas exist as self-contained, monolithic entities with clearly established borders. At the same time, one also cannot ignore how the ideological and material forces of domination that privileged the metropole at the expense of the colonies continue to create global hierarchies (for example, in the categories of “first” versus “third” world nations).

In order to briefly illuminate these points, one may consider the specific case of Japan. Beginning with the acquisition of Taiwan as a colony in 1895, Japan conceived of its formal empire in imperialist terms, as a relationship between the ruling metropole (*naichi*) and its subordinate peripheries (*gaichi*). Upon its unconditional surrender to the Allies in 1945, Japan was stripped of its colonies and its name changed by 1946 from “The Great Empire of Japan” (*Dai Nippon teikoku*) to simply “The Country of Japan” (*Nihon-koku*). With these changes, Japan had to contend with its transformation from an imperial to a post-imperial nation. However, the Allied Occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1952 complicated decolonization efforts, leading some scholars to label Japan during this period as a “neocolonial” state (i.e., under the indirect control or influence of another power through economic and political domination). Meanwhile, the continued marginalization of former colonial subjects in Japan, combined with the massive influx of Japanese returnees (*hikiagesha*) during this period, ensured that no easy divide could be made between the postcolonial outside Japan and the postcolonial within it.

While I tend to use “colonial” in the context of pre-1945 East Asia and “postcolonial” for the post-1945 periods, this is less an attempt to demarcate time periods and geographical areas than a desire to recognize (while at the same time questioning) the ways the historical actors who are the subjects of my research conceived of their own position on the global stage. The same goes for my adoption of the “postwar” (*senjo*) appellation for Japan after 1945. As I argue in Chapter



4, the reconfiguration of world history as *national* histories – divided into pre-liberation and post-liberation in Korea, pre-war and post-war in Japan – had immense consequences for how Japanese imperialism was (and could be) seen and discussed. In the following pages, I introduce and analyze multiple discourses, voices, and literatures from Japan (again, very broadly defined) in an effort to not only critique the legacies of colonialism but also to deconstruct the teleological narratives these legacies have produced. In other words, I do not wish to advocate the use of one literary label over another (“Japanese literature” versus “Japanese-language literature,” for example) but instead find it more productive to think about who is using these labels, when, for what purpose, and to what effect. In doing so, I hope to show how the dialectic relationship between metropole and periphery shapes linguistic, literary, and political experiences across and beyond nations, in a way that will prove useful for future scholars working in a variety of different fields.

## CHAPTER 1

### Imperialization and the Gender Politics of Language in the “Korean Boom”

*On close inspection, all literature is probably a version of the apocalypse that seems to be rooted, no matter what its sociohistorical conditions might be, on the fragile border (borderline cases) where identities (subject/object, etc.) do not exist or only barely so – double, fuzzy, heterogeneous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, abject.*

– Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*

*That’s right, Japan is like a man holding out his hand in marriage to a female Korea. What reason is there to spit on that hand?*

– “Tenma,” Kim Saryang

## INTRODUCTION

In the latter years of imperial Japan’s rule over Korea, the Japanese publishing industry ushered in what contemporary scholars have termed a “Korean boom.”<sup>30</sup> Also known as a “Korean literary/cultural boom,” the term refers to a marked rise in Japanese-language works published in the metropole on Korea and its culture, written by Japanese and Korean authors alike. Interest in things Korean often took the form of *tokushū*, or special journal issues devoted to a single topic. The issuing of a *tokushū* on Korea was not without precedent. The journal *Tōyō* (The Orient), for instance, published a Korea-centered volume in 1924 and again in 1935. Both volumes featured articles heavily slanted towards economic, industrial, and political topics.

Examples of article titles from the 1935 volume include “Chōsen tōchi no genjō oyobi shōrai”

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<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Watanabe Kazutami, “*Tasha*” to *shite no Chōsen: bungakuteki kōsatsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003) and Kajii Noboru, “Gendai Chōsen bungaku e no Nihonjin no taiō (2)” in *Toyama daigaku jinbungakubu kiyō* 5 (1981), pp. 93-115. In English-language scholarship, Nayoung Aimee Kwon describes the “Korean boom” as “colonial kitsch” meant for consumption by the metropole. Kwon astutely points out that while the demand for this colonial kitsch may seem counter to assimilation efforts, in fact it embodied the contradictory logic of imperialism: the colonies had to be differentiated from the metropole (to maintain colonial hierarchies) while also assimilated to it at the same time (in order to mobilize support against the West). Kwon also shows how this simultaneous need for differentiation and assimilation can be seen in the incorporation of Korea as a *chihō* (region, countryside, periphery) of Japan. See Kwon, *Translated Encounters and Empire: Colonial Korea and the Literature of Exile* (PhD diss., UCLA, 2007), and in particular Chapters 3 and 4.

(The Current State and Future of Korea under Japanese Rule), “Chōsen no kōgyō ni tsuite” (On Korea’s Mining Industry), and “Nichiman keizai burokku ni okeru Chōsen no tachiba” (Korea’s Position Within the Japan-Manchuria Economic Block).

It was not until the literary journal *Bungaku annai* (Literary Guide) did a spread on “contemporary Korean writers” two years later, however, that interest began to concentrate around Korean literature and culture. The popular magazine *Modan Nihon* (Modern Japan) published an extra issue (*rinji daizōkan*) on Korean culture and arts in 1939 and then again in 1940; *Bungei* (Literary Art) featured a special on Korean literature in 1940; *Nihon no fūzoku* (Japan’s Customs), in 1941.<sup>31</sup> The increased visibility of Korean writers in Japanese journals was furthermore fueled by the publishing giant and writer Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948), who had visited Korea before in 1930 and whose deep interest in the *gaichi*, or colonial peripheries, was manifested through the Akutagawa Prize and a separate Korean Arts Prize established in 1939.<sup>32</sup> It should be noted that, even if not in the form of a *tokushū*, journals published by Kikuchi Kan’s publishing company Bungei Shunjūsha were often instrumental in jumpstarting the Japanese-language careers of Korean writers. Kim Saryang, for instance, won recognition after his story “Hikari no naka ni” (Into the Light, 1939) was reprinted in *Bungei shunjū* (Literary Chronicle) in 1940 after being nominated for the Akutagawa Prize, while Yi Kwangsu’s so-called

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<sup>31</sup> See *Tōyō* 27:8 (August 1924), *Tōyō* 38:2 (February 1935), *Bungaku annai* 3:2 (February 1937), *Modan Nihon* 10:12 (November 1939), *Modan Nihon* 11:9 (August 1940), *Bungei* 8:7 (July 1940), and *Nihon no fūzoku* 4:10 (October 1941). Of course, this does not mean that Korean writers who wrote in Japanese were completely unheard of before 1937. Notably, Chang Hyōkchu made his official Japanese debut in 1930 with the help of poet Katō Kazuo. Other Korean proletarian writers such as Han Sik and Yi Pukman started writing Japanese-language works even earlier, in the 1920s. However, we may mark the late 1930s as the period when “Korean literature” (versus, for example, “proletarian literature written by Koreans”) became a discursive term that was circulated and discussed in the metropole, in a wide variety of Tokyo-based journals.

<sup>32</sup> Kawamura Minato has noted that there were as many as twelve Akutagawa Prize-winning stories from the years 1935 to 1944 that dealt explicitly with the *gaichi*. See Kawamura Minato, *Ikyō no Shōwa bungaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990), pp. 143-6. Of course, this interest in the *gaichi* was not limited to Kikuchi Kan but was often enthusiastically shared by the Akutagawa Prize committee members as well.

collaborationist apologia “Gyōja” (Devotee) was published in *Bungakukai* (Literary World) in March 1941.

Here, a caveat must be made. “Korean boom” (*Chōsen būmu*) is a postwar phrase, one that first appeared in 1950 in newspapers and economic journals to describe the jumpstart to *Japan’s* economy following the outbreak of the Korean War. With the rise in prominence of self-proclaimed *zainichi* (resident Korean) writers in the 1960s, the term came to be used by scholars such as Itō Narihiko and Pak Ch’un’il as well as *zainichi* writers themselves to describe the “origins” of a (retrospectively constructed) *zainichi* canon.<sup>33</sup> On the one hand, it is undeniable that the early 1940s witnessed an unprecedented amount of Japanese-language works by Korean writers published in the metropole, as well as a notable number of Korea-related articles written by Japanese writers.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, using the term can make it all too easy to assume a phantom uniformity and coherence that was not actually there. It can also make the publishing phenomenon seem more pervasive than it was; articles on Manchuria, for example, were still more common than articles on Korea. I thus use the term with caution in this dissertation, both mindful of its analytic limitations and aware of its usefulness as a provisional frame of reference.

A brief examination of an anonymous essay from the May 1940 issue of *Shinchō* (New Tide) may demonstrate my point. In the essay, entitled “Chōsen bungaku ni tsuite no hitotsu no gimon” (One Doubt Regarding Korean Literature), an anonymous writer questions whether the efforts of “one or two Korea-born writers” is enough to spark domestic (*kokunai*) interest in

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<sup>33</sup> Itō Narihiko, *Kyōku suru sōzōryoku* (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 1978); Pak Ch’un’il, *Zōho Kindai Nihon bungaku ni okeru Chōsenzō* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1985); Kim Sijong, “Kim Saryang to Kim Chiha,” *Nihon dokusho shinbun* 1972.04.10.

<sup>34</sup> In the *Chōsen bungaku kankei Nihongo bunken mokuroku* edited by Ōmura Masuo and Hotei Toshihiro, for example, one sees the number of published articles and stories related to Korean literature jump from 80 entries in 1939 to 168 entries in 1940. Numbers would stay high until 1943, when increasingly severe paper shortages, censorship restrictions, and U.S. aerial bombings, among other factors, would curtail publishing in Japan across the board.

“Korean literature.” Until very recently, Japanese interest in Korean literature had remained almost nonexistent because the majority of stories were written in Korean. After all, the author comments with sardonic bluntness, “you can’t have interest in something if you don’t even know it exists” (p. 9). While the rise of Koreans writing in Japanese may generate more interest among Japanese readers for Korean literature, it may also paradoxically threaten the very foundation of “literature” itself. That is to say, because literature by definition emerges from the “womb” (*botai*) formed from the words and written characters intrinsic to the *minzoku* (ethnic nation),<sup>35</sup> a literature *not* written in one’s mother tongue may threaten to destroy the integrity of the nation itself. The essay concludes on an ambivalent note: “It can be argued that . . . literature, which should by all rights occupy a crucial position in a country’s culture (*ikkoku bunka*), must in Korea continue to exist as it has, being without a doubt the inevitable destiny of the *minzoku*. But if this is the case, then how should the integration of [Korean and Japanese] *minzoku* be resolved?” (p. 11).

The essay illuminates several key aspects of the so-called “Korean boom” and the larger context of the literary world in 1940s wartime Japan. First, it suggests that the boom was in effect fueled by a relatively small group of male intellectuals. The names mentioned in the *Shinchō* essay are the same names that crop up again and again in *Bungei shunjū*, *Bungakukai*, *Bungei*, and other major journals: Yi Kwangsu, Kim Saryang, Chang Hyōkchu, Murayama Tomoyoshi (1901–1977), Akita Ujaku (1883–1962). If one can indeed point to a publishing

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<sup>35</sup> *Minzoku* is a loaded word, and has been alternatively translated in English as “people,” “race/ethnicity,” “Volk,” and “nation.” Kevin Doak and Kenneth Wells, among others, have interpreted *minzoku* along the lines of ethnic nationalism and the ethnic nation, where “nation” would have of course been necessarily stripped of the political aspects of statehood or legal citizenship in the case of colonial Korea. See Kevin Doak, “What is a Nation and Who Belongs?” in *The American Historical Review* 102: 2 (April 1997) and Kenneth Wells, *New God, New Nation: Protestants and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea 1896-1937* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991). Although ethnic nationalism could be wielded by the colonized as a political tool for championing autonomy, it could also be used for the “naturalization of political ideologies that . . . excluded other ethnic groups like the Taiwanese and Koreans as members of the Japanese nation” (Doak, p. 298).

boom, it was one controlled by an elite, male circle of writers intimately connected to each other through the intersecting circuits of coterie magazines, educational backgrounds, literary prizes, and government-sponsored organizations.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, these connections were rarely stated outright in essays introducing “representative” Korean writers, perhaps for fear they would undermine the symbolic power (to borrow from Bourdieu) of a literary field perceived as autonomous from the demands of economic capital and political pressure.<sup>37</sup>

Second, the essay relies on a discursive framework where the explicit particularity of Korea (as a physically bounded space as well as the imagined origins of an ethnic unity) is brought into tension against the *implicit* floating signifier of Japan (whose overdetermined borders both exclude and exceed the former). One may consider the nuances of the word *kokunai* (国内), or “domestic.” On the surface the word may seem to innocuously point to a relational position – literally, “inside the country,” where the actual country may be left unstated due to the frame of reference provided by the Japanese-language, Tokyo-published journal itself. And yet, in the juxtaposition of “domestic” with “Korea-born writers,” one sees that the *koku* here does not stand simply for *country* but for *nation*, and all of the political and ideological privileges that

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<sup>36</sup> To give only a few examples of the connections that can be made: Chang Hyōkchu gained early recognition in Japan when his “Realm of Hungry Spirits” (Gakidō) won a 1932 *Kaizō* literary contest, and his affiliation with the literary coterie *Bungei shuto* brought him in contact with not only Hayashi Fusao but Kim Saryang as well. Kim Saryang himself first published his Akutagawa-winning “Into the Light” in *Bungei shuto* in 1939; he was also an active translator of Korean literature, and in fact translated Yi Kwangsu’s “Mumyōng” (The Unenlightened, 1939). The novella went on to win the first Korean Arts Prize, and Modan Nihonsha would publish two books by Yi in Japanese in the 1940s.

<sup>37</sup> Edward Mack discusses in detail how an “alternate economy of value” for “pure literature” was produced and maintained by the modern Japanese publishing industry by the 1920s through “differentiation (from, among other things, ‘popular literature’ and thus a market-driven value system) and association (with modernity, the nation-state, and existing literary prestige)” (p. 5). However, one must keep in mind that this new alternate economy of value “only *presented* itself as autonomous from the capitalist economy of value; as long as the works within that economy were published, however, they remained firmly embedded in the traditional economy as well” (p. 5). Mack later uses the creation of the Akutagawa Prize to demonstrate his point. He, like Kawamura, notes that the prize judges often took a special interest in the *gaichi*: “It would not be an overstatement to say those literary works were running a three-legged race with the period’s social trends and the ideology of national policy” (p. 205). See Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

the concept suggests. In other words, a “Korea-born writer” might live in Tokyo and write in Japanese and yet still be excluded from the borders of *kokunai* – an imperial subject, but *not* a national citizen. On the other hand, when the *Shinchō* writer speaks of *ikkoku bunka* (一国文化) – literally, “one country’s culture” – the *oku* here has been rendered much more ambiguous, stripped of its political contours when modified by “in Korea” but also capable of standing in for the *Japanese* empire (*kōoku*; 皇国) simultaneously. It may be said that the dilemma of Korean literature is in effect the dilemma of another variation of *oku* – namely, *kokubungaku* (national *and/or* Japanese literature). As I will discuss this topic in length in Chapter 2, I will merely point out for now while the essayist fully acknowledges the dilemma, s/he also assumes that this dilemma must be shouldered solely by the *Korean* (colonial) writer.

Third, and related to the above, the essayist is able to conceive of a potential crisis for “Korean literature” only after first universally defining literature as an art form that exists through and of the language of a *minzoku*. Most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, the essayist chooses a gendered vocabulary to describe the link between literature and language. Literature is likened to a child that emerges from the “womb” of the mother tongue. In this light, it is significant that the essayist emphasizes the mutually constitutive relationship between written and spoken language. According to the essayist, Yi Kwangsu’s *Mujōng* (The Heartless, 1917) should be recognized as the first successful step towards the creation of a modern, Korean literature precisely because it was written in the “colloquial written style” (*kōgotai*), or in a kind of *genbun itchi* (*ōnmun ilch’i* in Korean). I should stress that *genbun itchi* was not a simple unification of speech and writing, as the term is commonly translated, but rather the “conceptual transformation of the written language” into a vernacularized medium of expression that

emerged simultaneously with the institutionalization of “national language” (*kokugo*).<sup>38</sup> As Miyako Inoue has convincingly proved, the supposed neutrality and transparency of the narrative voice was in fact coded as middle-class, national, and male. The imagined speech of the Tokyo middle-class male, itself a fictitious construction, “served as an empty metapragmatic category in which disembodied and dislocated voices were integrated and assimilated into the voice of the modern subject.”<sup>39</sup> The category of “women’s speech,” meanwhile, became coded as a gendered excess, a mark of alterity that had to be ejected from the “neutral” linguistic space of *genbun itchi*.

The *Shinchō* essay follows the logic of *genbun itchi* in arguing for Yi Kwangsu’s canonization as the progenitor of modern Korean literature; it is the colloquial written style of *Mujōng* that both necessitated and effected the imagined (ethnic) community embodied by the anonymous speaking narrator. And yet, what is not acknowledged is the mediated and above all *colonial* canonization processes enabling the production of knowledge assumed (or consumed) by the essayist. Effaced from the text are the politics of translation, the role of literary prizes established through Japanese capital in promoting certain authors over others, and the historical forces of colonization that shaped the creation of a “modern Korean literature” canon and are now threatening its end. In other words, what becomes problematic in the “middle-class, national, and male” equation when moving from *genbun itchi* to *ōnmun ilch’i* is the term *national* – even while the *middle-class* and *male* components remain staunchly in place.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 44. The contentious issues surrounding *kokugo* in the colonies will be dealt with at length in Chapter 2.

<sup>39</sup> Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language: Gender and Linguistic Modernity in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p. 91.

<sup>40</sup> In her seminal study on the “origins” of the modern Korean novel, Kwon Boduerae [Kwōn Podūrae] writes extensively on the relationship between *ōnmun ilch’i* and *genbun itchi*, situating the former as heavily indebted to the latter (but also emerging in strategic response to the threat of colonial encroachment). She also spends some time



In this chapter, I argue that the phenomenon of the “Korean boom” was fueled by the *kōminka* (imperialization) policies launched throughout the Japanese empire with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Although it is often understood that the *kōminka* movement introduced a new paradigm of the imperial subject (*kōkoku shinmin*, or *kōmin* for short), less discussed are the ways in which this paradigm could both transcend and challenge definitions of “Japanese.” As my analysis of the “Korean boom” will show, Japanese editors and writers were able to represent Korea as an organic part of Japan and yet also apart from it by rendering Korean ethnicity subordinate to, and contained by, the borders of empire. Meanwhile, the Korean writers who contributed to the boom could assert agency either by insisting on the unique, indivisible nature of their own ethnicity or by positioning themselves as participants in a larger global modernity.<sup>41</sup> Both cases, however, relied on a monolithic definition of the “Korean people” that suppressed other articulations of identity, most notably that of gender and class.

This chapter is grounded on two different approaches: first, an analysis of the paratextual and contextual elements of *Modan Nihon*’s two special issues on Korea, from the editing and ordering of the articles to the presentation of advertisements; and second, close readings of Japanese-language texts written by the prominent Korean writer Kim Saryang. *Modan Nihon*

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discussing the reasons why many Korean newspapers adopted the mixed Korean-Chinese writing system (*kukhanmun*) instead of pure *hangŭl*. While this may seem to be a problematic choice, considering that the use of Chinese characters would exclude the uneducated (especially women) and block efforts at creating an “imagined community,” those who promoted the mixed system insisted that Chinese *characters* were an essential aspect of *Korean* history (a history that harkened back to a time before colonization by Japan, when the peninsula had a privileged position vis-à-vis China). Chinese characters were also seen as “stable” and “unchanging” in contrast to the many and as yet disunited varieties of dialect, gendered language, and so on. See Kwon, *Hanguk kŭndae sosŏl ūi kiwŏn* (Seoul: Somyŏng, 2000).

<sup>41</sup> In her dissertation, Se-mi Oh locates acts of resistance in the consumption patterns and everyday urban lifestyles of Koreans in colonial Keijō (present-day Seoul). She argues that consumption in colonial Seoul was a “manifestation of the desire to overcome the restrictions of colonialism and realize contemporariness with the global tide of modernity” (p. 3) and an attempt to challenge Japan’s privileged claim to modernity. At the same time, colonial hierarchies were maintained in the ways Japan placed itself as the leader of Korea’s modernization. In this context, “Japan’s promotion of modernity as an instrument of colonial control accelerated Korea’s integration into the global system of capitalism while simultaneously displacing it from within” (pg. 3). Oh, *Consuming the Modern: The Everyday in Colonial Seoul, 1915-1937* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008).

was unusual in that it was a popular magazine published in Tokyo but presided over by a Korean, the writer and editor Ma Haesong (1905–1966). It was the first magazine in Tokyo to produce a volume dedicated entirely to Korean literature and culture, and the success of that volume helped spur the boom to its height. Like the Korea issues of *Modan Nihon*, the writings of Kim Saryang were held up in their day by Japanese intellectuals as proof of Korea’s increasing incorporation into the Japanese empire. While stories such as “Hikari no naka ni” and “Tenma” (Pegasus, 1940) are frequently studied in relation to the rest of Kim’s oeuvre, my juxtaposition of Kim’s work against other products of the “Korean boom” is meant to emphasize the social, historical, and material processes always at work in the creation of a text. The themes I address here are also revisited in Chapter 3 (“Postcolonial Legacies and the Divided ‘I’ in Occupation-Period Japan”), which addresses the literature of self-identified zainichi writer Kim Talsu. Both *Modan Nihon* and Kim Saryang were explicitly mentioned together in Kim Talsu’s essays, and both would leave long shadows over articulations of zainichi identity in postwar Japan.

## **EXPLORING THE KOREAN BOOM**

On September 18, 1931, explosives were detonated near railroad lines owned by the South Manchuria Railway. Although the “Manchurian Incident,” as the attack came to be called, had in fact been staged by members of the Japanese Kwantung Army, army officials accused Chinese dissidents of the deed and initiated a series of aggressive campaigns that eventually culminated in the creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. While it is unarguable that the Incident transformed the scope and direction of Japanese imperialism in East Asia, it also had a profound impact on the metropole as well. A “cultural deluge” of Manchuria-themed products and media images flooded through every level of society: passionate, patriotic articles in general-

interest and special-interest journals alike; war songs (*gunka*) glorifying the Kwantung Army; special newsreels; picture postcards; new kabuki plays . . . even restaurant menus.<sup>42</sup>

The Incident also pushed Korea back into the (ancillary) spotlight as a military and economic cornerstone of the Japanese empire. Korea's communications and transportation networks were to be integrated into the development of Manchuria; excess labor to be shunted into new manufacturing industries; and the immigrant Korean population in Manchuria to be wielded as a tool for political control over the region.<sup>43</sup> The outbreak of "total war" with China in 1937 only increased concerns over Korea's strategic position vis-à-vis China.<sup>44</sup> The peninsula was touted as a crucial logistic base *against* and bridge *to* the continent, to be secured at all costs for the ongoing war. A number of measures, collectively known as *kōminka*, were adopted to transform colonial subjects into loyal imperial subjects with "the strength to endure all hardships for the sake of exalting the imperial way."<sup>45</sup> Some policies have already been cited in the introduction to this dissertation, but additional examples included the enforced recitation of the "Oath of Imperial Subjects" in public places (1937), educational measures restricting (1938) and then finally abolishing classes on the Korean language (1941); and the increased suppression of Korean-language publications, such as *Chosŏn ilbo* and *Tonga ilbo* (1940).

In his groundbreaking book *Becoming "Japanese,"* Leo Ching devotes one chapter to an exploration of the differences between assimilation (or *dōka*) and imperialization, identifying the

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<sup>42</sup> Louise Young, *Japan's Total War: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 69. See also Peter B. High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War, 1931-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> See *Korea Old and New: A History* ed. Carter Eckert et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), particularly chapter 17.

<sup>44</sup> This emphasis on China also explains why there was no "Taiwanese" boom of similar magnitude during this time. Taiwan did not have the same strategic importance as Korea; it was also not as closely linked to the metropole in terms of transportation, unlike the dense network of railway and shipping routes that brought together Japan, Korea, and Manchuria.

<sup>45</sup> From the "Kōkoku shinmin no seishi" (Oath of Imperial Subjects).

former as an ideological *project* of the early 1930s and the latter as a colonial *practice* launched in 1937. Ching argues that the amorphous, discriminatory structure of *dōka* “both maintained a degree of legitimacy for Japanese rule and left room for contestation and rearticulation by the colonized.”<sup>46</sup> *Kōminka*, in comparison, “constituted a colonial *objectification* by forcefully turning a project into practice, by rendering the ideal into the material” (p. 96, italics in original). According to the logic of *kōminka*, by engaging in such actions as shouting “Long live the Emperor!” and clapping one’s hands in reverence, one could theoretically internalize identity through external performance. To rephrase his argument through the lens of Louis Althusser, the call of *kōminka* is a kind of social interpellation, but one impossible to fulfill: the call demands the complete assimilation of the colonial subject, but it is exactly in the act of responding – in the very necessity to respond – that he is made to feel his own difference. Ching furthermore points out that as mobilization efforts intensified, rhetoric shifted again from “living as Japanese” to “dying as Japanese”; or, from the interpellating call of *must be Japanese* to the paradoxical and retrospective *must have been Japanese*.

In his discussions on the much-maligned *kōmin* literature of colonial Taiwan, Ching astutely criticizes the artificial binaries of “resistance” and “collaboration,” arguing that these categories give no justice to all the many ways in which meaning gets created, contested, and reinterpreted within specific historical contexts. Although Ching focuses exclusively on colonized subjectivity, the phenomenon of the “Korean boom” shows that *kōminka* could often work both ways. Paired with the push by government officials to “Japanize” Koreans was a seemingly counter interest held by the general Japanese populace in the unique and ultimately *non-Japanese* aspects of Korean culture. Oguma Eiji describes these dual forces as inclusion

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<sup>46</sup> Leo Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 104.

(*hōkatsu*) and exclusion (*haijo*): inclusion of colonial subjects as “Japanese” when brought up against the third term of the West, exclusion when defined against “Japan proper.”<sup>47</sup>

Oguma’s research also shows that the categories of “Japanese” and “imperial subject” never coincided completely. One only has to look at the bewildering proliferation of terms that could signify “Japanese” – *Nihonjin* (person of Japan), *naichijin* (person of the metropole), *waga kokumin* (we the people), *Nihon minzoku* (The Japanese people/ethnos), *kokunai no hito* (person inside the country, i.e. Japan), *kokugo o tsūyō suru mono* (those who habitually use the national language) – to understand that the discursive borders of Japan could be readily shifted or reinterpreted according to the subject positions of both speaker and audience. These tools were not limited to the colonizer alone; indeed, it was often Korean intellectuals who vociferously insisted on equating *kōmin* with *Nihonjin*. If the two were one and the same, the argument went, then Korean subjects were entitled to the same political and social rights as Japanese in the metropole.<sup>48</sup> In this sense, *kōminka* can be seen as encapsulating the tension between race and ethnicity outlined in the introduction of this dissertation: conceived of within a Pan-Asian rhetoric that pitted itself against the racial discrimination of the West, *kōminka* presented a vision of the Japanese empire in which ethnic difference could potentially be overcome by material practice.

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<sup>47</sup> Oguma Eiji, *“Nihonjin” no kyōkai* (Tokyo: Shin’yōsha, 1998), p. 9. Oguma argues that one may summarize the boundaries between Japanese and non-Japanese through a distinction between *kokuseki* (nationality) and *koseki* (household registry). Koreans were considered Japanese (through *kokuseki*) when pitted against foreigners; Koreans carried Japanese passports and were forbidden from changing their nationality to that of another country. At the same time, they were considered not Japanese (through *koseki*) and were denied the same rights and privileges as *naichi* citizens. For a succinct English-language analysis on this subject, see Chikako Kashiwazaki, “The politics of legal status” in *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* ed. Sonia Ryang (New York and London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>48</sup> Chikako Kashiwazaki notes that in 1944 “the imposition of heavy burdens on Koreans for war effort led the Japanese metropolitan government to take further steps towards legal-institutional assimilation and the equalization of political rights” (“The politics of legal status,” p. 20). Policy changes included allowing Koreans in the *naichi* to transfer their *koseki* to the Japanese registry under certain conditions and extending suffrage to the colonies (although the latter was never implemented).

Figure 1: Cover for 1939 Korea issue of *Modan Nihon*.



Figure 2: Yohmo hair tonic ad (1939), 2-page spread, featuring endorsement by Chang Hyökchu.



Mary Louise Pratt and other postcolonial scholars have written extensively about how the drive to know, to code, to narrate the colonies is intimately linked with the desire to control or contain them. If considered from this perspective, the ubiquitous kōminka slogan *naisen ittai* (Japan and Korea as One Body) may perhaps be more aptly translated as “Japan *Consuming* Korea Into One Body,” where a packaged knowledge of Korea is offered up for easy consumption by the general (Japanese) populace. The opening pages of the 1939 Korea issue of *Modan Nihon* may serve as a useful example. The first thing that leaps to the eye are the full-page advertisements designed to entice the home consumer: Victor radio sets, digestive medicine (cast, in a clever nod to the intensifying militarization of Japan, as a soldier on the “gastrointestinal battlefield”), Spanish guitar records, children’s toys, and a hair tonic endorsed by none other than the prominent bilingual writer Chang Hyōkchu, who guarantees that using the tonic will make your hair as “beautifully black” as that of the Korean woman featured in the advertisement (see Figure 2).

Chang Hyōkchu had gained early fame in Japan in 1932 upon winning a prestigious *Kaizō* (Reconstruction) literary contest for his Japanese-language story “Gakidō” (Realm of Hungry Spirits); by the time of *Modan Nihon*’s publication, he had become one of the most well-known Korean writers of Japanese in the metropole as well as in Korea and Taiwan.<sup>49</sup> His inclusion in the magazine speaks to the fluidity of audiences: just as his fiction was able to cross borders through the medium of the Japanese language, so too could his status as an iconic “Korean” writer appeal to Korean and Japanese readers alike. *Furigana*, or Japanese gloss, is heavily utilized throughout the magazine, and the articles themselves are a raucous mix of the

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<sup>49</sup> The Taiwanese writer Lu Heruo (吕赫若; born Lu Shidai, 1914–1951), who made his Japanese-language debut in 1935 in the Japanese proletarian journal *Bungaku hyōron* with the short story “Gyūsha” (The Oxcart), was so inspired by Chang’s success that he deliberately chose a penname that utilized the first Chinese character of Chang Hyōkchu’s given name. For more information on this connection, see Karen Laura Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 32.

political and the popular. Furthermore, while other issues of *Modan Nihon* always include a railroad time schedule for domestic travel, the Korea issues feature a time schedule that integrates Japanese, Korean, Manchurian, and Chinese railroads together – yet another reminder of Korea’s strategic importance vis-à-vis the continent.

Unlike journals such as *Tōyō*, then, *Modan Nihon* sought to appeal to a wide variety of readers not restricted to a single class or interest. As I mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the magazine is also unusual for another reason. Although originally launched by Kikuchi Kan, that perennial presence in Korea-Japan literary relations, the magazine soon came under the leadership of Ma Haesong, a writer of children’s books in Korea and one of Kikuchi’s young protégés. Born in Kaesŏng in 1905, Ma completed his higher education in Tokyo, at Nihon University’s College of Art. It was in Tokyo where he met and was eventually employed by Kikuchi Kan, first as the chief editor for *Bungei shunjū* and then as the president of Modan Nihonsha. It is undeniable that Ma’s position and influence helped lead to the printing of a Korea tokushū. One may see this influence directly in the round-table discussion (*zadankai*) entitled “Atarashiki Chōsen o kataru zadankai” (Round-Table Discussion on the New Korea), which was moderated by Ma himself. In his opening remarks, Ma states, “This is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Modan Nihon*’s founding, and as commemoration we decided to publish a special extra issue, the ‘Korea edition’ – I was born in Korea, after all, and thought it’d be appropriate given the current situation (*jikyoku*)” (p. 90).

From Ma’s remarks and the comments found in the editor’s postscript, which takes care to emphasize again the “current situation” and the “instruction and approval given by the distinguished men of the Korean Government General and others” (p. 354), it is easy to make a link between the “Korean boom” and the increasingly urgent demands of war. Kajii Noboru has



argued that we should call the publishing phenomenon a “fabricated” one, engineered by Japanese elites for the sole purpose of *kōminka*. As proof, he points to the exclusion of Koreans – with the notable exceptions of Ma Haesong and Chang Hyōkchu – from the editing process in general; the large number of articles dedicated to promoting total loyalty to the Japanese emperor through *naisen ittai*; and the command that those Koreans who *did* contribute works do so only in Japanese.<sup>50</sup> One must also consider the increasingly strict censorship conditions of 1940s Japan, and the ever-growing powers of the Home Ministry. By 1940, Bungei Shunjūsha and other major publishers were required to meet every month with military censorship authorities, who not only had the power to issue censorship bans but also had control over paper allocations. Uncooperative publishers were faced with the threat of government fines, prohibitions on publication and sale, paper restrictions, and even imprisonment.<sup>51</sup>

While I believe Kajii is right to note the coercive and one-sided nature of the “Korean boom,” his remarks do not help explain the existence of a *second* “Korea edition” of *Modan Nihon* published in August 1940, some nine months after the first one. According to scholar Hon Sonyon, the first “Korea edition” caused a huge stir among its readers and ended up exceeding all sales expectations. The second edition was hastily produced as a direct result of this unexpected success.<sup>52</sup> The acute interest in all things Korean in the *Modan Nihon* readership should tell us again that *kōminka* did not necessarily mean turning Koreans into “Japanese.” For while Korea – or rather, a carefully packaged media image of it – was being marketed as part and

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<sup>50</sup> Kajii, “Gendai Chōsen bungaku,” pp. 112-3.

<sup>51</sup> For a comprehensive English-language study on these matters, see Richard H. Mitchell, *Censorship in Imperial Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). The issue of censorship is also touched upon in Edward Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) and Suzuki Sadami, *Bungei shunjū to Ajia Taiheiyō sensō* (Tokyo: Takeda Random House Japan, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> From the introduction to the 1940 facsimile edition, vi. In the second *tokushū* there is an advertisement declaring the printing of a third edition in the fall, but for unknown reasons this edition never made it to the market.

parcel of the Japanese empire, its exotic consumer appeal was because it was simultaneously the Other to Japan the nation. As we shall see in detail in Chapter 2, this was not in spite of *kōminka* policy but precisely *through and because of it*. *Kōminka* demanded the full loyalty of the colonies without also promising parity in legal or social status, and its policies – *sōshi kaimei* (lit. establishing family names and changing given names), clothing reform, and even Japanese language enforcement – did not aim to make Koreans into “Japanese” but rather to make them into useful “imperial subjects,” a category itself defined by the contingencies of war. Japanese publishers were able to highlight the alterity of Koreans without apparent contradiction because the category of “Japanese” was unproblematized, an unassailable constant when considered in the domestic context of the metropole.

Who, then, were the consumers of *Modan Nihon*? Scholar Pak Migyong speculates that the journal’s readership was most likely composed of “women and children,” considering how the majority of advertisements seem aimed for an adult, married, female consumer.<sup>53</sup> Kajii, meanwhile, highlights Ma Haesong’s popularity with the Korean immigrant population in the metropole and argues that furigana was judiciously used because Ma expected that the majority of readers would be “fellow Koreans” who, although not fluent in Japanese, were “hungry for a scent of their homeland’s culture” and therefore in need of reading aids.<sup>54</sup> However, considering that other issues of *Modan Nihon* were also heavily marked with furigana, it seems unlikely that the Korean population in Japan would have been the journal’s *only* imagined readership.

What I find interesting about Pak’s and Kajii’s observations is that, when paired together, each shows the blind spot of the other. Missing from Pak’s analysis is a consideration of how the category “women and children” might be fissured internally along the lines of ethnicity and class.

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<sup>53</sup> From the introduction to the 1940 facsimile edition, xiii.

<sup>54</sup> Kajii, “Gendai Chōsen bungaku,” p. 113.

Kajii, on the other hand, does not address the crucial issue of gender in his considerations of ethnicity (which is also for him conflated with class: the “Koreans” he mentions are assumed to be largely uneducated laborers). The question of gender is one that is also left unexamined in Leo Ching’s otherwise careful analysis of *kōminka*. Why are the colonial writers of Japanese and their self-tortured protagonists overwhelmingly male, for example? Why do the rhetorical weapons of dialogic discourse often fall along gendered lines – the politically subversive power of irony employed *by* the double-tongued male narrator, and the culturally prescriptive power of satire employed *towards* the unwitting female target?

If we are to understand the how and why of the “Korean boom” and the *kōminka* ideology that drove it, it is crucial to examine how all three overdetermined characteristics of gender, ethnicity, and class inflect and are inflected by each other. This is not the same thing as simply tacking one thing onto another – trying to modify Park’s “women and children” category with the ethnic supplement “Japanese,” for example, or Kajii’s “Korean” category with the gendered supplement “women.” Instead, I follow Anne McClintock and others in arguing that gender, class, and ethnicity necessarily exist *in and through* relation with each other, and always within a matrix of discursive hierarchies.

In the following pages I focus on three byproducts of the “Korean boom” – *Modan Nihon*’s 1940 Korean *tokushū* and two short stories by the prominent Korean colonial writer Kim Saryang. In doing so, I hope to provide a more nuanced, comprehensive understanding of the cross-border collaborations between colonizer and colonized. Indeed, while I reject the idea of a stable divisions between “colonizer” and “colonized,” I do not deny their force as lived social realities and I emphasize their ability to function as transcendental categories whose borders might shift but never be radically erased. Who might count as “Japanese” and who as “foreigner”

could change according to context, but the categories themselves would remain firmly anchored in place. It is my aim in this chapter to examine how the discourse of difference was produced and maintained in a plurality of overlapping spaces, and how this discourse could be alternatively mobilized, forgotten, conflated, and prioritized depending on one's subject position and projected audience.

### ***MODAN NIHON* ADVERTISEMENTS, PHOTO MONTAGES, AND ZADANKAI**

*Modan Nihon* was established by Bungei Shunjūsha in 1930. The cover of the first issue is a montage of brightly colored images of modernity: cars, clocks, a pair of women's high heels, playing cards, even a zeppelin (!); the back page features a picture of a woman in the bobbed hair and stylish clothes of a flapper, advertising for a type of handbag. Kikuchi Kan's introduction on the first page declares that the journal would be devoted to "lifestyles, practical science, entertainment, and hobbies," although he adds as a caveat that since "journals are living creatures," it's anyone's guess how *Modan Nihon* will change in the years to come.<sup>55</sup> In fact, the journal came to embody Kikuchi Kan's keen business sense, which balanced the symbolic power of literature against the commercial power of popular interest and current events.<sup>56</sup> That the journal was also aggressively targeted to and through a female readership is clear from the succession of journal covers and advertisements featuring images of stylishly and expensively dressed women – most often Asian but not always, as with the European-looking woman with blonde hair featured on the cover of the September 1940 issue.

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<sup>55</sup> "Modan Nihon ni tsuite," *Modan Nihon* 1930.10.

<sup>56</sup> For more on this topic see Kanro Junki, "Kikuchi Kan" in *Kindai Nihon media jinbutsu-shi: sōshisha/keieisha hen* ed. Tsuchiya Reiko (Tokyo: Minerva Shobō, 2009).

In her study on the creation and policing of “women’s speech” discourse in modern Japan, Miyako Inoue identifies the magazine as a key tool in the creation of “desiring gendered bourgeois-citizen-consumers” due to its non-linear, intertextual reading format and reliance on print advertisements.<sup>57</sup> She further points to the role of the advertisement in cementing the indexical relationship between commodities and schoolgirl speech, the topic of her book.

A commodity does not have any intrinsic value; value is acquired in the commodity’s ‘social’ relationships with other commodities within the system of the market and the logic of exchange. Valorization is external to the commodity and autonomous from its thing-ness, and value is fabricated in such a way that it convinces the buyer of its excess over the values of other products as well as of why one needs to desire and to possess the specific good to which the value is attached. (p. 135)

I would add here that the “social” relationships outlined by Inoue were determined by a complicated network of alliances and strategies in which the *national* market both depended on and took advantage of *imperial* control of commodity capital. In order to illustrate my point, I would like to look closely at the Korea tokushū published by *Modan Nihon* in 1940.

*Modan Nihon*’s 1940 Korea edition mimics the organization and layout of its 1939 predecessor. Both feature covers where a woman dressed in “traditional” Korean attire stares straight forward with a faint smile on her lips. Like its predecessor, too, this version presents a broad array of articles: photo montages of *kisaeng* (professional female entertainers); an interview with Minami Jirō, current Governor General of Korea, on the escalating war and *kōminka*; various articles introducing the state of Korea’s industries and arts; a “classics” section featuring one essay on Korea’s ancient currencies and another on ancient crafts; a survey of “things that are easy for Japanese (*naichijin*) to misunderstand about Koreans”; short stories and poems by both Korean and Japanese writers; three separate *zadankai*; and so on. Contributors

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<sup>57</sup> Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, p. 27.

include Japanese reporters (listed only as Reporter A, Reporter B, etc.) sent to Korea for “field reports” (*genchi hōkoku*); Japanese notables in Korea, presumably writing from or speaking while still in Korea (Minami Jirō, Shiobara Tokisaburō, Matsubara Jun’ichi); Korean authors and artists, writing in Japanese at the request of the magazine but from an unspecified location (Yi Kwangsu, Han Sik); Japanese authors and artists, writing about their memories of Korea from the metropole (Murayama Tomoyoshi, Itō Shinsui, Ishii Hakutei); and Korean writers whose works were originally published in Korean but were translated into Japanese by fellow Korean writers (Pak T’aewŏn, translated by Kim Chonghan; Kim Tongni, translated by Kim Sanchŭn).

As even the brief outline above shows, *Modan Nihon*’s special edition assembled its sources from all corners of the colonial empire in order to introduce a composite picture of “Korea,” carefully edited and censored, to the curious masses. On the one hand, one might argue that the disparate voices of the Korean and Japanese contributors prove the heterogeneity of empire – no longer can “Korea” be confined to a single geographical location or be mobilized for a single purpose (whether economic, military, political, or academic). And yet, in flipping through the pages of *Modan Nihon*, I find myself caught not by this motley collection of information but by the jarring split between the written names of the male authors mentioned above and the pictured faces of the female models disproportionately featured in the journal’s advertisements and story illustrations. If Korea is being packaged here as a commodity, what we see here are two distinct methods of consumption. The first is the consumption of knowledge of Korea as commodity, presented and controlled by male elites – with one notable exception, which I will discuss in detail below – from both Korea and the metropole. The second is the simultaneous consumption of Japan-manufactured commodities *through* Korea as commodity,

marketed for a largely female demographic. How are these two trajectories reconciled with each other – and for what (whose) purpose?

Let me focus on three different examples as a way of suggesting entry points into these questions. Immediately following the table of contents of *Modan Nihon*'s 1940 tokushū, we encounter a lavish two-page advertisement for Yohmo (Yōmo when romanized from the Japanese) hair tonic, the same product endorsed by Chang Hyökchu in the 1939 edition. (See Figure 3.) A woman dressed in a *hanbok* fills almost the entire frame of one page. Her head is turned to the side, allowing us to get a full look at her rich black hair, the long tresses curled fashionably at the ends. The clothes may stand in for Korean ethnicity, but her hair is unarguably *modern* – a product of the salon and of a tonic that is available in “famous department stores, pharmacies, and cosmetics stores all over the country (*zenkoku*)” (p.11). The ad copy continues this appeal to the modern by using the word “hygiene” twice, bolding it each time. Use this product, it urges us, to “root out” the stink of sweat and dirt and to prevent hair damage.

The name of the brand itself is a curious hybrid: “Yohmo” is a derivative of the Japanese word *yōmō* (hair nourishment), and “Tonic” is of English origin. The brand name is printed on the advertisement first in *katakana*, the Japanese script that generally denotes words of foreign origin, then written out again in *hangŭl* underneath.<sup>58</sup> “Yohmo Tonic” is inscribed in the English alphabet on the tonic bottle itself. Here indeed is an advertisement that exploits all the fetishistic force of the commodity. First, the (Korean?) model who owns and is the commodity, and whose ethnic appeal is maintained by and for a Japan-manufactured product. Then a description of the product itself, which straddles the borders of colonial modernity by tempting consumers with the allure of “famous department stores all over the country” – with “country” left undefined in its borders, and so able to stand in for both nation and empire. Finally, the exotic appeal of the

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<sup>58</sup> In Japanese: ヨウモトニック. In Korean: 요우모토닉구.

Figure 3: Yohmo advertisement (1940), 2-page spread.

この一瓶が  
頭髮の衛生を  
一手に御引受する!!

△汗と汚れのカクテルで發散する  
不快な頭臭を一掃し  
△日焦汐焦で赤く醜くなる毛髮の  
豫防となり、やかて戻ひ來る  
「秋脱毛」の御惱みを防止する

◆正しい養毛料のフケ、カユミに悩  
む方は◆重厚な産後のウス毛を急速  
に恢復したい方◆若さに悩む方◆  
縮毛のひどい方には、男子は勿論  
日本髪、六マ、ウェーブの方に、論な  
く、ぜひ何れを指しても御試用をお  
奨め申したい逸品です。

正しい養毛料  
**ヨウモト**  
ヨウモト  
ヨウモト

全国の有名デパート・薬店・化粧品店にあり  
東京・三井ビル  
三井株式会社製薬部・三井製薬株式会社

にきびに専門ボソラック





language: Japanese that is orthographically stamped with the mark of the foreign, Korean orthography that mimics the *sound* of the Japanese.

In such an overdetermined battlefield of competing signs and symbols, is it even possible to pick out a single consuming gaze or a single representative reader? One reader (let's say middle-class, female, native Japanese) might encode this ad against the sea of photo montages that follow it: images of *kisaeng*, "Miss Korea" contest nominees, and famous Korean actresses – in other words, representations of femininity acknowledged by their male counterparts as desirable, if not necessarily socially respectable. She might interpret the advertisement as a call to this kind of femininity, exoticized by ethnicity but also safely domesticated for the Japanese consumer market. Another reader (let's say one with direct experience in Korea, also female, perhaps lower class) might see instead the class position of the model indicated by the immaculate, refined clothing and carefully groomed hair. She might view the model as a siren of cosmopolitanism, a privileged consumer in the playing field of modernity. A third reader – male, middle-class, native Japanese – might have yet another response to the advertisement, which states that the tonic will also work for "men, of course." The Korean model might be an object of desire, and the product the means to obtaining her good favor. Meanwhile, a reader like Chang Hyōkchu – a male, middle-class, native Korean intellectual – may imprint his words of representative authority onto her body and thereby gain access to the world of Japanese media as not the subject but the author of Korean ethnicity.

While it is possible to see in this potential plurality of readers fracture lines that open up the supposed wholeness of the empire, I am inclined to see also its darker flipside – the ability of the transcendental signifier of country/empire to marshal together a narrative that erases the colonial mechanisms of power. If we are to follow Pierre Bourdieu in arguing that economic

power may be mobilized through cultural capital, the question of *who* is privileged in the field of cultural production must always be interrogated. The Korean woman in the advertisement is presented without any geographical context, literally cut away from the colonial landscape of Korea and inserted into the blank space of Japanese media. She can stand in as a desirable symbol only once she has been (dis)placed in this way, her exotic hybridity mobilized for public consumption.

Now let me move on to two different photo montages, the one coming soon after the other. The first one is entitled “Tabi no arubamu yori: Chōsen de no watashi” (From My Travel Album: Me in Korea)<sup>59</sup> and is authored by Murayama Tomoyoshi, a Japanese author and playwright notable for his great interest in Korea during the colonial period. (See Figure 4.) The photos line the edges of the spread, surrounding the text written by Murayama about his three trips to Korea. Every photo is of Murayama, either posing in front of a famous site or talking candidly with Japanese and Korean colleagues. “I don’t own a camera,” he states from the very beginning, in order to explain why all the photos were taken by others. He goes on to briefly describe the place and people in each photo and the context in which the photos were taken.

The second photo montage is entitled “Kisaeng no ichinichi” (A Day in the Life of a Kisaeng; see Figure 5). The photos here take center stage, dominating the page; short small descriptions are attached separately to each photo, forming a loose narrative that takes the reader from morning until evening. The descriptions are written in such a way that one can read them in the voice of the featured kisaeng *or* in the neutral third person, unlike the “I” that literally begins and ends Murayama’s piece. One photo description, for example, reads “Once (I/one) wake(s) up

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<sup>59</sup> Pages 10–11. In the table of contents the title is listed as “Meishi tabi no arubamu yori” (From the Travel Album of a Famous Personage).

Figure 4: Murayama Tomoyoshi photo montage (1940), 2-page spread.



Figure 5: Kisaeng photo montage (1940), 2-page spread.



the first thing is the preparing of breakfast. While the maid is cooking the rice (I/one) cut(s) the radish for the kimchi. Kisaeng are domestic (*kateiteki*) in this way” (p. 15). At the top of the page is listed the name of the cameraman, Kim Jōngrae; at the bottom, the name of the kisaeng “model,” Yun Tansim. There is no note of the writer’s name, perhaps to encourage the reader to view the link between the photos and the writing as direct and transparent, a “true” record of a “true” kisaeng’s life. It must be noted as well that the writing is in the present tense, giving a sense of intimacy and timelessness to the whole photo montage. Contrast this to the past tense prose of Murayama. Timeless and unchanging “Korea” on the one hand, as represented by an unspecified day in the life of a nameless kisaeng; on the other, Korea as a memory, a controlled narrative from a single Japanese man.<sup>60</sup>

What the two photo montages have in common, of course, is the assumption of a Japanese reader whose gaze makes sense of the montage and makes it possible in the first place. Scholar Kim Chul [Kim Chōl] identifies a similar hegemonic gaze in his examination of key colonial-period photos of Korea. He notes that the composition of the photographs point to a thing that cannot be seen but which sees everything in the photo, and to which everything in the photo is oriented – in other words, the colonial apparatus.<sup>61</sup> Whether the writer of the text is stated, as in Murayama’s piece, or the cameraman taking the photos, as in the article on kisaeng,

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<sup>60</sup> A third photo montage entitled “Nobiyuku Chōsen” (A Developing Korea) presents yet another striking contrast: there, the photos are of military weapons and soldiers, massed for war with “the continent.” One picture captures the insides of a factory, staffed by women in severe uniforms. None of the faces are captured directly by the camera, unlike the other photo montages; the gazes of the subjects are firmly fixed on the tasks in front of them, on the mechanisms and machineries of war. One sees here what Ann McClintock describes as the “temporal anomaly” of imperialism, configured as a gendered difference – nostalgia for the past (the kisaeng) vs. a progressive sloughing off of the past (the male soldiers and modern factory women).

<sup>61</sup> Kim Chul, *Kungmin’ iranūn noye* (Seoul: Samin, 2005). Kim also talks about the post-liberation continuation of the hegemonic gaze, this time centered around the abstract notion of the “ethnic nation” (*minjok*) or the “state” (*kukka*).

what remains unstated and yet powerfully palpable is the organizing framework of empire – one that strips away direct access to colonial voices and visions by (re)presenting them.

My third and last example is a *zadankai* entitled “Chōsen jogakusei *zadankai*” (Roundtable Discussion with Korean Schoolgirls). Participating in the talk, which is staged in Keijō (present-day Seoul), are eight Korean women from four different prestigious women’s higher education schools; leading the talk is a male journalist from *Modan Nihon*, who remains nameless in this piece. There is no mention of a translator being present; even if one had been, it is likely that these women would have all been able to speak Japanese (the supposed language of the talk) with varying degrees of fluency, considering their elite educational background. Their use (or its translation) of *teyo-dawa* speech, described by Miyako Inoue as “the sign of the *Japanese* female modern and of all that the female national citizen would be disciplined to desire” (p. 108, emphasis mine), is highly suggestive in this light. By mimicking the speech so closely associated with the urban, modern, middle-class Japanese woman, the Korean women could signal their own participation in a modernity that exceeded the borders of Korean ethnicity – but only by reaffirming Japanese ethnicity as the norm to be desired.

In the interview, the reporter asks the women what instruments they play; what their favorite books and movies are; how they spend their allowances; what dishes they like to cook; and so on. In discussing these topics, the women often mention the differences they’ve observed between “Korean” customs and “Japanese” ones, with no apparent prompting from the reporter. Even if prompting had occurred and was later erased, the women would surely have been acutely aware of their Japanese-reading audience and the journal’s paradoxical need to present Korea as an integrated part of the Japanese empire but also exotically different from the metropole. And yet, in their privileged positions as educated daughters from upper-class families, these women

might have shared more in common with their Tokyo counterparts than with the lower-class, minimally educated tenant farmers who made up some 80% of the Korean population.<sup>62</sup>

When the topic turns to the notorious kisaeng, remarks range from sympathetic to scathing, but all speakers seem united in their ultimate disapproval of the profession.

Han Yŏnghŭi: Even in Korea some religious groups have tried to start movements to abolish kisaeng. In any case, I don't think kisaeng should put on such extravagant airs. They have absolutely no shame. They need to be more humble and honest.

Im Myŏngsun: I'm sure they do it out of desperation. It's so sad.

Ch'oe Chongok: They're very unfortunate people who have to provide for their parents and siblings economically.

Im Myŏngsun: I'm sure they all have their reasons, but I want them to think about the future and change their ways for the better. Once they deepened their sense of self (*jiko ninshiki*) I don't think they'd be able to keep on being a kisaeng.

Han Yŏnghŭi: In any case, I think it's society's sin, men's sin. Kisaeng prosper because of men. Have you ever heard of a woman playing around with kisaeng? It's all the fault of men.

Everyone: Agreed! Men should be punished. (cheers)

Im Myŏngsun: It is men who make playthings out of women.

Reporter: In that case, please accept my most sincere apologies! (gales of laughter)

Here, the women uneasily acknowledge the kisaeng's double bind of family: a woman may enter the profession in order to provide for her parents and siblings, but she can only do so by disrupting the sanctioned unity of the modern home. Im Myŏngsun tries to solve this bind by distinguishing the kisaeng from the *woman who becomes her*. She suggests a solution in a "sense of self" (the modern neologism itself problematically loaded with connotations of education, class, and privilege), and not the larger forces of capitalism and the state-sanctioned system of licensed prostitution. Han Yŏnghŭi connects the issue to "society" (which is to say, "men"), superseding the difference between themselves and the kisaeng with the gendered difference

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<sup>62</sup> See Kim Puja, *Shokuminchiki Chōsen no kyōiku to jendā* (Yokohama: Seori Shobō, 2005), p. 20.

between men and women.<sup>63</sup> This category of “society/men” is, interestingly, *not* ethnicized – no modifier of “Korean” precedes it – unlike the category of the *kisaeng*, which contains the stamp of ethnicity in its very name. The particularity of the *kisaeng* is held against the universality of “society/men,” who are agents of the capitalist market that produced and maintained the demand for *kisaeng* in the first place.

It should be noted here that a unified system of licensed prostitution similar to the one developed in Japan during the Meiji period was established by the Government-General of Korea soon after colonization. Indeed, the discourse of *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife, wise mother”) could be said to be the flip side of the same coin, as both the prostitute and the “good wife, wise mother” emerged from a patriarchal system of nationalism that harnessed women’s sexual and economic labor for the benefit of modern capitalist society.<sup>64</sup> While *kisaeng* were differentiated from prostitutes and barmaids, there was no law explicitly forbidding prostitution by *kisaeng* and barmaids; in fact, all three fell under the same prostitution regulations, and all three were required to undergo periodic medical examinations. At the same time, images of *kisaeng* came to be circulated in Japan through postcards, articles, photo montages (like the one featured in *Modan Nihon*), and guidebooks as the sign *par excellence* of erotic Korean femininity. But in order for the *kisaeng* to also represent to Japanese readers “the authentic Korea as yet

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<sup>63</sup> Judith Butler argues that not only is gender the “social construction” of sex, but also that one has no access to this “sex” except by means of its construction. Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 5. Ueno Chizuko likewise argues for the socially constructed aspect of gender; following Christine Delphy, she states that gender is the “practice of differentiation to create two asymmetrical arenas” and therefore true gender equality can only be achieved by dismantling those gender differences themselves. Ueno, *Nationalism and Gender* trans. Beverly Yamamoto (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2004), p. 172. Yamamoto’s translation is of Ueno’s *Nashonarizumu to jendā* (Tokyo: Seitōsha, 1998), but the passage quoted here is from a section on Hiroshima that was added on the occasion of the translation.

<sup>64</sup> Yamashita Yon’ei, “Chōsen ni okeru kōshō seido no jisshi” in *Chōsenjin josei ga mita “ianfu mondai”* (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1992), p. 129. Yamashita goes on to say that one only needs to look at how the “mother of the nation at war” (*gunkoku no haha*) and “comfort women” (*ianfu*) could coexist without apparent contradiction during the 1940s (with tragic and brutal result).

unblemished by modernity,” in the words of E. Taylor Atkins,<sup>65</sup> she had to be purged of all problematic associations with prostitution – hence, perhaps, the insistence in the *Modan Nihon* photo montage that a kisaeng can also be “domestic.” What I find illuminating is that the Korean women in the round-table flatly reject this attempt at domesticating the kisaeng – the privileged domestic sphere is only to be claimed by the educated and economically secure.

After the talk on kisaeng, the reporter turns the conversation to marriage and love, asking the women about their thoughts concerning “problems of love and problems of marriage.”

Cho Yōngsuk: These days, the advice columns in the living section of the newspapers are all about divorces. It’s all the fault of Korea’s early marriage culture. All those uneducated woman from the country end up in tears from the cruel treatment of men. (...)

Reporter: So, does that mean you all hate men? I apologize for being so forward, but do you intend to not become romantically involved (*ren’ai shinai*) with anyone?

Han Yōnghŭi: Because of Korea’s obstinate customs up until now, romantic love (*ren’ai*) was not permitted.

In a few casual lines, the student Cho Yōngsuk is able to move blithely from a disclosure of her class privilege (the ability to buy and read newspapers on a regular basis) to a generalization of “Korean” culture to a particularization of “uneducated women from the country.” When the reporter links marriage to the loaded word “romantic love” (*ren’ai*), the thread is promptly picked up by Han Yōnghŭi, who completes the tautological circle by connecting *ren’ai* back to “Korean” customs.<sup>66</sup> In the process the issue of class is neatly and

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<sup>65</sup> E. Taylor Atkins, *Primitive Selves: Koreana in the Japanese Colonial Gaze, 1910-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), p. 184.

<sup>66</sup> *Yōnae* in Korean. Although the word has its modern origins in China, when the missionary W.H. Medhurst translated “love” as 恋愛 in his English-Chinese dictionary in 1847, the word was introduced and popularized in colonial Korea through Japan, along with new discourses on individualism, selfhood, and subjectivity. Kwon Boduerae emphasizes the potentially revolutionary appeal of *yōnae* for the young, urban, educated generation in the late 1910s and early 1920s; because *yōnae* “declared its existence for its own sake beyond the planning of family and state . . . it led social change at the micro-level, for which the reconstruction of family played a critical role” (p. 205). However, after the 1920s *yōnae* was normalized and absorbed into an “individual goal of happiness” (p. 205)



quietly expelled – there is no need any more for the women to address their own position vis-à-vis the lower class because “class” has been superseded by “Korea,” which has itself been superseded by the “universal” (read: Japanese) categories of love and marriage – categories, it must be noted, that were introduced into the conversation by the male *Modan Nihon* reporter, and not the women themselves. One might argue that the reporter, like the women, cannot speak as an individual but as a representative (in this case, for *Modan Nihon* and its imagined readership). The difference between the reporter and the women, however, is that the former has access to the means and methods of narration because of his position within the publishing company, while the latter do not.

Who is allowed to cross colonial borders, who is allowed to come back? For what purpose do they travel, and how are the products of their travel – in the sense of *commodities*, such as literary works or journal articles, and also in the sense of *results* – packaged and sold? If we can learn anything from the contents of *Modan Nihon*, it is that “border crossings” may take place on a number of points by a wide variety of actors, but not equally and not with the same benefits. It would be easy, I can imagine, to retrospectively damn the eight women from the *zadankai* as “pro-Japanese collaborators” for their contributions to the journal, or the *kisaeng* Yun Tansim for her very appearance in it. And yet, what does it mean to draw a battlefield line between “collaboration” and “resistance” when the two sides they represent – “Japan” vs. “Korea” – have no coherent unity within themselves?

The “Korean boom,” such as it was, was enacted by Japanese publishers who attempted to represent Korea as part of Japan and yet also apart from it – a commodity to be consumed by the metropole, but never to be made equal to it. As we have seen, however, Korean subjects who

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that did not stand in opposition to the state. See Kwon Bodurae, “The Paradoxical Structure of Modern ‘Love’ in Korea: *Yeonae* and Its Possibilities” in *Korea Journal* 45:3 (Autumn 2005), pp. 185-208.

chose to participate in the boom could either embrace or repudiate the category of *Korean* depending on the target audience and topic. At the same time, the format of the magazine itself – a special issue devoted to Korea – would ensure that the constructed difference between “Korean” and “Japanese” would remain firmly in place as the ultimate metanarrative. This would also hold true in the case of Korean literature written in Japanese. I turn now to Kim Saryang and the gendered politics of *kokugo* (national language) in order to demonstrate not only the ways in which a colonial subject could manipulate the metanarrative of “Korean” vs. “Japanese” but also how, in doing so, he might perversely make himself complicit in the erasure of other narratives and voices.

#### **“HIKARI NO NAKA NI”: ON THE MATERIALITY OF MOTHERHOOD**

Kim Saryang published “Hikari no naka ni” in the coterie journal *Bungei shuto* (Literary Capital) in October 1939, while he was still a student at Tokyo Imperial University. The editor’s notes at the back of the issue include the following comment: “While Mr. Kim Saryang is a writer from the peninsula, the story expresses something magnificent – something that could in fact only come from a writer from the peninsula.” The link between Kim’s ethnicity and his writing would only be reinforced when “Hikari no naka ni” was nominated for the Akutagawa Prize in February of the following year. The judging committee at the time included such literary notables as Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), Satō Haruo (1892–1964), Kume Masao (1891–1952), and Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947). Kawabata remarked that the story dealt with major issues involving “the feelings of the minzoku,” while Satō Haruo concluded that Kim “fully weaved the tragic fate of a minzoku into his I-novel (*watakushi-shōsetsu*), making his I-novel

into a kind of social novel.”<sup>67</sup> Reactions to the Akutagawa Prize were printed in the May 1940 issue of *Shinchō* as well, with similar comments: Fujimori Seikichi (1892–1977) described “Hikari no naka ni” as a story about “minzoku issues,” while Itō Einosuke (1903–1959) praised it as “not simply literature, but deeply rooted in lived life.” Nakamura Chihei (1908–1963) in particular identified the issue at stake:

To be honest, I haven’t read any of the three stories [under discussion], but it seems like recently there are quite a number of writers from the peninsula who are prize candidates. I understand that such people are trapped in a dilemma of whether they should write stories in kokugo or in Korean – or, to put it another way, whether they should write in the literary circles (*bundan*) of the metropole or else establish themselves in Korea. I very much look forward to reading “Hikari no naka ni” in relation to these issues. (p. 92)

The framing of “Hikari no naka ni” as a tale of ethnic struggle and contested colonial identity is one that continues to this day.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, it would be hard *not* to view the story in such a light, narrated as it is by a Korean man in the language of his colonizers. The story centers around the fragile relationship between the narrator and a young boy named Yamada Haruo. We discover early on that the narrator is a student working part-time at a community co-op as a teacher of English to a group of adult students, mostly laborers at a local factory. It is at the co-op where he first meets Haruo, a child who attends the after-school daycare held in the same building. From the beginning Haruo is marked by his isolation from the other children as well as by his lower-class status. The narrator eventually learns that Haruo is a “mixed child,” the son of

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<sup>67</sup> Full comments by judges run from pp. 348-355 in the March 1940 issue of *Bungei shunjū*.

<sup>68</sup> Notably, Nam Bujin has argued that the story is a disguised critique of *sōshi kaimei*. See Nam, *Kindai bungaku no Chōsen taiken* (Bensei Shuppan, 2001). However, “Hikari no naka ni” was in fact published several months *before* *sōshi kaimei* was officially announced. Nam argues that because Kim was working as a reporter during this time, he would have been privy to information not yet available to the general public – a claim that is persuasive but ultimately almost impossible to verify. More importantly, Nam falls into the general misconception of *sōshi kaimei* as a policy that forced Koreans to adopt “Japanese” names. I will discuss *sōshi kaimei* in detail in Chapter 2, but suffice it for now to say that I would caution against confusing the government policy of *sōshi kaimei* with the general practice of *tsūmei*, where Koreans would take up Japanese-sounding names to pass as Japanese.

a Japanese man and a Korean woman. One day, Haruo's mother is brutally slashed with a knife by her husband. The narrator goes to see the mother at the hospital, only to have the mother insist that Haruo is not her son – that he is, in other words, Japanese and not Korean. Shortly afterwards, the narrator resolves to take in Haruo; the story ends with them happily walking around Ueno Park together.

“Hikari no naka ni” can be read as a kind of confession, although to whom and in what context are questions that remain unanswered to the end. To his peers and his students the narrator can “pass” as Japanese because of his language abilities, his position as a university student at the prestigious imperial university, and his use of a Japanese-sounding alias – Minami (南), the native Japanese reading of the ideograph representing his last name. In an early scene, playful dialogue is exchanged between several children and the as-of-yet unnamed narrator. “Minami-sensei! Minami-sensei!” one girl cajoles, and it is this hailing as “Minami” that triggers the narrator's confession of ethnicity. “Almost without knowing it, I came to pass as Minami within the co-op,” he states. “As you know, my surname should be read ‘Nan,’ but for a variety of reasons I was addressed in the Japanese style” (p. 4).<sup>69</sup>

In the original *Bungei shuto* version, the readings for both the narrator's “Japanese-style” name (Minami) and his Korean one (Nan) are consistently glossed in katakana. Here, the *material* text of the story is placed squarely within the narrator's epistemological authority: although the children themselves may think of the narrator as native Japanese, the use of katakana for Minami as well as for Nan carefully orients the reader to the gap between the colonizer's monological call and the colonial subject's deliberately dialogic response. This gap between call and answer is further widened in the structure of the narration itself. Although the

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<sup>69</sup> All quotations taken from the *Bungei shuto* text. Translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

narrator describes how the children addressed him as “Minami,” he deletes his direct response from the text. The result is a kind of non-answer, an acknowledgement of the call but also a refusal to answer it on its own terms. The narrator’s “true” Korean identity is set starkly apart from his situational Japanese performances, and the narrator’s name made foreign to the Japanese language.

In the *Bungei shunjū* version published some six months later, all of the name readings have been changed into the native *hiragana* script. Furthermore, when the children call out to the narrator, only the first Minami is glossed. Having established that reading, the text then incorporates the second Minami into the linguistic landscape of Japanese and the epistemological standpoint of the (Japanese) *reader*. It may be argued that this small but telling change transforms the narrator’s internal struggles from an “either/or” choice – either Japanese or Korean – into an “and/or” dilemma of “Korean and/or imperial subject” where the term *imperial subject* takes on an unmovable and unquestionable totality. The postulation of a Korean ethnicity is made nonthreatening because the category of *imperial subject* is able to supersede ethnicity, render it subordinate to and contained by the borders of empire.

It is important to note that in both versions, the narrator’s Korean name is given phonetically as *Nan*. This is almost, but *not quite*, the way it would be pronounced in Korean: *Nam*.<sup>70</sup> There’s a slippage here in the Japanese, one that goes unacknowledged. Questions of audience are also raised with the phrase “as you know” (*gozonji no yō ni*). Who is “you”? The passage implies a “you” who knows the narrator as *Nan* and not *Minami*, but also someone who can understand Japanese. While one might assume this points to a Korean listener/reader like the

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<sup>70</sup> In hangŭl: 남. The Chinese character is 南.

narrator, the fact that the narrator is unable to even gesture to the textual presence of another language in his confession of his “true” name suggests otherwise.

One might recall here Satō Haruo’s classification of “Hikari no naka ni” as an I-novel that is also a kind of a social novel – but not, significantly, the other way around. As Tomi Suzuki argues, the I-novel meta-narrative was often characterized as a direct, factual expression of the author’s own lived experience.<sup>71</sup> Only by ignoring or excising the dialogic marks of the foreign from the text can the narrator’s confession take on the so-called transparent quality associated with I-novel discourse. In other words, one must “forget,” in a way, the materiality of the text (as *text*) and the politically fraught conditions of its production. The categorization of Kim’s story as an I-novel comes with it the assumption that the Japanese language, for the Japanese reader, is able to become a mere medium for accessing the unvarnished truth of a confession. The slogan *naisen ittai* is here effected in all of its brutal force: Japan and Korea have indeed become one, but not equally; Korea, and all things Korean, have been cannibalized into the monolingual space of the metropole.

Both the narrator and the young Yamada Haruo are able to reassert their claim to Korean *ethnicity* (if not nationality) by embracing the “Korean blood” that flows inside their veins, which – unlike the outer trappings of language – remains stubbornly and secretly unalterable. In the case of Haruo, Korean ethnicity is physically embodied as *haha no mono*: literally, “the mother’s things.”<sup>72</sup> Who then is Haruo’s mother? We learn the mother’s name only when the narrator goes to visit her in the hospital: Yamada Teijun (Chōngsun in the Korean reading). In both *Bungei shuto* and *Bungei shunjū*, her full name is given in ideographs (山田貞順), without

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<sup>71</sup> Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 3.

<sup>72</sup> “Hikari no naka ni,” p. 14.

a gloss. Immediately we are presented with a linguistic difficulty different from that of the narrator. Not once is the reading of her name given, nor is it ever spoken in dialogue by any of the characters. Unlike the names of the other characters, her name is material, opaque, and hybrid – the surname most likely of Japanese origin, and the first name most likely Korean, but both linguistically ambiguous and stubbornly unvoiced.

The materiality surrounding Haruo's mother is further emphasized by the representation of her speech as well as her physical body. When the narrator first meets Teijun, her face is swathed in white bandages, leaving only her mouth and nose uncovered. As with Haruo, she is identified at first not by ethnicity but by class – and more specifically, by the “shabby” nondescript clothes that she wears. Her speech is the only place where the marks of foreignness are preserved. Although she speaks in Japanese, almost every syllable betrays her as a non-native speaker; she cannot pass, unlike the narrator. The reader learns that Teijun's husband Hanbei slashed her face with a knife after finding out she had visited a Korean neighbor. The neighbor's son Ri tells the narrator that Hanbei had forbidden his wife from visiting the neighbor because she “wears Korean clothes” (p. 11). In other words, Hanbei's rage stemmed not from the fact of the neighbor's Korean ethnicity necessarily but from her material dress. His anger is manifested through another kind of material marking: physical violence enacted on his wife's body.

Teijun's true origins are a mystery. “I don't think she's Korean,” the Korean doctor muses to the narrator at one point. “The way she speaks and the characters of her name (*jizura*)<sup>73</sup> struck me as odd, so I tried asking her in Korean how she got hurt, but she refuses to answer. All she says is ‘I fell down’ in Japanese” (p. 20). If the narrator is presented with an “and/or” crisis of identity, the mother in contrast seems to be faced with “neither/nor”: neither wholly Korean

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<sup>73</sup> *Jizura* (字面) combines the characters “word/character” with “face/surface.” It is commonly used to refer to the appearance of written letters. Kim Saryang's choice to use this word, which conflates writing with appearances/faces, is highly suggestive in this passage.

nor wholly Japanese, a strange and tragic figure marked by a negative hybridity. Although Teijun eventually admits to the narrator that she is a Korean *woman*, she refuses to acknowledge her identity as a Korean *mother* to Haruo. “Haruo is Japanese (*naichijin*),” she insists. “That child is not my child” (p. 22). The scene has no resolution; one never finds out if Teijun recovers from her wounds, or if she comes to a reconciliation with her son. Instead, the narrative shifts once again to the relationship between the narrator and Haruo, and it is there that the story ends.

“Hikari no naka ni” has attracted much critical attention for its optimistic but also uncertain ending. The narrator and Haruo go to Ueno together in order to browse the department stores and stroll around the park. Looking at the boy, the narrator remarks to himself, “I couldn’t help but be strangely overjoyed at the thought of little Haruo now surrounded by everyone (*subete no hitobito*)” (p. 26). On the one hand, the ending may be read as a nod to *naisen ittai*, where two ethnic misfits are able to overcome their identity crisis by participating in the highly ordered consumer space of Japanese modernity: the department store, the public park.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, as Jonathan Glade has pointed out, in this scene Haruo and the narrator in fact do not engage in any true social interaction.<sup>75</sup> Although they wander around Ueno Park, they speak with no one but Ri. There are no Japanese people to be found, no Japanese overheard. It may be argued that Haruo and the narrator have created an alternative space for themselves, one that does not resist the colonizing space so much as manipulate it for their own ends. Such a space must necessarily be a fragile one; it is only in silence, and in isolation, that the potential for the alternative can survive.

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<sup>74</sup> This reading is supported by the appearance of Ri (Korean: Yi), the son of Teijun’s Korean neighbor and a laborer who had previously appeared in the text as a voice of ethnic rebellion and pride. By the end of the story, however, he has been transformed completely into a nonthreatening subject with the purchase of his taxi, which allows him to make a living in the metropole as a contributing member of (Japanese) society.

<sup>75</sup> Glade, “Assimilation Through Resistance: Language and Ethnicity in Kim Saryang’s ‘Hikari no naka ni’” in *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 29 (2007), pp. 41-55.



What both of these readings do not take into account, however, is once again the figure of the *mother*.<sup>76</sup> The alternative space created by Haruo and the narrator is a distinctly male and homosocial one. Although the narrative hints at Haruo's acceptance of his ethnicity, associated with the maternal (*haha no mono*), this is not the same thing as his acceptance of his *mother* (*haha sono mono*). The narrator's decision to take in Haruo is especially significant in this light. In replacing Haruo's mother as both a caretaker and a Korean ethnic subject with whom Haruo can identify, the narrator is able to take on those positive aspects of the maternal *without* taking on the negative aspects of the mother. The mother's unnatural and uncanny hybridity, the materiality of her violence-scarred body, her precarious position as a lower-class and uneducated ethnic female – all these have been purged from the final pages of the narrative, allowing the male narrator and the male child to emerge whole, untouched, and pure.

### **TOKIEDA MOTOKI, KIM SARYANG, AND THE POLITICS OF KOKUGO USE**

In Chapter 2, I will fully explore the ways in which the ideology of kokugo shaped late colonial discourse on Japanese-language “Korean literature.” Here I would like to set the stage to my arguments by introducing the theories of Tokieda Motoki (1900–1967), considered by many as one of the most influential Japanese linguists of the twentieth century. Tokieda matriculated in 1925 at Tokyo Imperial University's prestigious National Language Research Program (Kokugo kenkyūshitsu), which had been established in 1897 by the linguist Ueda Kazutoshi, the leading architect of national language policy during the Meiji period. Two years after graduating Tokieda found employment as a professor of kokugo (i.e. Japanese) at Keijō Imperial University and

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<sup>76</sup> One rare exception is Itoi Azusa's short article “Kim Saryang ‘Hikari no naka ni’ ron: jūso suru sai” in *Aoyama gobun* 35 (March 2005), 71-81. Itoi cogently critiques those analyses that reduce the story into *only* a story about the minzoku writ large. By focusing solely on the relationship between the narrator and Yamada Haruo, one forgets about “the mother's suffering, hidden in the shadows of the mixed-blood child issue” (p. 75). Her reading focuses heavily on the relationship between the narrator and Teijun, rather than on Teijun herself.

remained there until 1943, when he succeeded Hashimoto Shinkichi (1882–1945) as professor of Japanese at Tokyo Imperial University. It is while at Keijō Imperial University that he formulated his famous language-as-process theory, or *genko katei setsu*, elaborated in his 1941 treatise *Kokugogaku genron* (Principles of National Language Studies).<sup>77</sup> In it, Tokieda rejected European – that is, Saussurean – structural linguistics in favor of a dynamic system of language analysis, one in which the agency of the *shutai*, or discursive subject, is emphasized.

Tokieda was praised then and now for breaking away from Eurocentric models of linguistics; by the 1980s, his language-as-process theory was frequently taken up by literary scholars seeking a model of narratology seemingly more appropriate to Japanese language and literature.<sup>78</sup> And yet, as both Tomiko Yoda and Yasuda Toshiaki point out, his linguistic formulations privileged the Japanese *national* subject while failing to acknowledge the conundrum of the *colonial* speaker of Japanese. After mentioning a 1942 essay by Tokieda on the dissemination of Japanese in Korea, Yoda writes:

Japanese language construed as an open-ended horizon that ultimately merges with universality and the kokugogaku defined by its mission of uncovering the essence and beauty of the language, therefore, were in accordance with the expansionist logic of Japanese imperialism and its agenda of producing imperial subjects out of colonial populations. This compatibility with the project of Japanese imperialism highlights the universalistic scope and ambitions that subtended Tokieda's theory.<sup>79</sup>

The essay referred to by Yoda is Tokieda's "Chōsen ni okeru kokugo seisaku oyobi kokugo kyōiku no shōrai" (Kokugo Policies in Korea and the Future of Kokugo Education),

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<sup>77</sup> Tokieda Motoki, *Kokugogaku genron* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941).

<sup>78</sup> See Tomiko Yoda, *Gender and National Literature: Heian Texts in the Construction of Japanese Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 150-1. Yasuda Toshiaki writes extensively about Tokieda in *Shokuminchi no naka no "kokugogaku"* (Tokyo: Sangensha, 1998) and *Teikoku Nihon no genko hensei* (Yokohama: Seori Shobō, 1997).

<sup>79</sup> Yoda, *Gender and National Literature*, p. 162.

which was published in the Tokyo-based scholarly journal *Nihongo* in 1942.<sup>80</sup> In this essay, Tokieda argues for the necessity of creating a monolingual (which is to say, a Japanese) environment in Korea as in all parts of the Japanese empire. He locates the key to achieving this transformation in the Korean mother. He writes:

As indicated in the word *mother tongue*, the first and primary educator of language is the mother, and language is born from her. ... (T)he most important priority is to think about the kokugo education of the women on the peninsula who will be the mothers of the future. (p. 62)

And then, a little further in the essay:

Grasping the Japanese spirit through kokugo, promoting kōminka through kokugo – these all come afterwards. What must come first, more than anything, is the nativization (*bogoka*) of kokugo. (p. 63)

While I will examine Tokieda's quotes in relation to kōminka in detail later in this section, what I wish to point out for the moment is the fact that the mother, here, is nowhere to be found. The colonial mother is for Tokieda an abstraction of the future – a deferral. She is a tool for the education of her children and the means, rather than the object, of kōminka. What agency is she afforded in this master plan? What kind of subjectivity? Where, indeed, *is she*?

It is with these questions in mind that I wish to re-consider Kim Saryang's "Hikari no naka ni." In the essay "Chōsen ni okeru kokugo seisaku oyobi kokugo kyōiku no shōrai," Tokieda argues that a bilingual environment will inevitably lead to a linguistic rupture in the discursive subject. By creating a home environment of kokugo, however, the colonial subject can

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<sup>80</sup> *Nihongo* 2:2 (August 1942), pp. 61-63.

be transformed into a linguistically pure and whole imperial subject.<sup>81</sup> The word “mother tongue” (*bogo*), after all, pivots around the word *mother*, and the mother’s role in passing on language to her children. Thus Tokieda advocates the education of women and the creation of a private, familial space in which subjects encounter kokugo not simply in textbooks but in daily life. Only with the complete nativization of kokugo, Tokieda suggests, will the Korean discursive subject be able to achieve parity with his Japanese peer.

Here, I use the pronoun *his* very deliberately. For gender is the silent aporia haunting Tokieda’s arguments, marking its presence by the very means of its displacement. As Tomiko Yoda cogently points out:

The burden of history falls on the maternal figure split between her own mother tongue (Korean) and the mother tongue (Japanese) that she is to impart to her child. The happy unity and fullness that Tokieda ascribed to the imperial linguistic subject, therefore, would stand on the shoulders of the self-divided maternal. Where would we locate the enjoyment of this maternal subject, who is at once identified with the abject bilingualism of the colonial linguistic condition and with her role of eradicating it?<sup>82</sup>

This fundamental contradiction is never resolved in Tokieda’s writing – but, I would argue, it is not because it cannot be. The self-divided maternal *must* be self-divided in order for the male discursive subject to emerge unruptured and whole. I use the word “male” here because it is difficult to imagine a time or place where “women” may emerge as potential discursive

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<sup>81</sup> Tokieda writes: “Words are a form of expression (*hyōgen keishiki*) that makes humans into subjects . . . Kokugo policy is therefore policy aimed at the acts of humans who are discursive subjects (*genjo shutai*), and not one aimed at ‘things’ (*mono*)” (p. 55). Here one may link Tokieda’s preoccupation with *acts* vs. *things* back to his language-as-process theory and his emphasis on the social and performative process of discourse rather than the static attributes of semantics. It is the discursive subject’s intentionality, his ability to marshal a communicative utterance within and against the signifying space of the “situated place” (*bamen*), which is important.

He goes on to write, “Words cannot exist apart from human acts. When it does not control all kinds of oral transmission (*denshō*) and practice (*jissen*) but is instead left to the discursive subject’s arbitrariness, language itself will rupture and be thrown into disorder, and will be unable to achieve the mission (*shimei*) that words hold” (p. 56). Since discourse is not a method or tool for describing objects but the very process by which those objects are signified and perceived as such, a bilingual environment would inevitably lead, in Tokieda’s opinion, to the bifurcated subject. Language education is thus crucial in preventing this type of rupture.

<sup>82</sup> Yoda, *Gender and National Literature*, pp. 178-9.

subjects on their own terms, rather than as potential mediums for the creation of them. In Tokieda's essay the category of "women" is inextricably tied to the maternal (as witnessed in the essay's subtitle "women's education," which is taken to mean "mother's education") and the maternal inextricably tied to the Korean language. Even if many generations were to pass, fulfilling the promise of a unified linguistic environment on the peninsula, women *as mothers* would still be charged with the task of continuing kokugo's heritage. But it is this very process – this constant need to impart, to teach, to shore up the imperial language against the threat of its disintegration by other forces – that perversely reveals the fictional and provisional nature of kokugo itself.

While Tokieda's essay ends without addressing this conundrum of the mother, in "Hikari no naka ni" we may catch a glimpse of what happens when one follows Tokieda's proposal to its logical conclusion: abjection. If abjection is "something rejected from which one does not part," as Julia Kristeva describes it, in Tokieda's formulation the male child must abject his mother, repudiating the process of kokugo acquisition that constitutes him as a discursive subject.<sup>83</sup> The mother is not a subject nor is she an object – she is an abject. Haruo tries to repudiate his mother and, as an extension, the uncanny hybridity she embodies. At the same time, there is another kind of abjection taking place simultaneously: the abjection of the mother *from herself*. When Teijun insists that Haruo is not her son, it is as a Korean *woman* repudiating her identity as a Korean *mother*, even as the language in which she rejects cannot help but be inscribed by its foreignness. The mother is presented to us as a hermetic paradox, an ouroboros without beginning or end: that which contains and is contained by its own body.

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<sup>83</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 4.

This is where I believe we can locate the key mechanism that allows the mother to be forgotten or erased from critical (re)readings of this text. As we saw with Tokieda, onto the figure of the mother is cast the burden of active assimilation. She thus embodies the process of *kōminka*, but never its completion; the completion is instead deferred onto her children. But if *kōminka* is to fulfill its total and uncompromising promise of assimilation, then even the memory of its process must be banished, lest it come back to haunt the borders of a supposed imperial wholeness. Hence the move to displace the process of *kōminka* onto the mother – in the case of this story, on her speech and even physically on her body – as the mother can then be thrust to the periphery, allowing the male protagonists to emerge scar-free.

At the same time, it is precisely this displacement that *also* allows “Hikari no naka ni” to be read as a story of anti-imperial resistance. For in order for the narrator or Haruo to stand in unproblematically as a representative of the “Korean people,” the fissured relations of gender, class, and ethnicity must be suppressed. Only when the memory of the mother is banished, and with it the violent and sometimes conflicting systems of colonialism that (en)gendered her, can the story seem to take on the direct, transparent illusion of an I-novel or, on the other end of the spectrum, the allegorical, nationalistic quality of “resistance literature.” Only then can the unquestioned equation of discursive subject = universal = middle-class male be allowed to persist in both readings.

The abjection of the mother – which is, as we have seen, not necessarily a repudiation of the maternal, as the maternal can be represented by and through others – must be undertaken in order to enter the sanctioned space of Japanese modernity, whether as a productive imperial subject (as interpreted by the judges of the Akutagawa Prize) *or* as an anti-imperial nationalist (as often interpreted by postcolonial scholars). As an abject, the mother can never completely be

cut off or negated; she is both the genesis and the constitutive border of the male subjectivity so carefully described in “Hikari no naka ni.” She can, however, be forgotten – and so she is, in the text itself and in the analyses that have followed it. It is hard to imagine an ending to “Hikari no naka ni” that could retain its cautiously optimistic tone while also retaining the memory of the self-divided mother. Hard to imagine a viable, alternative space for resistance – whatever that may mean – that does not erase the gender and class differences *within* the seemingly monolithic category of “minzoku.”

Many contemporary scholars have rightly pointed out that Kim Saryang felt conflicted about his Akutagawa nomination, often pointing to Kim’s “Haha e no tegami” (Letter to My Mother, April 1940) as proof. In this personal essay, written in epistolary style and published in *Bungei shuto*, Kim laments that his story is a “lie.” While I agree that “Haha e no tegami” is a document that provides valuable insight into the dilemma of representation experienced by the colonial writer,<sup>84</sup> I cannot help but wonder if, in privileging the contents of the essay over its form, we end up dangerously mimicking the Akutagawa Prize judges all over again. That is, in privileging “Haha e no tegami” as a direct window into the “truth” of Kim’s thoughts, we forget once again to listen to the dialogic voices of other people, other discourses at play in the text.

One might point out, for example, the significance of the title: Kim uses the word *haha*, which denotes one’s relationship to one’s mother in terms of a third party referent – thus raising from the very beginning questions of readership and reception. The third party here may be interpreted to be the Japanese readership of *Bungei shuto*, where “Haha e no tegami” was first printed. At the same time, the format of the essay points to another crucial reader, the mother to whom the essay is addressed: *aisuru hahae-sama*, or “my honored mother whom I love.” At the

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<sup>84</sup> Nayoung Aimee Kwon discusses Kim Saryang’s colonial “conundrum of representation” at length in her dissertation. See “Translated Encounters and Empires,” particularly Chapter 2.

end of the essay, Kim asks his mother to “please have someone translate this Japanese (*naichigo*) letter [into Korean].”<sup>85</sup> Here, again, we have a Japanese-language text that is enabled by and dedicated to a mother, and yet also one that does not – or cannot – speak directly to the mother herself. Where is Kim’s mother? If she replied, it was never recorded; if she spoke, it would have been in Korean, that unmentionable abject language that nevertheless continues to trouble the borders of Kim’s assured Japanese prose – maternal, material, and very much alive.

In pointing out the gendered assumptions encoded in “Hikari no naka ni,” I do not mean to simply recover the mother, or remember her. These things are important, but equally important is to ask ourselves why we lost sight of her in the first place – how and why this forgetting was made possible. We may only encounter the mother as a peripheral figure, a voice who can only be heard through the voices of the male subjects who alternatively adore and abject her. She may be a transitional character, an afterthought, a sounding board. But even if not seen, she is central – a place of origin as well as the site of that origin’s violent disavowal. What happens afterwards, when the mother is erased entirely from the text, is a subject I will now take up with “Tenma” (June 1940), which is frequently paired with “Hikari no naka ni” in contemporary scholarship as “canonical” Japanese-language literature by Kim.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Quotation taken from *Kim Saryang zenshū* vol. 4 ed. Kim Saryang zenshū henshū iinkai (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 1973), p. 107.

<sup>86</sup> “Tenma” has several meanings, including the following: the mythological figure of Pegasus; the horse that Tentei, the God of Providence, rides to heaven; and a swift, exceptional steed. The word refers to the story’s protagonist, a Korean man named Genryū whose shifting, malleable personality straddles a bewildering array of identities. While this story’s title is commonly translated as “Pegasus,” in this dissertation I refer to the original Japanese title in order to preserve the plurality of denotations/connotations. A complete English translation of the story (translated by this author) may be found online through the University of Chicago, [http://ceas.uchicago.edu/japanese/Sibley\\_Translation\\_Project.shtml](http://ceas.uchicago.edu/japanese/Sibley_Translation_Project.shtml) (June 2011). It is also featured in the short story collection *Rat Fire: Korean Stories of Japanese Empire* (Cornell East Asia Series, forthcoming).



## ON “TENMA”

Some four months after receiving the nomination for the Akutagawa Prize, Kim published “Tenma” in Kikuchi Kan’s *Bungei shunjū*. Many scholars have pointed out the parallels between characters in the story and real-life figures; Kim Yunjik and Nam Bujin, for example, have identified Kim Munjip (1907–?) as the model for the protagonist Genryū, while Nayoung Aimee Kwon points out a (self) parody that “includes the author himself sharing the conundrum of bilingual writers in a colonial context.”<sup>87</sup> Kwon’s point is especially well taken when read against the Akutagawa Prize comments (previously mentioned) and the editor’s notes at the end of the June 1940 *Bungei shunjū* issue, which mention again and again “the Incident” and the escalation of war with China. But rather than getting bogged down in investigations on precedent and origin, which can often lead one down a rabbit’s hole of conjecture without end, here I wish to highlight Kim’s use of parody and satire against a consideration of *kōminka* discourse.

“Tenma” follows the self-deluded Genryū (玄龍)<sup>88</sup> as he blusters and brags his way through Keijō (present-day Seoul), asserting himself as a renowned writer to everyone he meets. The reader learns in a flashback that while Genryū did in fact build up something of a name for himself in the years he lived in Tokyo, his so-called literary career started out as just that – a name, and only a name. Denied lodgings again and again “first for his (Korean) face, and then for the tattered trousers he came in,” Genryū suddenly hits upon the idea of lying about his

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<sup>87</sup> Kwon, “Translated Encounters and Empires,” pp. 84-5. It is commonly agreed that the character Ōmura was based in part on the leading member of *Ryokki*, Tsuda Tsuyoshi; and that the character Tsunoi is based on Karashima Takeshi, who was the principal of a vocational school in Keijō. Bun Sogyoku is said to have been based on the real-life poetess Ro Tenmei (in Korean: No Chōnmyōng).

<sup>88</sup> Korean: Hyōllyong. His name is ambiguous; it is possible that Gen (Hyōn) is his surname, or that Genryū (Hyōllyong) is his first name or a literary penname.

origins.<sup>89</sup> He begins calling himself not only the son of a noble family but also a first-class writer well known in Korean literary circles; over the next decade, the illusion grows so powerful that by the time Genryū returns to Keijō, he has thoroughly convinced himself of its veracity.

It is in Korea that Genryū begins writing compositions and publishing them in lowbrow magazines, thus materializing fantasy into a semblance of reality. At first glance, the fact that Genryū finds himself able to write in Korea and not Japan seems to vindicate the logic of *kōminka*, wherein categories of identity (loyal imperial subject, dutiful member of the empire) are articulated by the colonizing country and produced in the colonized territory. Within this context, the construction of identity is paradoxically enabled by the forcible *deconstruction* of national borders. The vocabulary used by the Japanese government to describe the asymmetrical relationship between metropole and colony further emphasizes the process of identity formation: theoretically, the qualities of the metropole radiate outwards toward the periphery, in perhaps the same way the human mind dictates the actions of the body.<sup>90</sup> The trope of the body finds further expression in the words *naisen ittai*, mentioned in the text on page 377. The catchphrase locates Japan and Korea within an unequal but unifying relationship not unlike “a male holding out his hand in marriage to a female Korea” (p. 377).

On the other hand, Genryū’s mental instability, his anguish and terror, confirm that any “identity” achieved through this violent unification is in constant threat of breaking down.

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<sup>89</sup> Quotations from the original *Bungei shunjū* text, p. 364.

<sup>90</sup> For further analysis of the *naichi / gaichi* issue and an exploration of various racial stereotypes of Koreans by the Japanese, see Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 397-423. The binary of Japan/Korea was often expressed as *naichi/Chōsen*, as in the phrase *naisen ittai*. This fact is significant, as it effectively symbolizes the paradox of *kōminka*: because *naichi* has no distinct borders, existing only relationally to and apart from some posited Other, the true “merging” of *naichi* with *Chōsen* would have to mean the erasure of *naichi* as a discursive term entirely.

Although Leo Ching describes *kōminka* as “not a process of becoming, but a state of being,”<sup>91</sup> I would argue that it may be more accurately defined as a *state of becoming* – that is, a perpetual performance in which the material effects of one’s difference become perversely re-signified through (not despite) one’s efforts to overcome them. These differences are physically inscribed onto the body in “Tenma”; Genryū is unable to hide the truth of his ethnicity because “his body build and physiognomy are unmistakably that of a Korean.”<sup>92</sup> Although the passage may seem like a simple declaration of racial disparity on the surface, contextualizing it against *kōminka* discourse helps uncover an oblique critique of Japan’s imperial policies. The rhetoric of *naisen ittai* collapses into meaninglessness when brought up against the insuperable barrier of the distinct body; the metropole’s attempt to imprint itself onto the colony meets with failure at every turn.

The text’s description of how Genryū once pursued Akiko, the sister of an acquaintance named Tanaka, further demonstrates the problematic contradictions of colonial reality. The narrator remarks:

Earlier that evening, Tanaka had told Tsunoī about all the trouble Genryū had given Akiko – such as how Genryū liked to time it so he visited her when Tanaka wasn’t there, even changing into Tanaka’s padded kimono and stationing himself at his desk. When the man in question returned, Genryū would say things like “Now, isn’t this a surprise,” with the air of someone greeting a guest. There was also one evening where Tanaka bumped into Genryū on the street and was completely extorted out of all the cash he had on him because “something serious had come up.” Later that evening, however, Tanaka returned home to find that Genryū had bought a heap of apples and cream puffs and was forcing Akiko to eat them, laughing delightedly with a *kikiki* as he did so. (pp. 373-4)

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<sup>91</sup> Ching, *Becoming “Japanese,”* p. 118.

<sup>92</sup> Kim, “Tenma,” p. 364.

Genryū puts on Tanaka's clothes in the same way he "puts on" the act of writer and noble son, attempting to become master of the house through a performance that is both material (the wearing of clothes) and linguistic ("Now, isn't this a surprise"). It is important to note here that the Japanese phrase used for "as if he owned the place" is *shujingao de*, which may be transliterated as "with the face of the household head" or "with the face of the master." The use of the word is significant because it echoes the vocabulary of the body seen in previous passages and emphasizes the mimetic quality of Genryū's performances. But just as the human body repels projections of sameness, the human face also resists reproduction with its physical individuality. The more Genryū tries to portray himself as a Japanese man, the more he slides into grotesque parody; the more he tries to act as an assimilated Japanese subject, the more his actions become threatening to the colonizer. The absurdity of Genryū's performance reaches its penultimate moment in his encounter with Tanaka at the Japanese man's home; there, the difference between real and imitation manifests itself through a literal face-to-face confrontation.

The danger of viewing Genryū as a mere caricature, however, is that one risks falling into the trap of gazing at him with the eyes of the colonizer. One may easily forget, for example, that this particular story of Genryū's pursuit of Akiko is in fact told through the perspective of Tsunoi, a Japanese scholar who delights in "using academic-sounding words to spout off slander against Koreans" (p. 81). When reconsidered through the eyes of the colonial subject, it becomes possible to interpret the face-to-face encounter between Genryū and Tanaka as a critical moment of contestation. Boundaries of metropole and periphery collapse: the periphery is no longer outside but literally *within* the metropole, the displacing colonizer himself displaced by the product of his imperial project. Although this moment of reverse displacement is fleeting, terminated with Genryū's deportation back to Korea, perhaps the significance of the act lies not

in its duration but in the way it shifts power to the dispossessed body *through the very means of its dispossession*. A returned gaze does not reflect the image of the colonizer, it distorts it; the reiteration of imperialistic discourse by the colonized subject does not reinforce its legitimacy, it calls it into question.<sup>93</sup>

And yet, what to make of the fact that this contest of wills is conducted over the silent and unseen body of a young, upper-class Japanese woman? Akiko, the narrator recalls, was “a student at a women’s college in Tokyo” when Genryū first met her.

Genryū had loved Akiko with a burning passion, but his feelings were not only discouraged but in fact actively scorned by Akiko and Tanaka both . . . His claim that he was a brilliant Korean nobleman had not the slightest effect.

On his way home one day after yet another rebuff, he ended up spending the night at the house of a serving girl he knew. Earlier that day, he had deliberately visited Akiko while Tanaka was out of the house, but had failed to overcome her by force as planned. That night he took his anger out on the serving girl, slashing at her with a knife. For that he was deported from the metropole. (pp. 370-1)

I find it significant that Genryū’s thwarted desire is displaced onto the body of another female – but one who is unnamed in the narrative and marked not by ethnicity but by class. Complicated inversions are at work: the power dynamics of ethnicity works to (en)gender the Korean Genryū as an emasculated figure when faced with the Japanese Akiko, leading him to reassert his masculinity through class parity with the serving girl, whose ethnicity is unstated. The hegemonic power of the imperial state intervenes, however, leading to the eventual reinstatement of Genryū to the place and position where he started: in colonial Korea, as a lower-class,

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<sup>93</sup> The exchanges that take place between Genryū and the visiting Japanese men later in the story are illuminating in this regard. In the bar in Keijō, Tsunoi decries that Koreans “were all cowardly and warped from birth, and were furthermore members of a shameless, factious race” (p. 374). Genryū later faithfully repeats Tsunoi’s statement, stating that Koreans are “sneaky and cowardly, so they break up into factions and try to tear down anyone who’s better than them” (p. 375). The delicate irony of the situation is that while the Japanese men take this reiteration as validation of their opinions about Koreans, Genryū’s words stem not from any observation of reality but from a desire for equality. The narrator reveals that “whenever Genryū found himself in the company of Japanese people, a certain base instinct made him unable to stop heaping curses on his fellow Koreans – only by doing so, he believed, could he talk equally with the Japanese”(p. 375).

ethnically Korean colonial male. In a way, he could be the shadow twin of Hanbei in “Hikari no naka ni,” whose lower-class status and ethnically ambiguous identity manifest themselves as scars of violence on a woman’s body.

Incidentally, a shadow twin of Akiko also exists in “Tenma.” Early in the story we are introduced to Bun Sogyoku (文素玉; Mun So-ok in the Korean reading), whose appellation of “poetess” is used to great ironic effect, much as the epithet of “writer” is attached ironically to Genryū’s name. Like Akiko, Bun Sogyoku also pursues higher education in Tokyo, and she too becomes the object of Genryū’s desire. Considering the amount of capital and connections necessary for a young Korean woman to attend school in Tokyo, we may also safely assume that Bun Sogyoku comes from an upper-class family as well. Unlike Akiko, however, Bun Sogyoku falls firmly in the register of satire – a self-deluded, would-be poetess whose meager output consists of “a handful of derivative poems heavily borrowing from Rimbaud” (p. 359). Like the fervent generation of “new women” who came before her, Bun Sogyoku vows to fight feudalism wherever she finds it, but ends up falling “into a life of immorality” instead.

This is also a key difference from Akiko, whose chastity is seen as something to be defended against Genryū and his ilk. Because of her sexual activities, Bun Sogyoku is shut out of the privileged halls of *ryōsai kenbo* and Korean nationalism both.<sup>94</sup> On the one hand, Bun Sogyoku’s sexuality fits neither the sanctioned role of the mother, whom Tokieda described as the key to building a unified Japanese empire, nor the state-regulated role of the prostitute. On the other hand, her sexuality also transgresses the patriarchal logic of nationalism, which

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<sup>94</sup> The corresponding Korean phrase is *hyōnmo yangchō*, or “wise mother, good wife” (賢母良妻). Kim Puja argues that the Chinese characters were ordered that way as a Korean nationalistic strategy: it would be the mothers who would raise their children to become fellow nationalists who would fight for liberation. However, *hyōnmo yangchō* was seized by the Government-General of Korea in the 1930s for the purposes of imperial ideology: women were now expected to be loyal *kōmin* mothers and efficient household managers. See Kim, *Shokuminchiki Chōsen*, p. 190.

“dictates that women’s sexuality is the most fundamental right and property of men.”<sup>95</sup> One should note that whereas Genryū has immediate (if problematic) access to the Japanese bundan through Tanaka, Bun Sogyoku’s status as a writer is defined through *Genryū*, whose praise of her poems is what enables her to think of herself as a “poetess.” And while Genryū’s physical qualities mark him as ethnically different from his Japanese peers, Bun Sogyoku’s body is emphatically sexualized and compartmentalized through Genryū’s soliciting gaze: her “wavy hair” (p. 359), her “disproportionately long torso, her strangely large rear” (p. 367). Genryū and Bun Sogyoku are both described in the story as the “misfortunate” children of contemporary Korean society (p. 359). But while Genryū’s parodic “repetition with a difference”<sup>96</sup> contains a strong critical edge, one directed at *and by* the parody, the ridicule of Bun Sogyoku (and the “new women” parodied through her) is monologic and one-way. The target of criticism, in other words – but never the agent who wields it.

### **THE IN-BETWEEN SPACES OF COLLABORATION, MADNESS, AND LAUGHTER**

Although his threats have lost their power by the time the narrative begins, the way in which Genryū manages to eke out a living for himself between – not within – the two poles of rejection speaks tellingly of the ambiguous double-consciousness of the collaborator. Genryū is two-faced in all senses of the word. He shifts his rhetoric according to the listener, for one; consider how he brags about his reputation in Japanese literary circles to his Korean peers, and

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<sup>95</sup> Ueno Chizuko, *Nashonarizumu to jendā*, p. 107. Quote is from the translation by Beverley Yamamoto, p. 74.

<sup>96</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 7. Hutcheon points out that parody does not necessarily have to have a critical or ridiculing intent. In the case of “Tenma,” however, the critical function of parody comes to the fore when considered against the colonial context of its production and may in this regard be described as a parodic satire. Still, emphasizing the role of parody’s “paradox,” namely that “its transgression is always authorized” (p. 26), may help explain why “Tenma” could be published so readily in *Bungei shunjū*: its transgressions could be safely contained within the genre ghetto of “colonial” literature, leaving the hegemony of “Japanese” literature ultimately untouched.

about his reputation in Korean literary circles to his Japanese acquaintances. For another, his gaze alights on the discriminatory attitude of Japanese colonists and on the declining state of Korean society alike. The instances where Genryū looks back at his ridiculers often become powerful examples of how confrontation can generate silence and guilt. When Genryū accosts a group of cooks who had previously been sneering at him, for example, “they became increasingly more flustered and looked at each other’s faces questioningly. There was no one who laughed” (p. 355); when he meets the eyes of the other customers in the seedy bar, “they clamped their mouths shut and looked the other way” (p. 369).

But Genryū’s performance as a collaborator fails to secure him a stable position of power, and his bluffs grow increasingly more empty, prompting Tsunoi to dismiss him as a clownish idiot and his Korean peers as a madman. Both labels are suggestive, not only for the mental instability they connote but also for the marginality they personify. Like the collaborator, the fool and the madman share an ability to nonplus others through their unpredictable performances, in the way they move in and out of the proscribed rules of social behavior. Genryū’s prominent use of laughter may then be regarded as the verbal manifestation of his in-between state – the cackling of the madman, the ironic self-disparagement of the fool.

In his seminal work on Dostoevsky, the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) uses the concepts of dialogism and polyphony to describe the multi-voiced nature of Dostoevsky’s novels. According to Bakhtin, linguistic tools such as stylization, irony (including the use of humor), and dialogue work to infuse a text with a dialogic discourse that is twofold in direction, “directed both toward the referential object of speech . . . and toward *another’s discourse*, toward *someone else’s speech*.”<sup>97</sup> Crucially, dialogic discourse can be found not

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<sup>97</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 185.



simply in dialogue – upon which the concept of dialogism rests – but within a single utterance, or a seemingly single style of narration. In the introduction to their seminal biography of Bakhtin, Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist describe this theory as “not a dialogic either/or, but a dialogic both/and.”<sup>98</sup> They view Bakhtin’s rejection of the either/or binary of difference in favor of a more unifying both/and logic as an ultimately positive impulse. The constant negotiation, contestation, and resignification of utterances can create narratives that, in Bakhtin’s own words, have an “extraordinary multi-sided and multi-leveled quality” that is itself the very condition of human experience.<sup>99</sup> What happens, however, when dialogic structures are glossed in the context of colonial contestation? Does Genryū’s laughter indicate an attempt to achieve a “both/and” synthesis of language, or does it signal a collapse into the “neither/nor” anarchy of failed communication?

Laughter in “Tenma” erupts among Korean and Japanese characters alike. The Korean poetess titters with an *ohoho* (p. 362); Tsunoi gives out a loud *hahaha* (p. 373); the crowds of Genryū’s imagination jeer *wahaha* (p. 381); and Genryū goes through an entire spectrum of laughs. By transcribing the actual sounds, the text imbues a phonic slipperiness into the characters’ speech. For example, *wahaha* written in hiragana marks the sound as Japanese; but the same sound spoken leaves open the question of its linguistic affiliation, since the syllables could easily be marked as Korean as well.<sup>100</sup> Genryū’s constant laughter may thus be seen as an effort to bridge the gap between Korean and Japanese, a way for him to retain the possibility of both identities without necessarily having to choose one.

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<sup>98</sup> Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 7.

<sup>99</sup> Bakhtin, *Problems*, p. 18.

<sup>100</sup> When spoken, that is, the syllables slip into the “both/and” space of わはは / 와하하.

On the other hand, the fact that the laughter in “Tenma” is often full of irony and hostility suggests that the sounds may more accurately indicate the loss of language, not its retention. To return to the analogy of the fool, Genryū is a figure whose laughs are laughed *at*; his humor is that of farce. It must be noted here that much of Genryū’s chortles proceed from his blustering performances: he says *hehehe* to the bellboy at Tanaka’s hotel (p. 357); he sniggers at the writers advocating Korean as a literary language (p. 360); he giggles with delight when feeding food to Akiko (p. 374). Furthermore, the narrator comments several times that, like a madman, Genryū “even while lying prone on his back, he did not stop his sullen laughter” (pp. 355-6) and how “the sound of his own strangled, oddly shrill laughter startled him” (p. 370). We have seen in previous sections how Genryū’s performances fail to fully achieve their desired effects. Perhaps we can link Genryū’s increasing inability to control his laughter to a commentary on the growing impossibility of reconciliation between colonial identities. The rhetoric of *kōminka* is monologic, in the end; it insists on the totality of imperial rule by orienting words like “national language” and “patriotism” to point to the metropole.

For Genryū, escape means only alienating exile – while escape is never even presented as an option for Bun Sogyoku. The reader learns at the beginning of “Tenma” that Genryū is under suspicion by the Japanese government of being a spy, and that he would have been detained in prison had Ōmura, the chief of the patriotic current affairs periodical “U. Magazine” and Genryū’s erstwhile benefactor, not intervened on his behalf. Although it’s later revealed that the case stems from a simple misunderstanding, the description of Genryū as a spy is surprisingly apt when viewed on a textual level. Like a spy, Genryū traverses national borders and assumes false identities. One of the most noticeable manifestations of this spatial in-betweenness is his ability to inhabit prohibited spaces: metropole, Tanaka’s house, the Japanese section of Keijō (*naichijin-*

*machi*). “Tenma” in fact opens with Genryū in movement, following him as he navigates his way through the back-alleys of Keijō. The streets form a formidable maze where “one loses one’s bearings in the tangle of alleys, not knowing where to turn. Thinking one might turn right, one ends up going to the left” (p. 352). That Genryū finds his way out of the maze and onto the main street of Keijō’s *naichijin-machi* attests to his ability to travel between and within different colonial spheres. His physical movement from right to left may also allude to how he navigates the space between ideological discourse and material performance, an interpretation supported by the narrator’s choice of vocabulary in his description of Genryū’s movement “back and forth (lit. ‘right go left go’) between *reality and fantasy*” (p. 370, emphasis mine).

However, if the liminal aspects of collaborator and spy allow Genryū to enjoy access to a variety of social and spatial spheres, it is that same quality that eventually leads to the threat of his imprisonment. When Ōmura suggests that Genryū retreat to a Buddhist temple in order to show penance for his actions, Genryū reacts with deep alarm. Ōmura, he complains, “told me – me! – to go to a temple and sit in Zen meditation. I understand he means well, but that’s the same as suicide to an artist!” (pp. 362-3) One reason for Genryū’s intense fear may lie in the fact that the Buddhist temple emblemizes a decisive sundering from society in its physical distance and functional difference from the urban space. Retreating into the temple walls means losing the ability to interact with anyone but the monks; it means losing the freedom of mobility. A second consequence of exile is linguistic: dialogic discourse forcibly replaced by monologic chanting. That is to say, while laughter exists *between* languages, the words of the Buddhist sutras exist *outside* them – neither Korean nor Japanese, merely empty sounds stripped of meaning for Genryū.

Like Genryū, Bun Sogyoku also has a certain freedom of movement: we find her in the smoky cafés of Koreatown, in Genryū's dingy apartment, and on the broad streets of the prosperous Japanese section of the city. It is Bun Sogyoku's active espousal of *kōminka* and the Japanese language that allows her the mobility to transcend borders. While the text makes clear that Genryū's collaborations originated from a desire to achieve parity with his Japanese (male) peers, Bun Sogyoku's motivations are unstated. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, *kōminka* measures would have had different consequences for colonial men and women due to the different gendered positions they occupied within society. For example, in the penultimate scene of "Tenma" we see Bun Sogyoku actively urging Genryū to join her in shrine (*jinja*) worship along with the rest of the city.<sup>101</sup> Participation in mass parades and shrine worship could have given a broad range of colonial women access to the public sphere in ways that transcended divisions of class and region. *Kōminka* policies were publicly endorsed by prominent public figures such as Kim Hwallan (Helen Kim), then president of Ewha Women's Professional School. She and other women reformers worked closely with the *Kokumin seishin sōdōin Chōsenren* (Korean League for the National Spirit Mobilization Movement) for the specific purpose of improving the living conditions of women in poor farming communities and promoting women's rights in general.<sup>102</sup>

Here, however, I do not want to speculate on Bun Sogyoku's motives so much as point out that they are not made to matter in the text. Denied the sanctioned role of the mother, Bun

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<sup>101</sup> The Government-General of Korea started building Shinto shrines throughout the peninsula following annexation. In 1935 it began requiring student and government employee attendance at Shinto ceremonies. In Keijō in the 1940s, public festivals and parades often culminated in a mass procession to Chōsen Jingū, the major imperial shrine in the city.

<sup>102</sup> It should be noted that Kim was later branded as a pro-Japanese collaborator by Korean nationalists precisely because of these actions. See Insook Kwon, "Feminists Navigating the Shoals of Nationalism and Collaboration: The Post-Colonial Korean Debate over How to Remember Kim Hwallan" in *Frontiers* 27:1 (2006) and Oguma Eiji, "Nihonjin," pp. 430-431.

Sogyoku is in the end delegated to the siren who lures Genryū to his doom. She leads him to a long procession of shrine worshippers, but the sight frightens him so much that he flees in the opposite direction, even as Bun Sogyoku disappears into the crowd. Wandering aimlessly down nameless streets, Genryū tries to fight against the hallucinations springing from his unsettled mind. In his fevered imagination, the repeated intonation of “Hail Lotus Sutra” rises up “like an ocean, spreading itself around him” (p. 383). The end of the story has him roaming through Keijō, desperately trying to outrun the chanting of the monks – only to find himself lost in the same tangle of narrow back-alleys he began in, as if the text itself were a linguistic maze. Once again Genryū “turns left, flees right” (p. 383) in a bustle of motion, but this time no escape presents itself to him; no house opens to take him in. Does this inability to move beyond the in-between of space signal the final collapse of both/and into neither/nor? It strikes me as significant that the last page of the story has the narrator identifying Genryū with only the ambiguous pronoun marker “he” – with even this “he” disappearing by the last four lines:

“Open up, let this Japanese (*naichijin*) in!”  
 Breaks into a run again. Bangs on the front gate.  
 “I’m not a Korean anymore! I’m Ryūnosuke, Gennoue Ryūnosuke! Let Ryūnosuke in!”  
 Somewhere the thunder was growling. (p. 384, end)

Stripped by the text of all external names, Genryū tries desperately to name himself as the “Japanese” Ryūnosuke, but his voice is instead replaced by the ominous rumble of thunder. The story ends without resolution, on a bleak suggestion that the interplay of various colonial identities may be more trap than maze – for the male colonial subject. Bun Sogyoku has been all but forgotten; her fate unknown, and unnoted.

In his analysis of “Tenma,” Nam Bujin argues that Genryū should be seen as a true “martyr” whose “misfortunes derive from his enthusiastic descent into the world of Japanese and Japanese names.”<sup>103</sup> Indeed, one can say much about how the text explicitly compares Genryū to Christ bearing the cross. I do not want to retread these issues here, especially as Nam Bujin and others have so richly covered them already. I do find it significant, however, that the metaphor of Christ on the cross once again legitimizes the figure of the *male* martyr of the nation, leaving the female body relegated to the margins and constitutive of them. For instance, it is unlikely that Kitaoka Shirō was thinking of Bun Sogyoku when, in July 1940, he summarized “Tenma” as a story about “the clash between Koreans and Japanese.”<sup>104</sup> We will see in Chapter 2 how the engendering of empire also affected debates on colonial literature and the politics of kokugo use. For now, let me end by simply stating that, even if the subaltern cannot speak, we would be wise to listen for the silences, the gaps, the absences that paradoxically herald her presence. In that silence is not negation, but abjection; not resistance, but restitution.

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<sup>103</sup> Nam, *Shokuminchi Chōsen*, p. 77. It should also be noted that Ryūnosuke, the Japanese name Genryū gives himself, immediately brings to mind the noted Japanese author Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), whose works were widely read by Korean intellectual elites during this time period. That Kim Saryang gained fame in the metropole when “Hikari no naka ni” was nominated for the *Akutagawa Prize* (named after Akutagawa Ryūnosuke) bolsters this possible connection. Akutagawa chronicled the disintegration and fragmentation of *European* literary names (and of the novelistic form itself) in late works such as *Aru ahō no isshō* (1927) and *Haguruma* (1927), opening up possible resonances with the observations I make in Chapters 3 and 4 about the I-novel form.

<sup>104</sup> Kitaoka Shirō, “Rokugatsu no bundan (bungei jihyō)” in *Wakakusa* 17 (July 1940), p. 56. Kitaoka’s review was generally positive, as were Japanese reviews of “Tenma” in general. One wonders if we can see here the limits of irony’s subversive power, as defined by Linda Hutcheon: “After all, the final responsibility for deciding whether irony actually happens in an utterance or not (and what the ironic meaning is) rests, in the end, solely with the interpreter.” Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 43. Her chart on the functions of irony on page 45 is particularly illuminating and helps explain why one reader might read “Tenma” as corrective or satiric (targeted outwards) and another reader might read it as destructive or aggressive (targeted inwards).

## CHAPTER 2

### Envisioning a Literature of the State: The Production of National Literature

*Although Kitahara had tried to believe in Juzen, he could not clear his heart of the dregs that remained from that incident . . . . With heated emotion, he took out several letters from Juzen he had already read and, with the intent of confirming the truth, reread them one more time.*

– from “Tōhan,” Obi Jūzō

*This does not mean arguing that its history is random . . . or treating capitalism as a “potentially disposable fiction” held in place only by our acceptance of its categories. Whether we want to or not, we accept these categories into our argument the moment we attempt to question them. They are fictions, if one wants that word, of the nondisposable sort.*

– from “The Stage of Modernity,” Timothy Mitchell

## INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, I outlined how the Japanese publishing industry promoted the inclusion of Koreans in the empire (as imperial subjects) while excluding them from the privileged space of the nation (as ethnic Koreans) during the so-called “Korean boom.” Using the writings of Tokieda Motoki as an example, I argued that *kokugo* (national language) ideology was both a crucial cornerstone of Japan’s imperial project and the site where the paradoxes of that project were most exposed. In this chapter, I expand on the role *kokugo* ideology played in the repositioning of Korean literature within a larger Japanese-language canon during the latter years of the colonial period. Like *kokugo*, which emerged precisely as the national borders of Japan were expanding and facing radical redefinition vis-à-vis its colonies, *kokumin bungaku* (国民文学) was defined as a national literature that was simultaneously a world literature. In its challenge to the “West,” *kokumin bungaku* depended upon the inclusion of colonial writers, but in doing so it also denied them an autonomy outside the strictures of the Japanese language.

Centered as it was on Japanese-language writing, the “Korean boom” explored in Chapter 1 anticipated the further incorporation of Korean colonial subjects as imperial subjects through *kokumin bungaku*. In order to demonstrate my point, I would like to briefly introduce one essay written by the novelist and critic Hayashi Fusao (1903–1975). In July 1940, at the height of the so-called “Korean boom,” Hayashi published an essay entitled “Chōsen no seishin” (The Spirit of Korea) in the literary arts journal *Bungei*.<sup>105</sup> In the essay, Hayashi celebrates the metropole’s rising interest in Korea and anticipates the day when *naisen ittai* (Korea and Japan as One Body) will become a reality. “Literature,” he declares, “is the expression of the spirit. Through the writer’s spirit, the spirit of the people (*minzoku*) and the national subject (*kokumin*) is expressed. This is literature” (p. 194). In the original Japanese, the second sentence keeps the action in its transitive state but leaves the agent of the action unstated. What results is a curious grammatical ambiguity that allows the word *literature* to stand as subject *and* as object, both the means and the ends: literature is the writer’s spirit; the writer’s spirit is the people’s spirit; and this, finally, is literature.

Language is the unstated symbol holding this circular equation together, a transparent medium for the outward expression of one’s inner self. One sees this in the way Hayashi views the act of translation as an unproblematic transference of meaning and expression. Through translated works, Hayashi “began to read Korean literature and learned about the spirit of Korea” (p. 194). He expresses the hope that soon all Korean writers will write in Japanese – *naichigo*; literally, the language of the metropole (*naichi*) – while still retaining some of the superior qualities of Korean expression. Here, Japanese takes on the same qualities as literature, in that it acts as a both means and an end: it is a tool, a language of translation that can bridge the gap

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<sup>105</sup> *Bungei* 8:7 (July 1940), 194-196. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this issue was a special on Korean literature; along with Hayashi’s essay, the issue featured four short stories by Korean writers, including Kim Saryang, and an article by the prominent literary critic and theorist Im Hwa.



between cultures; and it is simultaneously the process by which the ethnic nation (*minzoku*) is constituted (p. 196).

This logic is also what underpins Hayashi's suggestion that the "language problem" (and also, by extension, the *minzoku* problem) faced by colonial writers can be solved by the "fusion" of Korean and Japanese (p. 196). Just as the English language has been able to absorb the words of many different people, Hayashi argues, Japanese too would benefit from the incorporation of Korean sounds and words. The imbalance of power is painfully obvious; Korean is placed firmly within Japanese, the language utilized just like land resources or human labor for the benefit of the empire. At the same time, what I find notable about this passage is the suggestion that both Korea *and* Japan will change from their interactions with each other. Hayashi projects the ultimate linguistic result to be a *lingua franca* like English, unbounded by national borders.

What does all this mean for the centrality of the metropole? Instead of reiterating a position of authority, Hayashi chooses instead to end his essay on an ambiguous note. "What if," he muses, "an author were to appear who had even more richness and brilliance than *naichi* writers because he was writing in Japanese but also . . . making good use of the Korean language's strengths? For the sake of a new literature of Asia, there would be nothing greater" (p. 196). What interests me about this passage is the use of the phrase "new literature of Asia." Hayashi calls for a writer (who, it may be noted, is not ethnically marked – not of the *naichi* but also not necessarily either Korean or Japanese) who can exceed *naichi* writers. In doing so, does Hayashi also gesture to an exceeding of the *naichi* itself? One may perhaps hear echoed in his words the rhetoric of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and yet it may also be argued that Hayashi's emphasis on literature destabilizes national and linguistic boundaries, raising the tantalizing possibility of Japan itself destabilized as a point of reference.

Throughout his essay, Hayashi uses the words *naichigo* and *Nihongo* (Japanese language) when contrasting Japanese against Korean (*Chōsen-go*). While the essay ends without naming what might result after successful fusion of the two languages, Hayashi's arguments show that, when taken to its utter limit, *naichigo* becomes obsolete by its own success. What takes its place is *kokugo*, revisioned not as a national language but as an *imperial* one. The unstated but powerfully hegemonic ideology of *kokugo* is what also allows Hayashi to simultaneously posit a distinct "minzoku spirit" apart from a "kokumin spirit" in the beginning of the essay: the potential contradictions between the two are sublimated within the all-encompassing boundaries of the Japanese empire.

With the launch of the Pacific War in December 1941, articulations of *kokumin* identity were increasingly emphasized and solicited over *minzoku* identity, although the latter never disappeared entirely. In the pages of major Japanese-language journals both in the *naichi* and without, the focus would no longer be on *naisen ittai* but on *nichibei*, or the Japan-America conflict. *Kokugo* policies in the colonies during this period had a specifically political thrust: making Korean males into effective laborers and later soldiers, and Korean females into loyal supporters. But ideologically *kokugo* also promised to transcend ethnicity, tempting its speakers with access to a language-bound community. Likewise, *kokumin bungaku* – which was understood to be literature written in *kokugo*, meant to inspire loyalty to the emperor and the imperial state he presided over – gestured to a body of texts not necessarily written in or about the metropole. Korea gained a new visibility within this discourse, as both Korean and Japanese writers championed the constitutive role of the peripheries in the making of a new East Asian order. Paradoxically, however, it was *only* in the peripheries that the identity of the individual imperial subject was able to supersede established colonial hierarchies.

I begin this chapter by providing a background on kokugo policies in colonial Korea, as an examination of these policies is critical in understanding how the differentiation between “Korean” and “Japanese” was perpetuated. I then discuss key literary case studies that illustrate how the category of kokumin bungaku operated as an organizing social force: various essays published by Yi Kwangsu in both Korean and Japanese on *kōminka* (imperialization) and the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere; Obi Jūzō’s Akutagawa Prize winning story “Tōhan” (Ascent, 1944), which was first published in the Keijō-based journal *Kokumin bungaku*; and the short story “Aikoku kodomo tai” (Patriotic Children’s Squad, 1941), written by a Korean schoolgirl named Yi Chōngnae. Whether or not the potentially profound implications raised in Hayashi Fusao’s essay were ever realized is a topic I will address at the end of this chapter.

## **KOKUGO IN KOREA**

In my first chapter, I introduced the kokugo theories of linguist Tokieda Motoki, who argued that the full assimilation of Koreans into the Japanese empire depended on the complete nativization of kokugo on the peninsula. As I mentioned then, Tokieda was a student of Ueda Kazutoshi, whose influential work on kokugo theory and policy consistently highlighted the mutually constitutive relationship between language and the nation. In a public lecture entitled “Kokugo to kokka to” (The National Language and the Nation-State) given in June 1894 and later published as part of the essay collection *Kokugo no tame* (For the National Language) in June 1895, Ueda laid out the basic tenets of kokugo that would form the foundations of his life work.<sup>106</sup> The language spoken by the common people, Ueda claimed, “demonstrates a spiritual

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<sup>106</sup> It is crucial to make a distinction between the date of the speech and the date of the publication: the speech was given upon Ueda’s return from Europe, one month before the start of the First Sino-Japanese War, but published two months after the war’s end. It may be argued that the speech’s publication had such impact precisely because it

brotherhood, just as blood demonstrates a brotherhood of the body. To use Japan's kokugo as an example, one may certainly say that Japanese (*Nihongo*) is the spiritual blood of the Japanese people. Japan's *kokutai* is maintained by this spiritual blood, and the Japanese race is united because of this most strong and long-preserved chain."<sup>107</sup> Ueda's metaphor of the blood and body emphasized the organic link between language and the nation-state, a link that found its ultimate manifestation in the *kokutai* (国体) – a word whose characters literally join the nation and the body together.

Ueda went on to employ the figure of the *mother* as mediator par excellence of the kokugo-kokka relationship: "Language is not simply a marker of the *kokutai* but is simultaneously a kind of educator – what you might say is like one's compassionate mother" (p. 111). As indicated in the German word *Muttersprache*,<sup>108</sup> language is learned first from the mother and made intimately familiar by her; so too kokugo, which should and must inspire love and loyalty to the nation-state family. Ueda likens "true love" towards language to the love one might feel towards one's parents, or one's home (*kokyō*). Only by cherishing its own kokugo and refusing to "honor and serve" (*sonpō*) foreign languages could the nation-state be expected to thrive.

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occurred in this key moment in history, at the intersection of Japanese nationalism and Japanese imperialism (with the acquisition of Taiwan as its first formal colony).

<sup>107</sup> Ueda Kazutoshi, "Kokugo to kokka to" reprinted in *Meiji bungaku zenshū 44* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1968), p. 110. The word *kokutai* has been variously translated as "national polity," "national essence," "fundamental character of the state," and so on. Carol Gluck writes, "As before in Japanese history, the precise definition of *kokutai* mattered less than the ideological uses to which it was put. In late Tokugawa times, *kokutai* had served as a rationale for imperial restoration. Then, after a brief ascendancy at court, the Mito and nativist conception of *kokutai* . . . was submerged by the tides of civilization and enlightenment, whence *kokutai* emerged, unchanged in mythic essence, to function as a benchmark against which to measure institutional change." See Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 144.

<sup>108</sup> Ueda studied in Germany for three and a half years and became well acquainted with German linguistic theory during that time, as is evident in this speech. For more on this topic, see Lee Yeounsuk [Yi Yōnsuk], "*Kokugo*" to *iu shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996).

Ueda was writing in a time when the language of “mothers” in Japan would have been far from unified or standardized. It is clear here that the figure of the mother was exactly that: a figure or a symbol *through which* the nationalized body could speak, but who could not be heard herself. As we saw in Chapter 1 with Tokieda Motoki, the gendered nature of Ueda’s kokugo formulations would continue to have immense consequences both within the metropole and without it. Lee Yeounsuk has argued that the image of the mother became the lynchpin in establishing the nation – and, on a larger scale, the Japanese empire – as a “natural and harmonious community.”<sup>109</sup> This sense of community was projected both backwards in time and outwards to the colonies. Lee writes:

The further it receded . . . the more “home” (*kokyō*) was created and glorified within a distanced space. And not just that. In fact, at the root of Japan’s colonialism is this impulse to “yearn for home.” A colony was not a land usurped through violence, but the restitution of a “home” that had existed in one’s memories or that was imagined as a projection of it. Here we see a doubled process of distancing and symbolization. In the sense that it was a projection of desire produced through distancing, “home” in modern Japan was itself a colonialist concept. (p. 129)

When Lee talks about “home” as a colonialist concept, she is here emphasizing its linguistic function: “home” as a function of kokugo. Only by disassociating the word *kokyō* from any actual place could the word take on the powerful connotations of loss and desire. Among the many arguments put forth by Japanese historians to justify its imperial expansion was a common origins theory that compared Korea to a branch family (*bunke*) that had finally returned “home” to the main family (*honke*) that was Japan, with the emperor presiding as the symbolic family head.<sup>110</sup> Meanwhile, Japanese travelers to Korea often described their experiences as “nostalgic”

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<sup>109</sup> Lee, *Kokugo*, 126.

<sup>110</sup> Peter Duus goes into detail about the “common ancestry” argument in *The Abacus and the Sword* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 413-423. The issue is also addressed in detail in Oguma Eiji, *Tan’itsu*

(*natsukashii*), some even going so far as to view Korea as the repository for Japan's long-vanished past.<sup>111</sup> What Lee's comments show us is that the nostalgia and imagined origins of the colonies were not described by the word *kokyō* but produced through it.

In the same way, only by disassociating the figure of the mother from any actual woman could she then stand in as a link between home and state, mother tongue and national language. Paradoxically, however, it was in the process of exporting Japanese to the colonies that the ideology of Japanese as "kokugo" became institutionalized (although never completely totalized). From the beginning, language policies in colonial Korea and Taiwan employed the term "kokugo" and not "Nihongo." In contrast, the word "Nihongo" was used in puppet states such as Manchuria, and favored as a term in linguistic studies and essays that contrasted Japanese with other languages, as seen in Hayashi Fusao's essay quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The distinction is an important one because it reveals the underpinnings of Japan's colonial strategies. If Japan was to succeed in setting itself apart from the Euro-American imperialism it claimed to be fighting, the colonies had to be made *into* and *one with* Japan, at least on the level of discourse.

As Lee points out, however, we cannot say that kokugo was constructed out of a preexisting, homogeneous language identified as "Japanese." Rather, it was only within the emerging ideology of kokugo – which "cannot exist without the belief that everybody who lives

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*minzoku shinwa no kigen* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 1995), particularly Part 1; and in Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires, 1895-1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), particularly Chapter 4.

<sup>111</sup> For an example of an early essay that evinced nostalgia towards Korea, see Seika Ayaka, "Chōsen yori" in the August 1912 issue of *Chōsen oyobi Manshū*; also summarized in Mark Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009). Interestingly, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō also renders a present-day Korea into an ancient Japanese past in his short essay "Chōsen zakkān" (first printing unknown; anthologized in the *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū* vol. 22 by Chūō Kōronsha). In the essay, Tanizaki describes a train ride he took from Pusan to Keijō through Korea, where the rich Korean landscape unfurled before his eyes like a Heian picture scroll (p. 62). Korea is located both temporally and aesthetically in Japan's past, and as such its value for Tanizaki is its usefulness as a reference for "the writer or artist who wants to depict a story or historical picture set in the Heian imperial court" (p. 62).

within the political and social space called ‘Japan’ (*Nihon*) speaks ‘one Japanese’ (*Nihongo*)” – that the diachronic and synchronic identity of Japanese language was codified.<sup>112</sup> This was in spite and even as specific debates about orthography standardization, syllabary use, pronunciation, and so on continued to rage among linguists and policy makers well into the 1940s (and underwent further transformations with the educational and language reforms under the Allied Occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1952).<sup>113</sup>

By the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the idea that kokugo was a national language steeped in the traditions and “spirit” of the people had become deeply entrenched. Therefore any modifications made to it – such as simplifying the writing system – threatened to modify the kokutai itself. One may take as an example the harsh criticisms made in 1943 by the Home Ministry’s Police Bureau (*Naimushō keihokyoku*) against the Deliberative Council on the National Language (*Kokugo shingikai*), an organization meant to promote kokugo reform in the metropole:

[B]y right, kokugo policy should be based solely on protecting the purity of kokugo and respecting the traditions of the minzoku. And yet the Deliberative Council and others want to handle matters simply through Europeanized principles of opportunism and crass efficiency by senselessly limiting the number of *kanji* and reforming the kana orthography we have had from time immemorial. As such efforts impede understanding of the imperial rescripts, history, and literary classics of the kokumin and, by extension, cause needless disorder and confusion in the wartime national ideology (*kokumin shisō*), they can truly be said to be a conspiracy against the kokutai.<sup>114</sup>

Consider in contrast the statement made in 1942 by the National Language Association (*Kokugo kyōkai*) concerning the overseas promotion of Japanese: “In order to construct a Greater East

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<sup>112</sup> Lee, *Kokugo*, iv.

<sup>113</sup> For a concise history of the many different language policies and issues in Japan (including its colonies) from the Meiji period to the current day, see Yasuda Toshiaki, *Kokugo no kindaiishi* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2006).

<sup>114</sup> *Shōwa 17nenchū ni okeru shakai undō no jōkyō* (Tokyo: *Naimushō keihokyoku*, 1943), pp. 377-8.

Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere with Japan (*Nihon*) as its leader, Japanese (*Nihongo*) must be disseminated as the lingua franca among all the various minzoku.”<sup>115</sup> Here, one sees kokugo transformed into Nihongo as soon as it crosses the country’s borders. Unlike kokugo, Nihongo was something that could be dissected and reformed because it corresponded to the notion that language was a practical tool for communication or education within an international context.<sup>116</sup>

While kokugo may have projected a seductive vision of inclusion, in reality it was more often used to maintain the distinction between colonizer and colonized in increasingly subtle ways.<sup>117</sup> After the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement in 1919, for example, efforts were made by the Governor General to create at least a semblance of social equality in the legal structure in Korea. At the time, the school education system had been divided along ethnic lines. Koreans were forbidden from attending the primary schools (*jinjō shōgakkō*) of their Japanese peers; instead, they attended a four-year regular school (*futsū gakkō*). A February 1922 ordinance raised the amount of primary school education to six years for Koreans and revised the age of admission from eight years old to six, the same as Japanese nationals. The ordinance also struck out all obvious references to ethnic segregation – but by replacing “Japanese national” with the phrase *kokugo o tsūyō suru mono* (those who habitually use the national language) and thereby effectively

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<sup>115</sup> “Daitōa kensetsu ni saishi kokugo kokusaku no kakuritsu ni tsuki kengi” in *Kokugo undō* 6:5 (May 1942), pp. 2-3.

<sup>116</sup> Both Lee Yeongsuk and Yasuda Toshiaki have written extensively about the ideological underpinnings of kokugo and Nihongo, and this chapter is indebted heavily to their work. For further references, see the bibliography.

<sup>117</sup> Of course, it is not the case that Korean disappeared during this time, and in fact it was included as a mandatory school subject in regular schools until 1938. Mitsui Takashi has argued that the intense academic and political interest in the Korean language during the 1930s (as emblemized by the Korean Language Society) was not simply a sign of Korean “resistance” against Japan; the Government-General of Korea, for example, took a keen interest in Korean language reform for the sake of “modernization” and the practical necessities of primary school education, and often worked together with Korean educators and linguists for this purpose. See Mitsui, *Chōsen shokuminchi shihai to gengo* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2010). For a Korean-language article that addresses the various language debates regarding Korean within the lens of colonial modernity, see Yi Hye-ryōng, “Hangūl undong gwa kūndae midō” in *Taedong munhwa yōngu* 47 (2004).



keeping segregation firmly in place.<sup>118</sup> Ueda's metaphor of blood would triumph over all else: the blood-based "principle of exclusion" privileged over the language-based "principle of inclusion," to borrow phraseology from Ukai Satoshi.<sup>119</sup>

One may consider the actual conditions of Japanese language use as another example. While teachers of the Japanese language in the colonies may have relied on standardized textbooks in school, they themselves often came from rural areas in the metropole and spoke in heavy dialects far from the (imagined) norm.<sup>120</sup> Texts such as Yuasa Katsue's 1935 novel *Kannani* and Ibuse Masuji's 1942 novella "Hana no machi" (City of Flowers) illustrate, often with great ironic effect, the glaring contradictions that emerged between colonizers who spoke in Japanese dialect and the colonized who spoke and wrote "standard" textbook Japanese.<sup>121</sup> As such novels demonstrate, what was made important by colonial policy makers was not the actual practice of speaking Japanese so much as the systems of differentiation that wielded place (naichi) to race (Japanese). In other words, because kokugo was defined as "a spiritual and cultural inheritance from our ancestors," simply being fluent in standardized Japanese was not

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<sup>118</sup> Article 2 of the ordinance states, "The regular education of those who habitually use the national language is as stipulated in the Primary School Ordinance (*Shōgakkō rei*), Secondary School Ordinance (*Chūgakkō rei*), and Women's Higher Education Ordinance (*Kōtō jogakkō rei*)." Article 3 of the ordinance states, "The regular education of those who habitually do not use the national language is to be regular school (*futsū gakkō*), higher regular school (*kōtō futsū gakkō*), and regular women's higher regular school (*joshi kōtō futsū gakkō*)." The full Japanese text may be found online at Nakano Bunko: <http://www.geocities.jp/nakanolib/rei/rm44-229.htm>

<sup>119</sup> Ukai Satoshi, "Koroniariizumu to modaniti" in *Tenkanki no bungaku* ed. Mishima Kenichi and Kinoshita Yasumitsu (Tokyo: Minerva shobō, 1999), p. 215. Phrases are taken from the English translation by Lewis E. Harrington, "Colonialism and Modernity" in *Contemporary Japanese Thought* ed. Richard Calichman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 271.

<sup>120</sup> Yasuda, *Kindaishi*, p. 17.

<sup>121</sup> *Kannani* was first published in the journal *Bungaku hyōron* in April 1935; "Hana no machi" was serialized from August to October 1942 in the newspapers *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* and *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun*. In *Kannani*, the eponymous Korean character laughs at the Shikoku dialect spoken by the Japanese protagonist. *Kannani* herself has been educated in a *futsū gakkō* and speaks Japanese that is more "standard" than the Japanese spoken by the protagonist. In "Hana no machi," which is set in Japan-occupied Singapore, a Japanese educator tries to explain the rules of Japanese orthography to a local student only to get embroiled in a humorous series of misunderstandings, due in no small part to competing sets of rules for hiragana and katakana and the educator's inability to accurately explain the logic behind those rules.

enough to overturn the colonial order.<sup>122</sup> A lower-class, dialect-speaking Japanese living in Korea could still be included in the community of the Japanese nation because of his “blood-based” origins, while an educated Korean living in Tokyo would be excluded on the same terms – a dilemma we saw portrayed in the story “Hikari no naka ni” in Chapter 1. It is also important to realize that this ideology of kokugo was emphatically *material*, composed of and perpetuated by an entire system of textbooks and signages, labor practices and hiring discriminations, government laws and economic exploitation.

In 1938, the Korean Government General announced the Third Korean Education Ordinance, which officially renamed *futsū gakkō* into *shōgakkō* and *chūgakkō*, terms that had been previously reserved for “Japanese” schools only. The ordinance revision played into the rhetoric of *naisen ittai*, and it was also aligned with the policies of the Educational Affairs Bureau (*Gakumukyoku*), which prioritized the promotion of “national education” (*kokumin kyōiku*) and the fostering of Korean students into loyal subjects and – perhaps more importantly – loyal soldiers and supporters.<sup>123</sup> National language and national history (*kokushi*) textbooks were revised by the Korean Government General to more closely resemble those in the metropole, and distributed to both Korean and Japanese students on the peninsula.<sup>124</sup> A fourth

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<sup>122</sup> Quote is from Yamada Yoshio, *Kokugo no honshitsu* (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 1943), p. 112.

<sup>123</sup> Inaba Tsugio, “Shiobara Tokisaburō kenkyū” in *Kyūshū daigaku daigakuin kyōikugaku kenkyū kiyō* 1 (1998), pp. 185-208. The *shiganhei seido* (military volunteer system) had been implemented in Korea in February 1938. The Government-General announced in 1942 that it would conscript Korean soldiers beginning in December 1944. Brandon Palmer argues that this delay of two years was meant to “prepare” Korean conscripts by addressing three key issues: loyalty to the empire, to be secured through propaganda; Japanese language proficiency; updating of the *koseki* system to ensure accurate conscription pools. See Palmer, “Imperial Japan’s Preparations to Conscript Koreans as Soldiers, 1942-1945” in *Korean Studies* 31 (2007), pp. 63-78.

<sup>124</sup> From the fourth grade onwards, schools in Korea were allowed for a time to use kokugo textbooks issued by the Ministry of Education. However, the switch to *naichi* textbooks would only beg the question of “proper” hiragana and katakana usage: the textbooks issued by the Korean Government General used a revised system based on sound, while the Ministry of Education textbooks used a “traditional” writing system. With the introduction of the *kokumin gakkō* system, the Korean Government General textbooks reverted back to the traditional writing system, but this only sparked even more debate on language usage and revision. Nagashima Hiroki provides a

ordinance in March 1941 renamed all schools *kokumin gakkō*, in keeping with the renaming of the school system in the metropole. The teaching of Korean was forbidden (as opposed to the third ordinance, which made Korean an “optional” subject), and martial education was incorporated into the curriculum for Koreans. With the Fourth Korean Education Ordinance, Koreans were now theoretically made equal not only to the Japanese in Korea but also to the Japanese in the metropole under the all-encompassing umbrella of “kokumin.” In reality, however, the segregation of Koreans and Japanese continued, with Japanese schools receiving more funding and priority attention than Korean ones.

While it is undeniable that kokugo policies in the late colonial period had a specifically political thrust, we must be careful not to dismiss their ideological dimensions as simply false, or superficial, or supplementary. On the surface at least, kokugo promised to transcend ethnicity, tempting colonial subjects with access to an essentialized spirit and language-bound community. In doing so, of course, it shifted all responsibility of imperial assimilation to the colonial subjects while denying the entrenched barriers, both legal and social, that stood in their way. And yet, as is suggested in the Hayashi Fusao essay, kokugo could inadvertently turn on itself through the very terms of its logic. A colonial subject who wielded kokugo could retrospectively claim the same blood-bound, quasi-mythological origins as a native Japanese citizen – though whether or not he would be heeded is another question entirely.

By way of example, let me turn to two pieces written by Yi Kwangsu in the general interests journal *Sinsidae* (新時代), or *Shinjidai* in the Japanese reading. While it is commonly assumed that the Korean language was eradicated from all public spaces in Korea after 1942, this is a misleading claim. Korean-language writing was highly regulated and closely censored, but it

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synopsis of this complicated history in *Senjiki Chōsen ni okeru “shintaisei” to Keijō teikoku daigaku* (Tokyo: Yumani Shobō, 2011).

was featured in select journals and newspapers through the end of the colonial period. *Sinsidae* was one such journal. While its first issue in January 1941 was published all in Korean, starting from February it featured articles in both Korean and Japanese each month, up through its last issue in February 1945. Its publisher, Sinsidaesa, was based in Keijō and also had branches in Tokyo and Osaka as well as in other cities on the Korean peninsula. Sinsidaesa was itself a subsidiary of Pangmun Sōgwan (博文書館), one of the major Korean publishing companies during the colonial period and a frequent publisher of works by Yi Kwangsu. The first issue of the journal promised to “do its utmost to contribute to the empire’s triumphant conquest of the momentous current situation.”<sup>125</sup> Articles calling for the imperialization of Koreans featured heavily in the journal, along with essays evaluating the state of kokugo education, military training, and Korean economic output.

A frequent contributor to *Sinsidae* was Yi Kwangsu, who wrote primarily under his *sōshi kaimei* name Kayama Mitsurō. Yi’s first long novel, *Mujōng* (The Heartless, 1917), was hailed then and now as Korea’s first modern novel. Born in 1892 in what is now North Korea, he witnessed the annexation of Korea and lived to see its end. Although he studied the Chinese classics in his early childhood, two long sojourns in Japan (the first from 1905 to 1910, the second from 1915 to 1919) introduced him to Japanese literature and language and, through that, writings from Europe. Yi became involved in the overseas Korean independence movement based in Shanghai starting in 1919. He returned to Korea following the launch of the so-called “cultural rule” (*bunka tōchi*) by the Government-General and began advocating a gradualist approach to national development and independence. In 1937, he was arrested for his connections to the Korean nationalist movement but was soon released because of his

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<sup>125</sup> *Sinsidae* 1:1 (January 1941), p. 19. As mentioned before, the first issue was written entirely in Korean.

deteriorating health. By 1938, he was actively publishing essays and stories promoting *kōminka* and support for Japan's war against China, support which did not end until the war's end in 1945.

In the March 1943 issue of *Sinsidae*, Yi contributed an essay in Japanese titled “*Tadashiki ikikata*” (The Correct Way to Live).<sup>126</sup> In it, he urges his readers to live a life of kindness and gratitude and sacrifice, all in humble service of the emperor. “I can't understand people who belittle others, who complain or maliciously gossip, who are underhanded,” he declares. “These kinds of people must be made to have a change of heart. Otherwise, let's have them leave Japan (*Nihon*). Why not place our (*wareware*) trust in the Emperor?” (pp. 31-2) Yi's choice of vocabulary is significant: here, *Nihon* is an inclusive term, transcending all distinctions of ethnicity and reordering the imperial order according to loyalty and action. In suggesting that those who fail to act “Japanese” should leave Japan, he implies that the Korean peninsula is as much a part of Japan as the metropole, and that Japanese-ness is not something inherent to the latter. The word *wareware* is employed throughout this work, constantly inviting and imagining an imperial community – one without a clear center or specific boundary, but appealing precisely because of that reason.

In another section of the essay, Yi writes that the one thing separating Japan (*Nihon*) from America and Europe is the former's commitment to “co-existence and co-prosperity” (*kyōson kyōei*, p. 31). To prove his point, he quotes directly from the 1941 imperial rescript declaring war against the U.S. and Britain: “The Emperor declared, ‘We rely upon the loyalty and courage of Our subjects.’ These words were graciously bestowed upon you as well as upon me” (p. 31). It should be noted that Yi quotes the rescript exactly, without glossing or revising its archaic language and script. It is not the words that are important so much as the aesthetics of *language* – a language that is indivisible and untranslatable. The immediate, collusive, and powerfully

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<sup>126</sup> *Sinsidae* 3:3 (March 1943), pp. 29-33.

emotive style of the essay evokes a vision of community made through and by (the Japanese) language.

The Korean-language essays written by Yi for *Sinsidae* serve as interesting contrasts. For example, the essay “Kungmin munhak munje” (National Literature Issues, 1943), locates the defining elements of “Japanese national literature” as anything that contains “the author’s belief and emotions on being an ‘imperial subject of the Emperor.’”<sup>127</sup> Yi uses a nature metaphor to describe the literary process: just as the difference between medical plants and poisonous ones is determined by differences in the soil, water, sunlight, and air, so too are people’s philosophies of life determined by their environment. And like a bee who takes pollen from a flower and secretes honey, a writer should strive to produce a work composed of the best and most pure elements.

What is most striking about this essay is not that it is written in Korean but that its diction replicates that of earlier literary criticism, notably from Yi’s own oeuvre.<sup>128</sup> Whereas he uses the formal *de arimasu* form in “Tadashiki ikikata,” a form that presupposes a (Japanese-speaking) reader, here the Korean *ta* verb form (similar to *de aru* in function) is dominant. There are no direct exhortations to the reader, no invitations to imagine a shared imperial community. The argument put forth is direct, concrete, and focused, limiting itself only to a theoretical conception of “national literature” and its uses. Significantly, separated from the rest of the essay by a box but placed at its end is a short list of “new vocabulary” of three Japanese words, with the definitions also written in Japanese: *sora no kihei* (cavalry of the air), *sora no shinzō* (heart of the air), and *shinmin yokusan* (imperial subjects’ assistance). The contrast is a stark one and serves

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<sup>127</sup> *Sinsidae* 3:2 (February 1943), p. 63. “Japanese national literature” is as follows in the original: 日本の国民文学.

<sup>128</sup> One may consider how Yi uses the scientific vocabulary of “elements” and how he speculates on literature’s values in early essays such as “Munhak ūi kach’i” (The Value of Literature, 1910) and “Munhak iran hao” (What is Literature?, 1916).

to emphasize the discursive differences inscribed in the two languages, at least within the medium of a literary journal closely watched by the Government-General of Korea (GGK): Korean as a tool for communication, Japanese as a repository for an essential spirit.<sup>129</sup>

## KOKUMIN BUNGAJU

The term “kokumin bungaku,” or “national literature,” began appearing in Japanese journals as early as 1887 and particularly in the 1890s, but its explosive reemergence as a topic of debate in the pages of Japan’s most prominent journals would coincide with the kick-start of the New Order Movement (*shintaisei*), led by then-Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro. Already in 1937 Konoe had introduced the National Spiritual Mobilization Movement (*kokumin seishin sōdōin undō*) to marshal the masses in support of the war against China. The Korean League for the National Spirit Mobilization Movement (*Kokumin seishin sōdōin Chōsenren*) was established as a branch league in Korea in 1938. October 1940 saw the creation of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA, *Taisei yokusankai*), a new political structure that brought together government officials, party leaders, military officers, and civilian volunteers in an effort to mobilize public support.

In response to the launch of the IRAA, the Korean League was renamed the Korean League for Concerted National Power (*Kokumin sōryoku Chōsen renmei*).<sup>130</sup> The Korean League

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<sup>129</sup> Watanabe Naoki points out that Yi used the Korean language during this period primarily for purposes of “education and enlightenment.” His writing style can be further divided into two types: a mixed *hangŭl* and Chinese character script used for promoting *kōminka*, *naisen ittai*, and the ideological conscription of the intellectual; and a primarily *hangŭl* script full of rhetorical flourishes meant to train both the “body and spirit” (*shinshin*). In either case, it was clear that the use of Korean had a practical function of reaching readers with no knowledge of Japanese. Watanabe, “Yi Kwangsu to *Sinsidae*” in *Shokuminchi bunka kenkyū* 10 (July 2011), pp. 46-61. At the same time, a comparative look at other media may reveal other ways in which the Korean language could be mobilized for local, affective knowledge in comparison to Japanese, used in a cosmopolitan or public register. The 1941 film *Hantō no haru* (in Korean: *Pando ūi pom*; dir. Yi Pyōng-il) is a particularly interesting example that shows different kinds of linguistic code-switching occurring between its Korean and Japanese characters.

shared the common purpose of fostering a patriotic, participatory spirit among the public, but with a greater sense of urgency: the number of radio sets and newspaper agencies were far less in Korea than in Japan, a condition that sparked concern about the efficacy and applicability of dissemination methods across the peninsula.<sup>131</sup> With this issue in mind, the Government General enlisted a number of Korean intellectuals – with Yi Kwangsu as perhaps the most famous and active member – to create materials that could “contribute in the direction of national policy (*kokusaku*), understanding of current affairs, and the governing of Korea.”<sup>132</sup>

The New Order Movement centered around a call for a political order in keeping with Japan’s self-appointed position as the leader of East Asia. Literature too fell within its scope. In August 1940, *Yomiuri shinbun* ran a series entitled “Watashi no shin seikatsu taisei” (My New Order of Daily Life) in which Hayashi Fusao, Hino Ashihei (1907–1960), Yoshikawa Eiji (1892–1962), and other notable writers ruminated on the new political function of literature. Hayashi Fusao, for example, advocated patience in the creation of the New Order, comparing the nurturing of sound national subjects (*kokumin*) to the nurturing of trees. His own strategy was to “start collecting masterpieces of kokumin bungaku now” in order to prepare for the day when kokumin bungaku would be called upon to shore up “a true New Order.”<sup>133</sup> Sakakiyama Jun (1900–1980), in contrast, called for writers to guide the national policies of the New Order

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<sup>130</sup> The reason why a separate organization was formed in Korea, rather than a branch office of the IRAA, is that the Government-General of Korea wanted to avoid any organization that sounded too “political” in nature. No political parties were allowed to exist in Korea, and it was not until April 1945 that a law granting suffrage to Korean and Taiwanese males was announced (although the war would end before the law could go into effect). The GGK did not want to encourage political activities among Koreans, who might have taken the opportunity to lobby for change or independence. See Anzako Yuka, “Chōsen ni okeru sensō dōin seisaku no tenkai” in *Kokusai kankeigaku kenkyū* 21 (supplementary volume) (March 1995), pp. 1-19.

<sup>131</sup> Miyata Setsuko (ed.), *Sōdōin: bessatsu* (Tokyo: Ryokuin Shobō, 1996), p. 6.

<sup>132</sup> Miyamoto Masaaki, “Senjiki Chōsen ni okeru ‘bunka’ mondai” in *Nenpō Nihon gendaishi* ed. Awaya Kentarō et al. (Tokyo: Azuma Shuppan, 2001), p. 197.

<sup>133</sup> Hayashi Fusao, “Kokumin bungaku no kessaku o” in *Yomiuri shinbun* 1940.8.21 (evening edition).



towards ever-more “heroic” forms.<sup>134</sup> “We have a duty,” he declared, “to raise high the culture of Japan (*Nihon*) and the Japanese (*Nihonjin*).”

While definitions of “kokumin bungaku” were never entirely unified, the general consensus was that it was to be a literature of the state, as well as a type of world literature that could compete with the output of other nations. For example, *Shinchō*’s 1940 *tokushū* (special issue) on kokumin bungaku boldly begins with the statement, “The New Order has taken over the entire country (*kuni*). On this occasion and at this time, literature is allowed to exist only as one branch of culture. The idea of the supremacy of art, or literature for the sake of literature – these will remain as old tales only.”<sup>135</sup> In the same *tokushū*, Asano Akira (1901–1990) laments that “the literature up to now has been citizen’s literature (*shimin bungaku*), not national literature (*kokumin bungaku*) . . . We must reproach ourselves for the fact that we were indifferent to the fate of the nation, that (we) pursued life while indifferent to the fate of the nation.”<sup>136</sup>

*Bungei* would publish a *tokushū* on kokumin bungaku one month after *Shinchō*. In “Kokumin bungaku to wa nani ka” (What is Kokumin Bungaku?), Sakakiyama Jun prefaces his statements with a straightforward question: what exactly is kokumin bungaku?<sup>137</sup> Sakakiyama acknowledges the need for writers to “cooperate” with the government, but also stresses that “to write is simultaneously to be political” (p. 143). True kokumin bungaku is not a literature of the petty bourgeois, or of the masses, or rather not simply that; it must be a literature that transforms the sentiments of the reader from that of a member of civil society (*shimin*) to that of a

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<sup>134</sup> Sakakiyama Jun, “Kokusaku o michibikidasu bungaku o” in *Yomiuri shinbun* 1940.8.27 (evening edition).

<sup>135</sup> “Shinchō hyōron: bungaku noshintaisei” in *Shinchō* 37.11 (November 1940), p. 2.

<sup>136</sup> Asano Akira, “Kokumin bungaku e no michi” in *Shinchō* 37.11 (November 1940), p. 30.

<sup>137</sup> *Bungei* 8:12 (December 1940), pp. 143-146.

nationalized member of the state (*kokumin*). How and why this is to happen are questions picked up in the next essay, written by the novelist, literary critic, and translator Itō Sei (1905–1969).<sup>138</sup> In his essay, Itō stresses the importance of *language* in preventing literature from becoming mere propaganda. He goes so far as to suggest that the reason for China’s fall lies in the fact that they used words “inaccurately, and remained unconcerned even when the words became disconnected from the content” (p. 148). Only through the precise, deliberate, and deeply thought-out use of language is it possible for Japan to achieve true greatness.<sup>139</sup> “Kokumin bungaku has many objectives,” Itō concludes, “but I cannot stress enough how important it is to build a foundation of correct kokugo” (p. 149). Common in both essays is the assumption that kokumin bungaku has not yet been established; it is a literature of the future, a goal and not yet a reality. The authors also agree that it is not enough to write about Japan, or in Japanese; it is the *effects* of language that hold the key.

The start of the Pacific War (called the Greater East Asia War in Japan) in December 1941 ushered out Konoe and ushered in Tōjō Hideki as Prime Minister, spelling the end of the renovationist reforms of the New Order. In Korea, Governor General Minami Jirō was replaced by Koiso Kuniaki, who publicly declared that *naisen ittai* was to be understood not as a simple promise of equality but as the complete imperialization of the Korean people. Meanwhile, newspapers were quick to report what seemed like an unstoppable series of triumphs for the Japanese navy. The first images of the attack on Pearl Harbor were published in January 1942; next came the bombardment of Hong Kong; the fall of Shanghai, Guam, Thailand, the

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<sup>138</sup> “Kokumin bungaku no kiso,” *Bungei* 8:12 (December 1940), pp. 146-149.

<sup>139</sup> One could argue that in his emphasis on precise language, Itō Sei’s comments obliquely act as a warning against the “aesthetic strains of fascism” described by Alan Tansman in *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

Philippines; and, trumpeted most loudly of all, the Japanese seizure of Singapore. Ben-Ami

Shillony writes of this time period:

The collaboration of the press with the wartime authorities was the result of coercion as well as conviction. The excitement created by the initial victories swept over the whole nation, including editors and writers who, like most of their compatriots, believed in the justice of Japan's cause and in her ultimate victory . . . They believed that in time of war it was their responsibility to 'guide public opinion' in a way that would help achieve victory, and they thought the press was an important weapon in the 'ideological war' (*shisōsen*). As Hōjō Seiichi of the *Nichi nichu* wrote in December 1942: "In time of war journalists are the front-line fighters in the ideological war, and newspapers are the ideological bullets."<sup>140</sup>

Not only newspapers but books too were expected to become ideological bullets in service of the war. Writers ineligible to fight on the front could still participate (or could be made to participate) through ideological conscription – and so they were, through quasi-military, state-sponsored organizations such as the Pen Corps (*Pen butai*), formed in 1938 and led by Kikuchi Kan; and the Patriotic Association for Japanese Literature (*Nihon bungaku hōkoku kai*), established in 1942. Focus shifted to Japan's expansion into Southeast Asia, and the term *daitōa bungaku*, or Greater East Asian literature, came to dominate over the older term *kokumin bungaku*. The latter did not disappear, however, and in fact often stood in tense relation to the former.<sup>141</sup> It was here too that sporadic attempts were made by Japanese intellectuals to situate Korean literature vis-à-vis *kokumin bungaku*. Consideration of Korea in *kokumin bungaku* discussions in the metropole from 1940 and 1941 had been mostly absent; as discussed in the

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<sup>140</sup> Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 98.

<sup>141</sup> In the April 9, 1943 edition of *Yomiuri shinbun*, for example, Takami Jun has an article entitled "Daitōa kyōeiken to kokumin bungaku" (The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere and Kokumin Bungaku) that describes his personal experiences in Japanese-occupied Burma. Takami Jun writes that there is a necessity to write *kokumin bungaku* for the sake of the many Burmese (and others in the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere) who want to read books in order to "know" Japan. But what place would Burma occupy in this category of *kokumin bungaku*? What place would Japan occupy in the category of *daitōa bungaku*? What happens to *kokumin bungaku* when one translates it, as Takami Jun suggests doing? Instead of addressing such questions, the essay ends with a command rather than any definite answer: "One must write [*kokumin bungaku*]. The writers' battle is here."

first chapter, if Korea was mentioned at all it was most often in terms of its particularity or difference. But as the Pacific War progressed the question of where to place Korea became increasingly more urgent – and the answer increasingly less clear.

In February 1944, the poet and literary scholar Jinbo Kōtarō predicted in a February 1944 issue of *Bungakukai* that the “current drive and turn of Japanese literature (*Nihon bungaku*) towards kokumin bungaku” would serve as a model for other literary movements in the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>142</sup> Kokumin bungaku was a chance for East Asia to cast off the pernicious influence of European literature; it was a chance to “return to our native home of Asia, which for a long time had seemed almost cut off; and to the fatherland (*sokoku*) of Japan” (p. 6). In the essay, Jinbo also notes that Japanese literary circles (“or to be more precise, the Tokyo literary circles”) had long ignored Korean literature, along with the literature of other areas such as Manchuria, through the same misguided attachment to Europe. Kokumin bungaku had the ability to explode onto the world stage as “world literature” precisely because of its challenge to the authority of Europe. Without purifying one’s vision with “the blood and soil of Japan,” Jinbo concludes, “there can be no Greater East Asian literature of tomorrow, no Japanese literature (*Nihon bungaku*) of today” (p. 7).

In this essay, we see an attempt to theorize the position of Japanese literature as part of but not necessarily equal to kokumin bungaku. In doing so, Jinbo is able to gesture to a literature that transcends borders, making them obsolete. Once again, however, we run into the same discursive contradictions found elsewhere. Who is included in Jinbo’s references to “Japanese” authors? In asking this question, I do not wish to pinpoint the position of Korean writers within the ambiguous category of “Japan” so much as to point out that the terms work to obfuscate the issue, and make the question moot. It was “Japan” and “Asia” that would stand together against

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<sup>142</sup> “Daitōa bungaku joron” in *Bungakukai* 11:2 (February 1944), p. 6.

the unstated but overwhelmingly monolithic third term of the West. If Korean literature was neither Japanese literature *nor* Greater East-Asian literature, the only thing it *could* be was kokumin bungaku – a literature of the state but not of the nation. In practice, the ambiguities of genre would allow Jinbo and the other Japanese critics mentioned above to forget the “Korea issue,” sweep it aside whenever it could not fit into the theoretical model at hand.

But the question of Korea’s position within the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was one that could not be ignored or forgotten for those denied the sacrosanct bonds of “blood and soil.” In November 1941, the literary journal *Kokumin bungaku* (*Kungmin munhak* in Korean) was launched in Korea by the prominent Korean intellectual Ch’oe Chaesŏ (1908–1964), exactly one year after the tokushū on kokumin bungaku appeared in *Shinchō*. The founding issue’s declaration, written in Japanese, would borrow much of the same vocabulary, declaring that it was time to “serve the Empire (*okuni*) with a pure heart and earnest passion” and gaze upon “the unfolding world of East Asia with the eyes of a new-born baby.”<sup>143</sup> At the same time, the declaration would also contain one critical difference – namely, the deliberate and consistent inclusion of Korea within the parameters of this new literature. One finds, for example, the following sentence: “The significance of the historical turn (*tenkan*), the fate of the world, the mission of the Empire *and, by extension, the future of Korean literature* – it is undeniable that all these have already been determined” (p. 2, emphasis mine). The declaration would end with a similar sentiment, concluding that Korean literature had to make a fresh start “through imbuing it with a national (*kokumin-teki*) passion” (p. 3). Korean literature was not simply to contribute to kokumin bungaku but to *become* it, on par with the metropole and the forerunner of the empire.

Although the original plan was to publish four issues in Japanese per year and the rest in Korean, starting from the May-June 1942 issue the monthly journal was published entirely in

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<sup>143</sup> “Chōsen bundan no kakushin” in *Kokumin bungaku* 1:1 (November 1941), pp. 2-3.

Japanese. It can be inferred that this change was at least in part effected through pressure from the authorities – references in the journal to “paper shortages” and “the current state of affairs” (*jikyoku*) gesture obliquely but insistently to ever-increasing wartime restrictions and censorship. However, one should remember that government control was not simply or not only a form of suppression; it could also be productive, in the sense that it opened up new venues for literary production and new audiences for its consumption. In his article on the transnational circulation of *kokumin bungaku* written by Koreans, Michael Kim writes:

The wartime restrictions on colonial cultural production are often understood primarily for their coercive quality and the strong collaborationist themes of the literary output. However, what the wartime consolidation also achieved was the creation of a powerful platform for the industrialization of Korean literature and the formation of a dissemination system that linked the Korean peninsula with the rest of the Japanese Empire.<sup>144</sup>

Kim points out that the circulation for newspapers and journals in Korea reached unprecedented numbers during the late wartime period, precisely because the consolidation or discontinuation of titles would mean a greater market share for those publications that did survive. This meant that their marketing and propaganda power would have been greatly increased as well. The creators of *Kokumin bungaku* were still robustly publishing well into 1945, while Tokyo-based journals such as *Bungei shunjū* and *Shinchō* were forced to produce more and more meager issues. Unfortunately, while information on Japanese-language publications imported into the colonies can be found, albeit in scattered form, very little data on the reverse exists. One can infer from the list of contributors of *Kokumin bungaku* that individual writers were not contained by place: an article by Yi Kwangsu could appear in *Kokumin bungaku* one month and another article by him appear in the pages of *Bungakukai* the next. It is also clear that

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<sup>144</sup> Michael Kim, “From the Age of Heroic Production to the Birth of Korean Literature” in *Sai: Kan* 6 (March 2009), p. 24.

the rising numbers of Japanese-language journals in Korea were an important source of revenue for Japanese writers as well, both in Korea and outside it.<sup>145</sup> What is less clear is just how widely *Kokumin bungaku* and other Japanese-language texts published within Korea were read and circulated outside of the peninsula's borders.

At the very least, however, it can be said that the existence of writers in Korea who wrote in Japanese was essential to maintaining the logic of late imperial discourse, which positioned Korea as part of “Japan” in spirit if not in civic equality. All writers from all parts of the empire could theoretically speak as one – if they spoke in Japanese. As I mentioned before, even in the wartime period Korean-language articles did continue to circulate, and one can still find Korean-language stories published here and there in the latter issues of *Sinsidae*, proving that official government control was never as uniform nor as total as it is often assumed to be. Debates on kokugo versus Korean language usage would also continue, with no resolution ever reached. But what is important to note is that, whether one argued that language created a minzoku or was a product of it, both sides implicitly accepted the idea of “language” as existing apart from and/or a priori to the historical process. Literature, too, could not help but be trapped in the same conundrum: it was understood as not a dynamic practice but static proof of a material, indivisible reality. Thus for people like Yi Kwangsu and Ch'oe Chaesō, to write in Japanese was to irrefutably prove one's right to be a historical actor on the imperial stage; to write kokumin

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<sup>145</sup> For more information on this topic, see Yun Taesōk, “*Kokumin bungaku* no Nihonjin shōsetsuka” in *Hanryū hyakunen no Nihongo bungaku* (Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin, 2009), pp. 27-45. Even a glancing look at the table of contents for journals such as *Kokumin bungaku* and *Ryokki* (緑旗; another Japanese-language journal based in Korea) immediately unearths familiar names: Tanaka Hidemitsu, Kobayashi Hideo, Kikuchi Kan, Yuasa Katsue, Satō Haruo, and so forth.

bungaku, the irrefutable sign of one's inclusion in an imperial brotherhood. And this *was* to be a brotherhood, of course, one bound just as tightly by gender as it was by “blood and soil.”<sup>146</sup>

As mentioned before, the category of kokumin bungaku also opened up a space for Japanese settlers in Korea to make their own literary voices known as well. The writer Tanaka Hidemitsu (1913–1949), for example, lived in colonial Korea between 1935 and 1942 and published in both the metropole and Korea during those years. A member of the GGK-affiliated *Chōsen bunjin kyōkai* (Korean Writers Association) headed by Yi Kwangsu, Tanaka was able to use his literary connections to speak from a position of authority on the subject of kokumin bungaku in such essays as “Kokumin bungaku e no kansō” (Thoughts on Kokumin Bungaku, first publication unknown) and “Shinshin sakka no tachiba” (The Position of Rising Novelists, first publication unknown).<sup>147</sup> Obi Jūzō is another example of a Japanese writer who rose to acclaim in the colonies; a resident of Korea from 1939 to 1942, his experiences and memories found voice in *Kokumin bungaku* and the Manchuria-based literary journal *Geibun* (Arts and Culture) before attracting attention in the metropole.

In the following sections, I intend to discuss three different texts – the first, a nonfictional report on the Greater East Asian Writers' Conference (*Daitōa bungakusha taikai*), written by Yi Kwangsu and entitled “Sankyō inshō ki” (Record of Impressions of Three Capitals, 1943); the second, Obi Jūzō's “Tōhan” (Ascent, February 1944), which won the Akutagawa Prize in 1944;

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<sup>146</sup> In the 1920s, the decade when Kim Saryang would have been attending primary school, the percentage of males enrolled in Korean regular schools (*futsū gakkō*) hovered at around 30 percent of the population of eligible children, while the number of females never broke 10 percent. These numbers must also be broken down according to class and region; the number of schools were much higher in the cities than in the countryside. See Kim Puja, *Shokuminchiki Chōsen no kyōiku to jendā* (Yokohama: Seori Shobō, 2005), p. 62. Furthermore, as Kim Puja points out, the education of females needs to be understood within the larger context of the family. In what may be termed “family strategy” (p. 250), there were often cases where a lower-class family of tenant farm workers would choose to go into debt to send the eldest son to regular school in order to secure future job prospects and advancement, thereby securing the overall fortunes of the family. But only rarely would the same thing happen with daughters, whose educations were deemed only incidental to family fortunes and secondary to immediate economic pressures.

<sup>147</sup> Reproduced in *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* volume 11 (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1965). I will return to Tanaka Hidemitsu in Chapter 4.



and finally, “Aikoku kodomo tai” (Patriotic Children’s Squad, 1941), a short fictional piece by the Korean schoolgirl Yi Chōngnae, written in response to a call by the Korean League for Concerted National Power for patriotic stories. All three were written in Japanese and labeled as kokumin bungaku. All three were published in Tokyo by individuals who lived outside it. All three exemplify a strand of literary border-crossing that destabilizes the centrality of the metropole by centering the spiritual heart of “Japan” in the peripheries. At the same time, however, the material circulation of the texts themselves show that border-crossing was a constant negotiation in which the value and meaning assigned to a work was encoded within larger political structures that sought to keep the colonial subject in his (and her) place.

### **CONFESSIONS ON DISPLAY: “SANKYŌ INSHŌ KI”**

In the previous section I introduced an essay by Jinbo Kōtarō that explicitly identified the role of kokumin bungaku in creating a unified “Greater East Asian” literature free of the pernicious influences of the West. Jinbo’s comments can be situated within a larger effort to unite the disparate parts of the Japanese empire through Japanese-language literature. The most prominent manifestation of this pan-Asian vision was the Greater East Asian Writers’ Conference, which convened for the first time in November 1942.<sup>148</sup> Fifty seven delegates from Japan (defined in this case as the naichi, Korea, and Taiwan) met with twenty one delegates from China, Manchuria, and Mongolia over a one-week period to give speeches, develop strategies to aid war efforts, and tour Japanese landmarks such as major Shinto shrines and museums.

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<sup>148</sup> For an extended analysis of the Greater East Asian Writers’ Conference and the production of a “Greater East Asian literature,” see Ozaki Hotsuki, *Kindai bungaku no shōkon* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), especially chapters 1 and 2. Donald Keene provides a succinct summary of the conference in *So Lovely a Country Will Never Perish: Wartime Diaries of Japanese Writers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 37-40.

*Bungakukai* published a series of reports and essays on the 1<sup>st</sup> Greater East Asian Writers' Conference in its January 1943 issue.<sup>149</sup> Yi Kwangsu had been one of the Korean writers in attendance, and he wrote about the experience in a number of outlets in both Korea and Japan. In the *Bungakukai* piece entitled “Sankyō inshō ki,” Yi writes not of the conference itself but of the sightseeing activities that occurred before and after it, as he and other delegates were escorted to major historical sites in Tokyo, Ujiyamada (Ise), and Nara.<sup>150</sup> Yi begins with his experiences in Tokyo. Because in his youth he had lived in Tokyo first as a student at Meiji Gakuin and then at Waseda, he fondly thinks of the city as a “second home” (*daini no furusato*). But with this trip, it is as if he is seeing Tokyo – “now not just the capital of Japan, but the capital of the Asian [sic.] Greater Co-Prosperity Sphere” (p. 68) – for the first time. It is a changed city, and he is a changed person: it is not his Korean name he uses when making offerings at the shrines but his *sōshi kaimei* name, Kayama Mitsurō.

This reference to “a second home” is a telling one. Previously in this chapter, I discussed how Japanese imperial concepts of home were located in and through *kokugo*. That is to say, home was not simply a place but also a *time*, ever receding but still accessible through the “spiritual blood” of *kokugo*. With Yi, however, we see this concept flipped on its head – it is not the colonies that is the “second home” but Tokyo, which has been made radically different not simply by the course of history but also, and more importantly, by the subject position of the colonial subject whose “mental state” (*shinkyō*) has changed (or has been made to change).

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<sup>149</sup> The closing ceremonies were held in Osaka. The second conference took place in August 1943 in Tokyo (which added to its participants' list delegates from Japan's territories in Southeast Asia), and a third conference was held on November 1944 in Nanjing. A fourth conference in Shinkyō (present-day Changchun) was planned but the war would end before it could take place.

<sup>150</sup> *Bungakukai* 10:1 (January 1943), pp. 68-84.

In Nara, Yi visits Hōryūji, a Buddhist temple said to have been commissioned by Prince Shōtoku. “As a Korean,” Yi notes, “there is a reason why I feel so fondly (*o-natsukashiku*) worshipful towards Prince Shōtoku.”<sup>151</sup> The reason is that it was in fact a Korean, the Koguryō monk Hyecha, who imparted the teachings of the Lotus Sutra to Prince Shōtoku. Yi uses honorific language towards Prince Shōtoku and humble language when talking about Hyecha, thus aligning himself with the latter and cementing a clear vertical relationship between the two. The mixed-racial origins of “Japan” seen here would not have been radical, as similar arguments were often employed by Japanese imperialists in order to justify colonizing Korea. But I find it suggestive that Yi locates these shared origins in language: in this case, in a Buddhist scripture that would not have been written in “Japanese” at all. Similarly, Yi does a linguistic analysis of key Korean words in an attempt to prove that the gods Izanagi, Izanami, and Susano-o were also worshipped in ancient Korea.

The essay ends with a reflection that “the Japanese and Korean *minzoku* are one and the same, through history and ethnicity and *especially language*, by blood and by creed; likewise, it’s enough to state the truth that the Japanese language and Korean language will be able to return (*sakanoboru*) to the era of their shared roots” (p. 84, emphasis mine). By pointing to an era of “shared roots” where Japanese and Koreans were worshippers of the same gods and speakers of the same language, Yi fuses together what had previously been treated as an irreconcilable split: the lineage of blood married to the lineage of spirit. It was history that achieved this, but *language* that carried its proof. Likewise, Yi frequently caps his observations by composing a *waka* in classical Japanese diction, as if in an attempt to access the “shared” past.

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<sup>151</sup> Page 77. The words used here are “*o-natsukashiku oshitai mōshiageru*.” The word *natsukashii* carries connotations of remembrance, longing, nostalgia, love; *shitau*, connotations of yearning and adoration as well as admiration. Again, Yi’s appropriation of the word stands in ironic contrast to the nostalgia cited by Japanese travelers to Korea, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

But in this context, what would it mean for a Korean colonial subject to compose waka in an archaic, literary language so often hailed during this time as uniquely “Japanese”?<sup>152</sup> To whom are the words addressed, and for what function?

This question of audience is a crucial one, because it is this question that most insistently highlights the politics of writing for the colonial author through contextualization and intertextualization. Along with visits to historical sites, Yi Kwangsu was invited to meetings and literary lectures and casual dinners with noted Japanese writers and intellectuals. He writes of meeting Akita Ujaku at a matinee performance at the Imperial Garden Theater; drinking with Hayashi Fusao, Kobayashi Hideo, and others; attending a lecture by Tanizaki Jun’ichirō in Nara; and drinking with the writers Kawakami Tetsutarō and Kume Masao. These names would have been familiar ones with the readers of *Bungakukai*, as almost all of the Japanese authors mentioned by Yi were regular contributors to the coterie journal. Yi himself was a contributor, if not a frequent one, and his seemingly casual references to someone like Kawakami Tetsutarō, one of the editors of *Bungakukai* at the time, would have reminded the reader of this fact.

As previously mentioned, Yi was invited to go drinking with Hayashi Fusao and others in Tokyo and then again with Kawakami in Nara. In Tokyo, Hayashi Fusao urges Yi to drink: “Drink yourself into a stupor! Show me Yi Kwangsu drunk!” (p. 73) Yi obliges, but not before sharing the following words with the reader: “The meaning of Mr. Hayashi’s words were quite clear to me.” What is puzzling about this passage is not only this cryptic remark, which never gets explicated (what *was* the meaning of his words?), but also the fact that Hayashi is quoted as calling Yi by his Korean name, and not his *sōshi kaimei* one. The moment captures a small moment of tension between self-identification and social interpellation, with both unable to

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<sup>152</sup> For rigorous deconstructions of the myth of a single “stable” Japanese canon or uniquely “Japanese” language, see Shirane and Suzuki (eds.), *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

escape their historicity: the one reveals the origins of the other. In other words, no matter how strenuously Yi may insist on his new *kōmin* identity as Kayama Mitsurō, the memory of the colonial past is never fully banished; it continues to inscribe and circumscribe the present, through the social process of language.

Although the discourse of *kōminka* offered powerfully seductive promises of legal equality, social parity, and a new East Asian order, one must not forget that these promises were undermined by the emphatically unequal structures of colonial domination. In order to clarify my point, let me briefly explain the much-misunderstood *sōshi kaimei* act. Although *sōshi kaimei* has been described by many scholars as a law that “forced” Koreans to adopt Japanese names, this is a misleading claim. As Mizuno Naoki proves in his illuminating study of *sōshi kaimei*, the campaign was first and foremost an attempt to revamp the *koseki* (family registry) system in Korea, which had allowed family members to be listed by clan name.<sup>153</sup> A married woman, for example, could still be listed under her maiden name as indication of her clan lineage. The *sōshi* part of *sōshi kaimei* required that members of a family unit be listed under a single surname (different from the clan name). The aim was to break the lines of loyalty tied to clan lineage and reorder the Korean family unit under the imperial order. As the war progressed, the *koseki* system also became vital for conscription efforts.

While Koreans were “encouraged” to choose surnames *resembling* Japanese ones – in many cases, adding an extra character to a clan name in order to create a surname with two characters, as was common in Japan – this was not necessarily the same as choosing a “Japanese” surname. The latter was in fact discouraged by the Governor General’s Office and local police forces, who wanted to preserve a clear difference between colonizer and colonized (and, in doing so, maintain their control over the latter). Some Koreans also refused to choose

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<sup>153</sup> Mizuno Naoki, *Sōshi kaimei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 2008).

“Japanese” names not from ethnic resistance but from a desire to maintain their difference from the Chinese, who were perceived as further down on the colonial hierarchy (p.113). Anxiety over the blurring of categories also explains why *sōshi* was mandatory but *kaimei* was not.<sup>154</sup> In other words, Mizuno summarizes, describing *sōshi kaimei* as a policy of assimilation or imperialization does not capture the full picture because, while it *did* try to assimilate the family institution into the *ie*, or Japanese-style household system, it also worked to maintain difference between Japanese and Koreans, and Koreans and other colonial subjects.

When we look at how *sōshi kaimei* plays out on the pages of Tokyo journals such as *Bungakukai*, we see that responses to official government policy were by no means consistent. Yi’s essay “Gyōja” (Devotee), for example, which was published in *Bungakukai* in March 1941, is listed in the table of contents under “Yi Kwangsu.” When one flips to the first page of the text, however, Kayama Mitsurō is written as the author, with “Yi Kwangsu” listed underneath in parentheses. For “Sankyō inshō ki” as well, the name Yi Kwangsu appears in the table of contents and also on the first page of the piece itself. We cannot know whose decision it was to list Yi Kwangsu over Kayama Mitsurō, or vice versa; what is clear, however, is that the latter name was always qualified by the former in Tokyo journals but not necessarily in Korean ones.<sup>155</sup> The paratextual limits or structures created by the format of the journal – the editing and presentation of a text, the juxtaposition of texts with other texts or with advertisements, calls to an imagined but specific community of readers, and so forth – were certainly present in both the

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<sup>154</sup> Mizuno states that while over 80% of Koreans had undergone *sōshi* by 1945, only around 10% had applied for *kaimei*. See page 167.

<sup>155</sup> Starting from February 1941, for example, the name Kayama Mitsurō was consistently used on its own in *Sinsidae* and the newspaper *Maeil Sinbo*, the Korean-language organ of the Japanese colonial government. Following liberation, he switched back to the name Yi Kwangsu.

Korean and Japanese context. But only in Korea, when ostensibly confronted with a Korean audience, was it possible for Yi to speak as an imperial subject first and a Korean second.

To return to the “Sankyō inshō ki” passage quoted earlier, I wish to point out that Yi omits his direct response to Hayashi’s demand. Instead, except for a brief remark that he “lost consciousness [from drinking], just as Mr. Hayashi had ordered,” he skips over the events of the night and goes straight to morning: “I was glad to have been able to spend a few hours on the veranda after breakfast, bathed by the late autumn sunlight and forgetting the passage of time” (p. 73). He then closes with another waka in classical Japanese verse. The tension of last night has been resolved by returning to a place outside of time, through the practice of poetry composition.

This form of narration occurs once more in a later passage. Again, Yi is urged to drink, this time by Kawakami Tetsutarō. The narration slides into an internal monologue:

It seems that Mr. Kawakami also wants to get me drunk. That’s Mr. Hayashi Fusao’s trick. Probably thinking, *That Kayama, let’s get him to show his true colors*. Or else it may be that in a past life Mr. Kawakami and I were old friends from the Nara period, friends who drank themselves into oblivion in a barren field . . .

OK. I’ll drink. I won’t just show my true colors, I’ll own up about everything. I have nothing at all to hide from the world.<sup>156</sup>

In the same *Bungakukai* issue, one is able to read Kawakami Tetsutarō’s version of events in his article “Daitōa bungakusha taikai zengo” (Before and After the Greater East Asian Writers’ Conference).<sup>157</sup> The article is listed immediately before “Sankyō inshō ki” in the table of contents and is a much shorter account of the sightseeing activities Kawakami participated in. According to Kawakami, he and Yi – introduced in the text as “Mr. Kayama Mitsurō (old name Yi Kwangsu)” – went out to a bar with Kusano Shinpei. “Kayama usually refrains from drinking

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<sup>156</sup> Page 76. The term he uses for “world” is the Buddhist word “shujō,” which refers to living things and/or people and, by extension, the world.

<sup>157</sup> *Bungakukai* 10:1 (January 1943), pp. 56-61.

*sake* when in the presence of other people,” Kawakami remarks, “but [after drinking] he became extremely talkative, probably from the excitement of the day” (p. 60). He goes on:

I was constantly struck by his sincerity. When I didn't know a certain historical fact, I was truly very pleased to be told by Kayama, “You are not yet Japanese (*Nihonjin*).” Nevertheless, whenever he offered us his self-confessions with unnecessary emphasis, we fell into gloom, reading a certain tragic shadow in his expressions. Whether for that reason or not, when at the end of the night I told him *I'll take in your son when you die*, he took me seriously. *Then please raise him into a fine, respectable Japanese person*, he urged me, and gripped my hand. (p. 60)

It is impossible to know if the two authors intended the accounts to be read together or if they wrote about the incident separately. For the reader of the journal, however, the effect is such that one account becomes incomplete without the other. On the one hand, the two work together to prove Yi's confessions are sincere. We can trust Kawakami's account that Yi “took [Kawakami] seriously,” for example, because that sincerity is made a cornerstone in Yi's own essay. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the two texts open up troubling questions without resolution. In Yi's version, we learn that Yi's seemingly spontaneous drinking was in fact *coerced*, pushed upon him by Kawakami. “We drank,” according to Kawakami; “I was urged to drink,” according to Yi. This small but telling difference in grammar may also help explain why Kawakami notes the “tragic shadow” on Yi's face but stops short of pursuing the reasons for it. For Kawakami, Yi's inscrutable nature appears to have no cause because Kawakami does not (or cannot) acknowledge his own complicity. Likewise, Yi's declaration that Kawakami is not “Japanese” is made nonthreatening by Kawakami through his use of the seemingly innocuous adverb “nevertheless.” Any possible connection between Yi's statement *You are not Japanese* and the “tragic shadow” on his face is negated because of it, and the power structures of colonialism are left untouched.



In “Sankyō inshō ki,” Yi’s confession that he will “own up about everything” is left strangely incomplete; the reader never hears the actual confession. The details of dialogue and action are stripped away, leaving only one transcendent moment of resolution. This is a moment, furthermore, that does not get conveyed to Kawakami through direct speech but through indirect prose, through the medium of the text and reader. My aim here is not to declare one account over the other as more “true” or “real.” Neither is it to refute or support the post-liberation condemnation of Yi Kwangsu’s Japanese language texts as “collaborationist” writing. Instead, I wish rather to ask on what terms the works were written and received, and how the format of the journal could encourage some meanings and discourage others through juxtaposition and context.

In the context of early 1940s Tokyo, it is true that a colonial writer could speak back to the colonizer by using his language. But while he might have been granted a textual space to speak, this textual space was already structured by the forces of politics and commercialism and shaped by the demands of the readership. In the case of *Bungakukai*, Kawakami Tetsutarō would have the last word – literally, in the form of the editorial postscript (*kōki*) commonly found in Japanese journals to this day. In the postscript, Kawakami writes: “Yi Kwangsu-kun was very grateful when I showed him around Tōshōdai-ji.<sup>158</sup> So I told him, *Show me your thanks by giving me a manuscript!* . . . What may seem like clumsy indignation to naichi literary circles (*bundan*) is really his sincerity and merit” (p. 152). Here, Yi’s writing is at one stroke set apart from the metropole *and* from the hallowed grounds of literature as represented by the *bundan*; it is to be judged not on its literary worth but on the “sincerity and merit” of its confessions.

Kawakami’s use of Yi’s Korean name also relegates him once again to the role of the Other whose words are always judged against his ethnicity. It is worth noting that while the

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<sup>158</sup> The use of the title *kun* connotes a casual, friendly relationship between Kawakami and Yi, but the hierarchy is ambiguous; the title can be used by a friend to another friend or by a superior to a subordinate. Tōshōdai-ji is a temple in Nara. Interestingly, the temple is only briefly mentioned in Yi’s account.

participants from Korea and Taiwan were officially treated as “Japanese” representatives, in the Kawakami article the participants are referred to as *gaichi* (periphery) representatives. Even more significant is the fact that although there were five representatives from Korea – Yi Kwangsu, Pak Yōnghŭi, Yu Chin-o, Terada Akira, and Karashima Takeshi – the three Korean writers were consistently differentiated from the Japanese intellectuals by their ethnicity.<sup>159</sup> The transcendent moments of stillness and resolution imagined by Yi could not hold, in the end; and despite his protestations otherwise, the distinction between “Japanese citizen” and “imperial subject” would remain firmly in place. At the same time, it is important to remember that the category of “Japanese citizen” was also internally fissured, and subject to the same hierarchies of place that privileged the hegemony of the metropole. In order to explicate this point, I turn now to Obi Jūzō’s “Tōhan,” a work that presents a vision of *naisen ittai* from the perspective of a conflicted Japanese settler in the peripheries.

### **CLIMBING EVER UP: “TŌHAN”**

Obi Jūzō was born in 1909 in Yamanashi Prefecture and died in 1979. He attended a local commercial school in Yamanashi for one year but dropped out at the age of 15, enrolling instead at a train driving school in Nagano. In his youth he took on a variety of jobs related and unrelated to the railway, and became involved in various leftist movements (only to recant his sympathies later). He eventually found work in the colonies as a teacher, first in northern Korea and later in Shinkyō (present-day Changchun), then the capital of Manchukuo.

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<sup>159</sup> The writer Pak Yōnghŭi (1901–?) was a member of the proletarian literary movement in Korea in the early 1930s but underwent an ideological conversion (*tenkō*) after he was arrested for his activities in 1934. Yu Chin-o (1906–1987) was a writer, law scholar, and (after liberation) politician. He is also known for drafting the Republic of Korea’s first constitution. Terada Akira (1893–?) was the chief of the Arts and Cultural News Department of *Keijō nippō*, the official Japanese-language organ of the Government-General. Karashima Takeshi (1903–1967) was a scholar of Chinese literature who taught at Keijō Imperial University.

It was in Manchuria that Obi began writing “Tōhan.” The short story was published first in *Kokumin bungaku* in February 1944 and re-published ten months later in *Bungei shunjū* as the 19<sup>th</sup> Akutagawa Prize winner.<sup>160</sup> Modeled in part on Obi’s own life, the story depicts the relationship between the Japanese teacher Kitahara Kunio (北原邦夫) and his Korean student An Juzen (安壽善; Korean reading, An Susōn). At the beginning of the story, Kitahara is a teacher at a school in Shinkyō, having been transferred there from Korea. He receives a desperate note from Juzen, a former student from his previous school in Korea; Juzen is under suspicion by the police, and needs Kitahara to vouch for his good character. The postcard triggers a long flashback sequence where the reader learns how the two characters became so close. While Juzen had originally been a “problem” student, he gradually blossomed into a loyal subject of Japan under the constant care and supervision of Kitahara. Troubled by Juzen’s note and refusing to believe he would have reverted to his former ways, Kitahara writes to the head teacher and principal at his former school and urges them to help Juzen. At the end of the story, Kitahara receives two letters from his former pupil. The first asks Kitahara to “cast him aside” because “the polluted and corrupted blood” (p. 139) of his (abject, Korean) mother runs through him. The second reverses position; Juzen declares that, despite his tainted ethnic blood, he has found the resolution to live as a “Japanese” (*Nihonjin*). The story ends with Juzen’s final words to Kitahara: “Farewell.”

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<sup>160</sup> *Kokumin bungaku* 4:2 (February 1944), pp. 78-143. *Bungei shunjū* 22:12 (December 1944), pp. 23-63. Unless otherwise noted, page citations refer to the *Kokumin bungaku* publication. “Tōhan” was also anthologized in *Akutagawa shō zenshū daiōkan* (Tokyo: Oyama Shoten, 1949). In the author’s postscript, Obi Jūzō notes that the story was first published in *Kokumin bungaku* through the aid of Yamada Seizaburō, who at the time was living in Manchuria along with Obi; and his “friend in poetry” Abe Ichirō (who was friends with Ch’oe Chaesō). Iwakura Masaji (who had previously published a story in *Kokumin bungaku*) was the one who recommended Obi’s story for the Akutagawa Prize. See pages 285-287. As mentioned in Chapter 1, it is important to keep in mind these personal, elite connections in thinking about the “free” circulation of texts.

In the editor's notes at the end of the December 1944 *Bungei shunjū* issue, it is noted that "Tōhan" is a story about the issues surrounding *naisen ittai* and "the problem of our Korean brethren."<sup>161</sup> The text begins with a short, evocative description of the "green glossy" leaves of poplar trees being battered by snow and wind – a landscape that is forbidding and devoid of people, nameless and placeless. Strangely, with only a line break to mark the change, the scene then shifts to a different kind of narration entirely, one that begins with a call to "my teacher" (*sensei*) from "me" (*watakushi*). From the diction and the content, we are made to understand that this is a letter written by someone who calls himself "a Korean – no, a single human being" (p. 79). When the letter ends we are finally introduced to the man reading it: Kitahara Kunio. After finishing the letter, Kitahara gazes out the window and notices the landscape earlier described. Suddenly he realizes that he has seen the same sight before: "A single picture rapidly unfolded beyond the cloudy window glass. In that picture as well, snow was piled on glossy green leaves. And Kitahara and Juzen were gazing at the scene in deep contemplation" (p. 79). The long flashback then unfolds.

On the page, these shifts in narrative point of view and time are marked only by dashes and line breaks. The deliberately dialogic voices introduced at the beginning are finally unified by Kitahara's all-encompassing gaze: the landscape, the letter, the rift between past and present can all exist simultaneously on the same textual plane because it is Kitahara's interiority that provides the locus for contextualization. Juzen – or rather his textual presence, as represented by the letter – is not set apart from Kitahara but made intimately part of him. Interestingly, it is only as a static picture that the two can be seen together as distinct and equal beings. The text seems torn between these two modes of media, representing two different strands of discourse: Korea as part of Japan textually; Korea as equal to but apart from Japan visually.

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<sup>161</sup> *Bungei shunjū*, p. 65.

This disjunction is replicated in the issue of names. The characters for Kitahara's first name, Kunio, are "country" and "man" – a highly suggestive pairing indeed. Juzen's last name, on the other hand, is given in the story as Yasuhara, the *sōshi* name his uncle chose for the entire family. At one point, Juzen asks Kitahara what he should do about his first name:

“ I think I've made up my mind. I want to change to a Japanese-sounding name . . . ”  
 “Japanese-sounding? But Koreans are perfectly respectable Japanese people too, you know.” (p. 92)

In the end, Kitahara convinces Juzen to keep the original characters but simply read them in the native Japanese way, as Hisayoshi. In the text, the two are consistently referred to as 北原 and 壽善, as if in an attempt to avoid the political minefields entangled in the names 邦夫 and 安原. Furthermore, by using the name 壽善 (which is never glossed, aside from this one passage), the text is able to preserve the simultaneous possibility of Korean *and* Japanese identity (Susōn/Juzen/Hisayoshi), as suggested in Kitahara's comment above – *but only when perceived as text*. The act of speaking must necessarily prompt a choice of either/or. What I find significant is that Juzen's name is never glossed in dialogue, and never spoken by Juzen himself. The radical potential of a hybrid identity is made possible by the ambiguity of text, but is also limited by the very same.

For Kitahara, Juzen's physical body is an enigma, something to be read visually for clues into a hidden interiority. Juzen is first described as having “thin, bony cheeks and humorless eyes” (p. 82) that would at times hint at some unknown sadness. During a visit to Juzen's home, Kitahara learns that the reason for that sadness lies in the boy's family situation. His father having died young, Juzen and his younger sister were brought up in his uncle's home. But his mother (described by Juzen to Kitahara as lazy and selfish), clashed frequently with the uncle

and his wife over matters of work and money. Twice the mother ran away with her lover, bringing her children the first time but abandoning them the second; only after Juzen tirelessly pleaded on behalf of his mother was she allowed to come back to the uncle's house. When Kitahara learns of the situation, he does everything in his power to aid his pupil, going so far as to find student lodging and tutoring work that allows Juzen to become semi-independent. This situation considerably eases the tension between the mother and the uncle's family, and it further deepens the "love" (*ai*) between student and teacher.

Meanwhile, Kitahara's own family situation deteriorates after he discovers his wife's affair with another man. He decides to go hiking up Mount Kūmgang in order to find catharsis for his problems, and he invites Juzen to go along with him. The hike is more arduous than expected, and Juzen almost gives up at several points. Finally, however, Kitahara leads him to safety, supporting him with the climbing rope that connects them together.

The sound of Juzen's approach was conveyed through the ladder. There were only two steps left. He hauled the rope in and reached down for Juzen's hand with his own. Juzen's face was pale as he looked up and wordlessly gripped Kitahara's hand. He had taken off his gloves, and his hand was frozen cold and slightly trembling.

"Come on! Just keep going!" (p. 120)

Finally, the two crawl into a calm space protected by a hanging crag, where they are greeted by "the strange beauty of white snow piled on leaves that were still dark green and glossy" (p. 121). It is there that Juzen and Kitahara finally have a conversation:

[Juzen said,] "This must be what life is about."

"Hm?"

"This may sound brash (*namaiki*), but today I keenly felt that this is what life is all about."

"What do you mean? You do sound rather brash."

"I realized that life needs to be like this. Up until now, I had always blamed my own immorality and laziness on my environment. But today has really shown me that you can

do anything if you put your mind to it . . . I think today has had much more of an impact than all those hours of moral training over the years.” (p. 121)

This moment of confession takes place in a space that is deeply private and distinctly homosocial, one that has been enabled only after other gendered relationships (Juzen’s relationship to his mother, Kitahara’s to his wife) have been severed. Juzen avoids any mention of the political situation, instead opting to couch his observations through a universal rhetoric of “life.” (Just as, in his later letter to Kitahara, he chooses to supersede the ethnic category of “Korean” with the universal one of “human being.”) But because the text thus far has already conditioned the reader to see the metaphoric significance of this scene, through the deliberate language of the opening pages to revelations of Kitahara’s own dedication to *naisen ittai* to even the title of the story itself, it becomes all too easy to make the leap from the personal to the political. In a time when “even a single piece of paper is a bullet,”<sup>162</sup> the personal *must* be political. Juzen’s epiphany is all the more powerful in its seeming universality, first because it hides the actual mechanisms of force at play (Juzen’s reformation interpreted as “spontaneous,” rather than engendered by state laws and social pressure) and second because it suggests that subjectivity does not stand apart from the “current situation” (*jikyoku*) but emerges from it (subjectivity as unnarratable outside the hegemonic structure of *jikyoku*). Is this the true manifestation of *naisen ittai* – a transcendent moment of unity and self-transformation?

If so, it is a fleeting one, and incomplete. The passage ends with a reversal: now it is not Juzen but Kitahara who is speechless. Kitahara has successfully led Juzen to the “correct” path, but instead of showing the reader the next logical sequence – the two walking down the mountain together as equals, for instance – the scene ends on a note of silence and inaction:

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<sup>162</sup> Niwa Fumio, “Watashi no kokumin bungaku” in *Bungakukai* 11:2 (February 1944), p. 10.

Admittedly, he was unable to properly accept Juzen's deep emotions, made so clear by his unexpected words. Moreover, no matter what his sympathies, in these kinds of situations Kitahara did not like glibly revealing his thoughts. Nevertheless, while the meaning being conveyed was vague, he thought he could deeply understand, and he continued to gaze intently at the thick, deeply green rhododendron leaves, which almost seemed to slightly tremble under the falling snow. (p. 121)

What on first glance seemed like a celebration of *naisen ittai* appears, on closer examination, to be instead a more ambiguous tale of missed connections. For whatever reason, Kitahara finds himself unable to respond directly. Part of the reason may be that to do so would be to acknowledge the potentially subversive message behind Juzen's words. Having led Juzen to this moment of self-determination, Kitahara is now no longer needed, either as an educator (for "hours of moral training") or as a spiritual model. Thus rather than listening to Juzen's words, Kitahara tries to listen to the emotions behind them. But this leads to another stalemate as Kitahara finds himself unable to respond in kind. Instead, he finds himself projecting a memory onto the landscape: the rhododendron leaves "slightly tremble" in the snow, just as Juzen's hands did in the moment before Kitahara grasped them.

By returning to this earlier point in time – just before Juzen's revelation, just after Kitahara's gesture of assistance – Kitahara is able to recuperate, in a way, a position of authority. It is his gaze that once again provides context and meaning to the entire scene, and it is his gaze that returns the narration back to the present in the sentence that immediately follows: "The landscape that unfolded within Kitahara's breast as he gazed out the window at the snow falling on the poplar leaves was the snow on the rhododendron and Juzen's words at that time, brash for the boy that he was" (p. 121). The question of *naisen ittai* and Kitahara's own responsibilities in it has been safely deferred. What is also telling about this remark is that Juzen has been removed from the picture, so to speak; at this critical juncture, when everything has been thrown into



doubt, what remains is not the sight of Juzen and Kitahara together (the snapshot that began the story, one may recall) but the empty landscape of snow and leaves overlaid with Juzen's words.

Later that evening, Kitahara delves again into past memories "with an almost crazed single-minded intent" (p. 123) in order to reevaluate Juzen's "heart" (*kokoro*). In the new context created by the letter, what had seemed like a heartfelt confession now threatens to be exposed as a lie. He recalls an incident that occurred soon after the announcement of the Greater East Asian War. Juzen had failed to show up for class on the day when teachers were to collect "monetary contributions" from every student in the school. Kitahara, the narrator states, tried to "guess at the state of mind of Juzen, whom he loved" (p. 124) and concluded that the boy skipped school out of a sense of shame from being unable to afford a contribution. Later that day, a fellow boarder informed Kitahara that Juzen was at the fish market. When he went to the fish market to check, he found Juzen "dressed in filthy white Korean clothes" (p. 125) working at the docks. At that moment, "Kitahara experienced an unspeakable feeling at the sight of Juzen, a student who was connected to him through spiritual blood, in a sense" (p. 125). Still shocked, Kitahara left without speaking to Juzen. The next day, Juzen came to class with more than his fair contribution of money. Kitahara acknowledged the money "with a silent nod" (p. 126), hiding his own understanding from him.

Again and again in the story, the spiritual bond between Kitahara and Juzen is brought up against the physical barriers of the body. The sight of Juzen's body at the fish market is shocking not simply because of its ethnic markers but also because of its class. After all, Juzen looks just like his Japanese classmates when clothed in the standardized uniform of the school, allowing Kitahara to "forget" class biases and Juzen's home(ly) origins. Just as we saw in Kim Saryang's "Hikari no naka ni," these origins are not associated with his father or his uncle, a man who lives

in relative comfort and who had the means to learn Japanese, but with his uneducated, penniless mother.<sup>163</sup> Having insisted all this time on the community of spirit, Kitahara finds himself driven into silence when confronted with Juzen's dilemma: in order to prove himself a loyal "Japanese" subject, Juzen is expected to contribute money to Japan's war efforts, but he can only do this by working as a *Korean* laborer (and, in doing so, removing himself from the imperializing environment of the school). This is, furthermore, a dilemma Kitahara himself had helped bring about, as it was he who first urged Juzen to leave his family's care. Perhaps silence is the only way Kitahara can reconcile these contradictions – or rather, perhaps it is the only way he can avoid them.

Back in the present, Kitahara receives a letter from a former "naichijin" student with more news on Juzen. Unlike the letters from Juzen himself, this one is set apart from the rest of the text through quotation marks. The content of the Japanese boy's letter are not called into question; the words are taken as unproblematic tools for the conveyance of information. One may compare this to Juzen's two final letters, which are marked apart from the narration only by a dash mark, as was the case with the letter at the beginning of the story. Juzen's ultimate resolution – to "believe in the emperor" (p. 142) as a loyal *Japanese* subject, and to teach other "Korean brethren" to do the same – are again made part of Kitahara's own interiority, absorbed into the rest of the narration and made inseparable from it. At the end of the letter, Juzen rejoices in the fact that Koreans too will be conscripted for the war. He asks Kitahara if he remembers that day on the mountain: "My heart now and my heart then are no different" (p. 143). The implication is clear: *If you could believe in me then, you can believe in me now.*

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<sup>163</sup> Although I do not have the space to discuss the role of the mother in detail here, I should note that the mother often stands as a barrier to Juzen's educational and social advancement. A few days after receiving Juzen's letter, for example, Kitahara gets a letter from a former Japanese student informing him that Juzen has not been attending class for the past week because he has been taking care of his sick mother. The mother's death is what also forces a crisis in faith for Juzen, prompting him to write another letter to Kitahara asking him to "cast him aside."

On the one hand, the story as a whole can be taken as a straightforward celebratory message on the power of imperial discourse: the colonized man has successfully transformed himself through the help of the benevolent colonizer. With his inclusion in the empire via military participation, he is no longer an incomplete or inferior subject but an equal brother to his Japanese peer. The frequent use of the word “love” (*ai*), in this passage and throughout, only serves to emphasize and endorse this new homosocial bond. Takashi Fujitani has described this bond as “enabled by the absolute and hierarchized boundary that is formed between men and women. All men, Mainlander or Korean, must first reject all women, Mainlander or Korean, in order for the diverse men to realize their sameness.”<sup>164</sup> Fujitani goes on to argue that in this masculinized military space, the presence of any women, Korean or Japanese, comes to be seen as a threat “to warfare, the masculine bond, and hence the nation” (p. 149).

In his article, Fujitani discusses the discourse of sameness mainly from the position of the colonial subject. As we can see in “Tōhan,” however, the ambivalence of the colonizer further reinforced divisions of ethnicity and class. To return to the last pages of the story, Juzen’s words – the act of his confession – serves only to make Kitahara speechless a final time and bring the text itself to an end. If it is true that Juzen could only achieve his transformation through the death of his mother and the ethnicity she represented, it is also true that his transformation renders the Japanese man useless. While it may appear that Obi Jūzō gives the final word to Juzen by ending the story with the letter, I must reemphasize the fact that the words themselves can only be accessed *through Kitahara*. Juzen has once again been removed from the picture, this time quite literally; he remains unseen and out of the frame, separated from Kitahara by insurmountable mountains and miles. The contradictions in which the message of *naisen ittai* is

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<sup>164</sup> Takashi Fujitani, “The Masculinist Bonds of Nation and Empire: The Discourse of on Korean ‘Japanese’ Soldiers in the Asia Pacific War” in *Senri Ethnological Studies* 51 (2000), p. 149.

told – where Koreans are Japanese in spirit (words conveyed in memory and through correspondence) but also apart in reality (literally, in terms of place; historically, in terms of bloodlines and political status) can find unification only in silence, in the space beyond the page.

As mentioned before, “Tōhan” was first published not in Tokyo but in Keijō, in *Kokumin bungaku*. The editorial comments for that issue quotes Obi Jūzō as saying he wrote the story for the Korean youth “he loved deeply” and because he wanted to portray their “true spiritual growth” (p. 144). Here, the target audience is given as the generation closest to Juzen in spirit and age. Whether one reads the story as a celebration or a warning, an homage or an apology, may then depend on the relationship imagined between the author and the Korean youth being hailed. The silence could very well become an invitation to speak, or a pause in a dialogue that has already begun.

Chang Hyōkchu, meanwhile, interpreted the story as a call to *Japanese* writers of “Korean” literature. In the article “Chōsen bungaku no shinhōkō” (The new direction of Korean literature), Chang first redefines Korean literature as “returning home in a great leap to Japanese literature (*Nihon bungaku*) from its ethnic (*minzokuteki*) character through the use of kokugo.”<sup>165</sup> He acknowledges the rise of novels written by “naichijin” about Korea but criticizes the authors for not “entering the blood of the Korean people (*chi no naka ni haitte seikatsu suru*).” “Tōhan” is a rare exception, and he hopes that it will set a new example for future writers. Chang’s comments show one instance, at least, where the discourse of blood could be reversed with radical possibilities. It was not only possible but desirable for a “Japanese” person to become Korean *through literature written in Japanese*. Kokugo, when conceived of as an imperial language, could work both ways: it could incorporate Korea into Japan, but it could also do the reverse. Significant in this light is Chang’s decision to publish his thoughts in the Tokyo-based

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<sup>165</sup> *Bungaku hōkoku* 1944/11/10.

*Bungaku hōkoku*, the newsletter of the Patriotic Association for Japanese Literature. If Korean literature did not have to be confined by ethnicity, neither did it have to be confined by place.

In the *Bungei shunjū* issue, in contrast, Obi Jūzō's affiliations with Korea are not mentioned in the editor's comments. The journal's editor-in-chief, Fujisawa Kanji (1908–1989), instead places the story's significance within the larger context of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere:

The problem of our Korean brethren is, in a way, a deeply fundamental one that connects to Manchurian and Chinese minzoku problems and, consequently, to all the various minzoku in Greater East Asia. At this time, when broad tolerance and proper love are being urgently demanded from the Japanese (*Nihonjin*) themselves, the significance of this work is large. (p. 65)

Here again, as late as December 1944, we see the same kind of positioning of Korea we saw in 1937, where the peninsula is made into a gateway to and/or stronghold against the mainland continent. The target audience is identified as Japanese, but instead of mutual communication or change, what is called for is a one-directional “tolerance and love.” The Akutagawa Prize judge comments, published separately in the September 1944 issue of *Bungei shunjū*, all mention the work's timeliness and relation to the political situation (*jikyoku*) but stop short of discussing Korea's place in the Japanese empire.

It should be noted that the original *Kokumin bungaku* publication was edited upon its republication, with the most major changes being a significant reduction in references to the infidelity of Kitahara's wife and the deletion of heavily propagandistic passages mentioning *naisen ittai* policies. Im Chōnhye [Nin Tenkei] has posited that the former was most likely cut by the censors out of a desire to avoid “detailed depictions of private married life,” while the latter

was most likely cut by the author himself in consideration of the Japanese audience.<sup>166</sup> In one deleted passage, for example, Kitahara and an unnamed Korean teacher argue about how to achieve *naisen ittai*. The Korean teacher's argument is as follows:

“The fastest way is for Koreans to see the beauty of being Japanese (*Nihonjin*) by looking at the *naichijin* nearest them and using them as a model for developing their own selves, don't you think? In this light, I think [*naisen ittai*] is a much more serious issue for *naichijin* than for Koreans, broadly speaking. If each and every *naichijin* were a beautiful *Nihonjin* worthy of emulation, I think that *naisen ittai* would naturally become a reality before we even knew it.” (p. 98)

Kitahara immediately dismisses the teacher's arguments as “sophistry” meant to justify the “negligence” of the teacher and others like him. However, the comment does spur Kitahara to silently reflect on his own behavior. He is forced to admit that “rather than lecturing to Juzen all night with words, trying to live as a model *Nihonjin* would aid Juzen in solving his mental conflict” (p. 99).

While not every single reference to *naisen ittai* was omitted in the *Bungei shunjū* version, the cuts that were made serve to de-emphasize the mutual responsibilities and roles of the Korea-Japan relationship. Questions of Obi Jūzō's own literary position –was it blood or affiliation that mattered in the end? how do texts change when crossing borders? – would be all but forgotten in the metropole as the war situation deteriorated and journal after journal stopped publishing. Obi would find a modicum of success in Korea and Manchuria, where the war situation was not as dire. In Manchuria, for example, he was able to publish several stories in the Japanese-language journal *Geibun*, which at that time was being produced by Manshū Bungei Shunjūsha. Manshū Bungei Shunjūsha was established in 1943 by its parent company, Bungei Shunjūsha, as a way to counter increasingly severe paper shortages and economic circumstances. The relationship

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<sup>166</sup> Im Chōnhye [Nin Tenkei], “Akutagawa shō jushōsaku ‘Tōhan’ no kaizan ni tsuite” in *Kikan sanzenri* 1:1 (Spring 1975), pp. 171-182. Quote is from page 177.

between the Manchurian branch and its parent company may therefore count as another example of how capital generated in the peripheries was made to flow back into the metropole. In August 1945, a collection of short stories including “Tōhan” was released by Manshū Bungei Shunjūsha, just days before the official surrender of Japan. After the war, however, Obi Jūzō would be treated firmly as a “Japanese” writer, if even remembered at all – as complicated new political alignments, international treaties, and wartime amnesia would ensure his eventual exclusion from literary canons in Japan and Korea both.<sup>167</sup>

### **CHILDREN OF THE EMPIRE: “AIKOKU KODOMO TAI”**

As a final foray into the uncertain waters of colonial history, gender politics, and language, I would like to briefly introduce a third short story for comparison. In its January 1942 issue, *Bungei* published a short story entitled “Aikoku kodomo tai” written by a young Korean woman, Yi Chōngnae.<sup>168</sup> The story centers on the daily activities of young Akiko and her school friends as they go around their village collecting war funds, doing chores for the families of war veterans, planting and harvesting vegetables, writing letters to soldiers in the field, and so forth.<sup>169</sup> Although Akiko’s mother is hardworking and honest, their household has suffered because of Akiko’s constantly inebriated, debt-laden father, whose downfall began when his

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<sup>167</sup> In the author’s postscript to the 1949 *Akutagawa shō zenshū*, Obi Jūzō writes that many of his most “glittering” ideas were cut by the Korean Government General despite the “servile compromises” he had already made (p. 286). The comment raises interesting questions about the role of the Government-General of Korea in literary production, and one wonders to what extent Obi’s own position within the Korean *bundan* was influenced by these factors. The comment also reminds us that the “Japanese” population in Korea was by no means homogenous, nor was it always aligned with the metropole.

<sup>168</sup> *Bungei* 10:1 (January 1942), pp. 50-64. Chinese characters of the author’s name: 李貞來.

<sup>169</sup> The main character is most often referred to as “Akiko,” but scattered use of “I” in place of “Akiko” suggests that the story be understood through the first-person point of view of a child who still refers to herself in the third person, as is common in Japan. The use of pronouns is not consistent, however; at times Akiko is referred to as “Akiko-san,” for example. The kanji characters for Akiko (明子) could also in theory be read in the Sino-Korean pronunciation Myōngja, lending further ambiguity to the ethnicity of the characters and locale of the story.

tenancy was taken away by the “Kanda family” (p. 58), for unstated reasons. The father’s shameful miscounts has even driven Akiko’s brother to run away from home. One day on her way home from school, Akiko walks past “a father and mother with their two children diligently working a wheat field” (p. 60). The sight fills her with sadness as she can’t help but be reminded of her own family situation, and she thinks to herself, “All of us kokumin have to be like them. No, everyone else *is* like them. But only my family . . . ” (p. 60, ellipses in original).

Thinking that if they “work more and more, without being told by anyone to do so” (p. 60) they will be able to spur others to do the same, Akiko and her female friends throw themselves into the war effort. They are finally acknowledged by the school with a special award and written up in the newspaper under the article title “A Heartwarming Story about Military Girls” (*gunkoku shōjo no bidan*). After the article is published, Akiko’s brother finally comes back home and signs up for the voluntary soldier program. Her father also reforms himself, inspired by his daughter’s efforts, and becomes a hardworking worker again. The well-ordered harmony of the family – and, by extension, the empire – has been restored to its rightful balance all because of Akiko. Unlike the suspicion and hostility seen in stories like “Tōhan,” then, “Aikoku kodomo tai” argues that women and children do not pose a threat to “warfare, the masculine bond, and hence the nation” but are essential to them, albeit in subordinate and secondary roles.

Written in simple, sometimes stilted, and non-literary diction (for example, using the *desu / masu* form instead of *de aru*), the text seems incongruous with the rest of *Bungei*’s contents when taken on its own. Furthermore, it gives almost no hints on the setting of the story: Akiko and her friends all have “Japanese” names, they speak in Japanese, and they live in an unnamed village in “Japan” (*Nihon*) that could plausibly exist in the naichi. The relative



frequency of family names with characters of possible Korean origin<sup>170</sup> and a glancing reference to “Chinese children who come to steal eggs and yams and sugar” (p. 64) could be interpreted to suggest a Korean or Manchurian locale, but this is by no means verifiable. The only concrete clue the reader gets, when opening the journal to the first page of the story, is paratextual: the foreign characters of the author’s name, printed alongside the title.

On its own, then, and unmoored from its media context, “Aikoku kodomo tai” presents the same remarkable possibilities previously glimpsed in the other texts discussed in this chapter. Here is a portrait of an empire that has indeed become homogenized, one part unrecognizable from the others. The use of Japanese, the patriotic actions of the characters, and their dedication to the emperor are all things that have no ethnic base and no specific origin. And yet, paradoxically, it is this very quality that makes the story’s inclusion in *Bungei* seem incongruous. If the text was absent of the so-called literary qualities that would have been sought by the editors and readers of *Bungei*, a prominent *literary* journal published by one of the most formidable publishing houses in Japan, then what would have justified its inclusion?

The answer comes down to the tension between particularity and universality as represented by “Korean-ness” and “literary-ness,” as well as by the complicated intersecting vector of gender. In an explanatory note attached to the end of the story, the editors of *Bungei* explain that “Aikoku kodomo tai” was originally a submission to a literary contest sponsored by the Korean League for Concerted National Power. The author, the editors explain, is a sixteen year old girl who attended a *kokumin gakkō* in Chōlla Province and who now “lives with her farmer parents, helping out with the household” (p. 65). This brief biography is accompanied by a picture of Yi in white Korean clothing, her hair pinned back in a style common with Korean

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<sup>170</sup> Many Korean families chose to add an extra character to the family name for the “sōshi” part of “sōshi kaimei,” creating surnames such as 金村 or 李本.

women. While the Korean League was unable to “treat this work as a novel (*shōsetsu*),” they were so “deeply impressed” by the work and by the author’s youth that they created a special prize just for her. The editing staff also notes that while the original manuscript was written in pencil in “cramped” characters that filled the page, without any punctuation marks or line breaks, the editors of *Bungei* chose to insert punctuation and line breaks and fix obvious grammatical errors, especially when it came to “the large number of *dakuten* (voiced sound marks) mistakes.”

On the one hand, the publication of Yi’s work in *Bungei* supports the rhetoric of inclusion: Korean subjects (even women) could also be the faces and voices of the Japanese empire. On the other hand, this point could be made only by paradoxically marking them *as Korean* – through their names, their clothes, and the explicit editing of their words. In the case of Yi, the editors are careful to emphasize both her gender and her age, captured through the powerful medium of the photograph. A young, unmarried Korean woman from the countryside would have historically been one of the most disenfranchised groups in colonial Korea; her manuscript submission would have therefore been seen as rare and extremely valuable “proof” of Japan’s imperial reach. One may contrast this treatment in *Bungei* to the text’s earlier serial publication in the Keijō-based, Japanese-language newspaper *Chōsen shinbun* in October 1941. There, the author’s name is listed in *kanji* as 北沢貞来, with the last name most likely Japanese in origin and the first name most likely Korean.<sup>171</sup> Here again we see colonial tensions at play: the desire on the part of colonial authorities to place Korea on par with the metropole, through a model (and very material) manifestation of *naisen ittai*, versus the need to keep Korea distinct and separate in the metropole.

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<sup>171</sup> The last name would most probably have been read as “Kitazawa.” The first name is more ambiguous; it could have been read either in its Sino-Japanese pronunciation (Teirai), or in its Sino-Korean pronunciation (Chōngnae).

The editing of manuscripts is of course not limited to works by Korean authors, nor is the act of editing the purveyance of journal editors only. The essay that began this chapter is just one pertinent example. Hayashi Fusao's "Chōsen no seishin" was also published in *Bungei*, but in its 1940 Korean tokushū issue. The possibilities it raised of a "new literature of Asia" was therefore already contained by the particularity of Korea. As seen in Korean writers' attempts to align themselves with the Japanese state, the identifying category of "minzoku" would indeed prove separate from – but *not* equal to – "kokumin." On the other hand, without the specific format of the tokushū, one wonders if Korea would have been considered at all in discussions among naichi writers on the state and direction of "Japanese" literature. One might consider the *Yomiuri shinbun* "Watashi no shin seikatsu taisei" series mentioned previously, or the notorious *Kindai no chōkoku* (Overcoming Modernity) symposium, both of which featured Hayashi Fusao.<sup>172</sup> In no instance is Korea's position addressed in either of these proceedings.

In February 1942, *Bungei* published a dialogue between Chang Hyōkchu and Yu Chin-o, where the two were asked by an unnamed reporter to discuss the "state of Korean literature" and its future.<sup>173</sup> Speaking on the journal *Kokumin bungaku*, Yu points out that "naichi authors living in Korea" such as Tanaka Hidemitsu are also featured in the journal's pages. Thus "one cannot consider the Japanese-language volumes (*kokugo-ban*) of *Kokumin bungaku* as separate from

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<sup>172</sup> The *kindai no chōkoku* symposium took place in July 1942 in Tokyo and its proceedings published in *Bungakukai* in its September and October 1942 issues. Richard F. Calichman describes the symposium's aims as attempting to "go beyond what was considered to be the facile and unreflective discourse on Japan's new spiritual order so as to examine in more substantive terms the phenomenon of Japanese modernization and westernization since the Meiji period." See Calichman, *Overcoming Modernity: Cultural Identity in Wartime Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), x. Calichman notes the rhetorical conundrum present (but never explicitly addressed) in the participants' insistence on returning to a "native" Japanese identity: "[W]hat I would like to emphasize here is that the very attempt on the part of the Japanese people to aid or restore the origin that essentially determined who they are inevitably put that origin in jeopardy . . . The exteriority of the Japanese people vis-a-vis their original identity needed to be accepted according to the logic of representation, but only on the condition that this exteriority be an *outside of an inside*, in which the bond that tied these people back to their point of origin was privileged, as opposed to an *outside of an outside*, in which they were linked more tightly to the foreign as that which was doubly outside the ground of Japan" (pp. 9-10).

<sup>173</sup> "Chōsen bungaku no shōrai" in *Bungei* 10: 11 (February 1942), pp. 72-79.

naichi literary circles . . . in the end, it's rather the same thing as Kyushu literature" (p. 75). In contrast, Chang supersedes questions of language and ethnicity by defining kokumin bungaku as works that "conscientiously depict the lives of the kokumin" (p. 76). Once again we see in both instances a conscious attempt to view both Korean and Japanese literature as not necessarily defined through the lens of ethnic particularity. And yet, these terms have already always been circumscribed by the format of the printed conversation – titled "The Future of *Korean Literature*" after all, and presented as a dialogue between two (particularized) Korean individuals moderated by a (ethnically unmarked and thus universalized) Japanese reporter. This discursive paradox is further emphasized when the reporter brings up "Aikoku kodomo tai." Instead of considering it a kind of kokumin bungaku, as Chang's comment encourages one to do, the reporter instead marvels that the "new generation" of Koreans represented by Yi Chōngnae are taught to express themselves directly in Japanese. This, finally, is where all the participants of the dialogue find the answer to the question of Korean literature's future – in the transformation of the younger generation into fluent speakers of kokugo. What this might mean for the future of "Japanese" literature is a question that does not get spoken, let alone discussed.

In contrast, Maki Hiroshi (Yi Sōkhun, 1907–1950?) would lament in the Keijō-based Japanese-language journal *Ryokki* (Green Flag) two months later that debates in the metropole on kokumin bungaku were too narrowly fixated on the minzoku and "Japanese-ness," leaving the question of Korea's position unaddressed.<sup>174</sup> "The creation of a truly Japanese (*Nihon-teki*) kokumin bungaku," he declared, "can only happen after driving out ethnic nationalism (*minzoku shugi*) from the naichi literary circles . . . . We [authors in Korea] want to make it so that kokumin bungaku debates overcome this thing called 'minzoku' in favor of the more encompassing ideology of 'kokumin'" (p. 62). Significantly, in this essay the terms *Japanese*

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<sup>174</sup> "Kokumin bungaku no shomondai" in *Ryokki* 7.4 (April 1942), pp. 62-65.

*person* and *Korean person* are avoided. Identity is instead defined through place: people from the metropole are distinguished from people from the peninsula, but all are the same “Japanese nationals” (*Nihon kokumin*). Despite Maki’s strident call to naichi authors, however, in the end it would paradoxically only be in the exclusive and excluded domain of “Korean literature” that an inclusive definition of “Japanese literature” could be imagined at all.

What is notable about “Aikoku kodomo tai” is that the transformation from the personal (in the form of the hand-written manuscript) to the public (in the form of the published text) was made a double-edged process of inclusion and exclusion both. In other words, Yi’s public inclusion in *Bungei* was predicated on her ethnic and literary exclusion as a Korean woman from the countryside with limited education and even more limited financial independence. What was valued by the editors of *Bungei* and the judges of the Korean League was not the style or content of the work but the fact that she could write in kokugo at all. In a way, the comments of the (male) editors and judges can be linked structurally to the established system of journal contests featuring reader submissions. Literary contests aimed specifically for women were common in Japan, with winning submissions often praised along certain gendered attributes – for their so-called simplicity, for example, or their gentleness. How we might understand Yi’s text and others through this practice of reader submission and literary judging is an open question that invites further research.

In these two chapters, I have sought to show that at no point during Japan’s imperial history did the line between “Japanese” and “Korean” get erased completely. Although it is often understood that the *kōminka* movement introduced a new paradigm of the “imperial subject,” we must also remember that it could mean different things to different people based on the multifracted alliances of class, gender, ethnicity, and place. To rephrase a question posed at the

beginning of this chapter, what does all this mean for the relationship between metropole and periphery? For example, when Hayashi Fusao called for the literature of Japan (*Nihon no bungaku*) to “recover [its] true nature” and cultivate “a heart of imperial loyalty” in an essay written for the Overcoming Modernity symposium in 1942 entitled “Kinnō no kokoro” (A Heart of Imperial Loyalty), it is unlikely he was thinking of the colonial writers who also lived in the amorphous space of “Japan.”<sup>175</sup> When contextualized historically, however, his comments cannot help but expose a logical trap, a Catch-22: colonial writers *must* be included in the “literature of Japan” for the sake of an imperial expansion justified as imperial benevolence, and yet their inclusion inevitably belies the existence of any single, essential, or “true” Japanese nature.

Hayashi’s “Chōsen no seishin,” the 1940 essay that began this chapter, sketched out the possibilities of a Greater East Asian literature but shied away from spelling out the potential consequences for the metropole. Pairing that essay with Hayashi’s Overcoming Modernity comments yields an intimation of why those potential consequences were never realized: the logical trap of *kōminka* was not opposed to or set apart from the colonial order but constitutive of it. Although Hayashi never used the word *kōminka* in “Kinnō no kokoro,” he employed the same vocabulary of personal moral cultivation and imperial loyalty that was the very warp and woof of imperialization in the colonies. The difference, of course, is that the epistemic gap between “naichi” and “Nihon” could be elided in that essay because the indeterminacy of those terms was itself the means in which differentiation from the peripheries was justified and

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<sup>175</sup> Hayashi Fusao, “Kinnō no kokoro” in *Bungakukai* 9:10 (October 1942), p. 27.

maintained. The idea of an essentialized, indivisible “Japan” may have been a fiction, but – to borrow a phrase from Timothy Mitchell – it proved to be a nondisposable one.<sup>176</sup>

In the immediate postwar period, both Hayashi Fusao and Yi Kwangsu were attacked for their vocal pro-imperial stances during the war. While I will go into detail about this issue in Chapter 4, here I wish to echo the conclusions made by John Whittier Treat in his study of Korean collaboration with the Japanese during the late colonial period.<sup>177</sup> Treat points out that “the trajectory of Korean literature for better or for worse cannot be traced without reference to Japan’s own” (p. 87). He adds that the “collaboration” between Korean and Japanese writers produced a body of work that “strove in tandem for cognates Japanese *kindai* and Korean *kūndae* ‘modern’: a goal that became politically and catastrophically collaborationist when that word was metonymically exchanged (this time in the Japanese language alone) for the racialist category of *Nihonjin*” (p. 88). The thorny issue of “collaborationist” versus “resistance” literature that exploded within Korean literary circles immediately after the country’s liberation in 1945 would emerge in part because the same ideologies of national identity and national language were adopted, albeit infused with a new national context. Meanwhile, in Japan, the memory of a time when Koreans were also (at least in theory) Japanese could easily be banished because those divisions had always been preserved, if in terms that varied throughout Japan’s imperial past. This revision of the past would have far-reaching consequences for the trajectory of the

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<sup>176</sup> Timothy Mitchell, “The Stage of Modernity” in *Questions of Modernity* ed. Timothy Mitchell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 12. Mitchell raises the issue of “nondisposable fictions” vis-à-vis historiographies of modernity and colonialism. “It is a question of asking what other histories must be overlooked in order to fit the non-West into the historical time of the West” (p. 11) he observes, and goes on to use “the story of capitalism” as an example of how “one can borrow capitalism’s notion of the non-capitalist, the West’s notion of the non-West, and modernity’s notion of the non-modern, and ask what these nondisposable fictions suppress” (p. 12).

<sup>177</sup> John Whittier Treat, “Choosing to Collaborate: Yi Kwang-su and the Moral Subject in Colonial Korea” in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71:1 (February 2012), pp. 81-102.

modern literary “canon(s)” in postwar Korea and Japan, a topic I will delve into in Chapters 3 and 4.



### CHAPTER 3

#### Postcolonial Legacies and the Divided “I” in Occupation-Period Japan

*Although it sounds strange, at the time I still couldn't read Korean. When I first learned about Korean literature, it was through the Japanese language. Kim Saryang was the one who translated and introduced it to me.*

– “Rōdō to sōsaku,” Kim Talsu

#### INTRODUCTION

The unconditional surrender of Japan on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945 introduced a decisive discursive break for what had previously been an empire spanning across Northeast and Southeast Asia. Changes, of course, do not occur overnight, and many of the same prewar institutions would carry over, in only slightly modified form, into the postwar period. As Andrew Gordon has noted, the Allied forces that arrived in Japan that September were “determined to engineer a root-and-branch transformation of Japan,” but their success was only partial and controversial at best.<sup>178</sup> On the one hand, lasting changes were implemented during the Occupation period (1945–1952) in the areas of land reform, labor reform, and women’s rights. On the other hand, the power of the old guard, as represented by political parties, *zaibatsu* (lit. “financial clique”) monopolies, and the bureaucratic system, would remain entrenched well into the next several decades. Still, it is undeniable that for many people – in Japan and outside it – the end of the war signaled the start of a new and uncertain era. In other words, according to

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<sup>178</sup> Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 242.

Carol Gluck, “although many Japanese lived their days in continuity, what they felt was change.”<sup>179</sup>

Nowhere were the possibilities of this new historical time more passionately debated than in the pages of Japan’s newspapers and literary journals. GHQ/SCAP (General Headquarters / Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), the organization in charge of shaping and implementing Japan’s postwar reforms, rigorously censored critical comments about the occupation via the CCD (Civil Censorship Detachment). Therefore outright evaluations of Allied policy would have to wait until 1949, when media regulations were finally lifted. This did not mean, however, that writers could not reflect on the legacies of Japan’s past or articulate visions of a better future. Newly freed Communist party members and leftist sympathizers in particular celebrated their freedom – literal and figurative – from the constraints of the prewar system and vociferously argued for a purge of all wartime collaborators. Members of the leftist literary organization *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* (Society for New Japanese Literature, formed in December 1945), were quick to raise the issue of collaboration, going so far as to publish a list of twenty-five authors who they believed culpable of war responsibility due to their literary and political activities.<sup>180</sup> Others were eager to place the burden of war responsibility on the former military regime; still others, such as Tamura Taijirō (1911–1983), denounced all ideology in favor of a life and literature of the flesh.

For Koreans, colonial subjects of Japan for the past thirty-five years, the end of the war meant something else altogether: liberation, and the promise of national autonomy. But for them

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<sup>179</sup> Carol Gluck, “The ‘Long Postwar’: Japan and Germany in Common and in Contrast” in *Legacies and Ambiguities: Postwar Fiction and Culture in West Germany and Japan* ed. Ernestine Schlant and J. Thomas Rimer (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1991), p. 67.

<sup>180</sup> Odagiri Hideo, “Bungaku ni okeru sensō sekinin no tsuikyū” in *Shin Nihon bungaku* 1:3 (June 1946), pp. 64–65. Among those listed include Kikuchi Kan, Kume Masao, Kobayashi Hideo, Hayashi Fusao, Satō Haruo, Yokomitsu Riichi, and Kawakami Tetsutarō.

too, change was neither as total nor as lasting as people might have hoped. The intervention of foreign powers led to the creation of the thirty-eight parallel, with Soviets in the North and the U.S. in the South by September 1945. The presence of the Soviet and U.S. forces only complicated efforts by Korean political leaders to construct new forms of government, and it created a split in how collaborators were defined and dealt with. While the North Korean government touted its efforts to purge anyone deemed to have actively assisted the Japanese, the South Korean government emphasized an anti-communist stance while continuing to rely on Koreans who had served in the colonial bureaucracy or police force or who had benefited as landlords under Japanese rule.<sup>181</sup>

For Koreans living in Japan during this time, Japan's surrender meant something else again. For some it was a call for celebration, and a return home for those who had been forced or coerced into working for Japan's war engine. Others, in their self-identification as Japanese *kōmin*, wept along with their Japanese peers; the celebrated *zainichi* (resident Korean) poet Kim Sijong, for example, would later recall that he "could hardly eat for a week or so" when he heard of the defeat.<sup>182</sup> For the many Koreans who had lived most or all of their lives in the metropole, the future was an uncertain thing. Return, for them, would have meant a strange exile to a foreign "home." I do not use the word exile lightly: in the early months of 1946, SCAP expressly prohibited unauthorized border crossings between Japan and Korea, ostensibly because of public health concerns at first and then later for reasons of public security (i.e. the threat of black

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<sup>181</sup> As Charles Armstrong has shown, however, the early North Korean legal system in fact combined aspects of both Japanese colonial law and Soviet law, and the colonial infrastructure of policing and surveillance remained much the same. See Armstrong, "Surveillance and Punishment in Postliberation North Korea" in *positions* 3:3 (1995), pp. 695-722. For a nuanced discussion of the collaboration controversies in South Korea, see Koen de Ceuster, "The Nation Exorcised: The Historiography of Collaboration in South Korea" in *Korean Studies* 25:2 (2001), pp. 207-242.

<sup>182</sup> Kim Sōkpōm and Kim Sijong, *Naze kakitsuzukete kita ka, naze chinmoku shite kita ka* ed. Gyongsu Mun (Tokyo: Heibonsha), p. 17.

marketeers, communists, and other “subversives”). Illegal movement between the countries was not uncommon but it was difficult, dangerous, and costly. There was no knowing what awaited you, should you go; and no guarantee that you could return.

This chapter and the next dig deep into the sometimes chaotic, sometimes euphoric period between 1945 and 1952, when both Korea and Japan were under foreign occupation. In Chapter 3, I outline the complicated factors that led to the creation of a stateless Korean diaspora in Japan and highlight the responses of Korean and Japanese writers who saw these political conditions as a sign of an imperialist system still insidiously intact. In particular, I look at the early writings of Kim Talsu, a leftist Korean writer who is often seen as the “father” of *zainichi* literature.<sup>183</sup> The majority of scholarship on Kim focuses on his postwar fiction, particularly starting from the 1950s, but in actuality Kim began to publish Japanese-language fiction before 1945; his career thus serves as a pertinent example of continuity amidst change.

Kim was also an active member of the Japan Communist Party and the leftist literary organization *Shin Nihon Bungaku kai*, demonstrating how Koreans in Japan actively sought out partnerships with their Japanese peers, and vice versa. Examining the complicated interactions between these two communities will therefore also contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the position of the Japanese leftist writers and organizations that dominated the political and literary scene in Occupation-period Japan.<sup>184</sup> I therefore begin this chapter with a consideration

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<sup>183</sup> Kim Talsu wrote under a variety of pseudonyms (see Appendix: Names); here, I employ the McCune-Reischauer romanization of the name most commonly known in English-language scholarship.

<sup>184</sup> Marxism enjoyed a surge of popularity in immediate postwar Japan, as elsewhere in Asia, in part because of what was seen as its ability to resist the imperialism and militarism that (it was argued) had led Japan down the wrong path. Many newly leftist writers who were liberated from prison post-1945 were able to use their wartime incarceration as proof of their “resistance” against the authoritarian state; Miyamoto Kenji (1908–2007), Miyamoto Yuriko’s husband and an active member of the JCP, is just one example. For more information on the rise of leftist literature/politics in the postwar period, see Tomi Suzuki, “Henkaku to renzokusei e no hihyō seishin: kaisetsu” in *Senryōki zasshi shiryō taikai, bungaku-hen* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2010); John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*

of Miyamoto Yuriko's *Banshū heiya* (The Banshū Plain, 1946–7), one of the first Japanese novels to depict Koreans in postwar Japan. Miyamoto Yuriko was also a member of *Shin Nihon bungaku kai*, and *Banshū heiya* was serialized in its monthly journal *Shin Nihon bungaku* (New Japanese Literature). While the post-1945 fiction of both Miyamoto and Kim celebrated the end of the Japanese empire, the forms their narratives took ironically replicated the same hierarchies of metropole and periphery, universality and particularity, constructed during the colonial period. I elaborate on this point by looking closely at how Koreans in Japan were politicized in both *Shin Nihon bungaku* and the related journal *Minshu Chōsen* (Democratic Korea), which was one of the most prominent Japanese-language journals produced by Koreans in the immediate postwar period.

Kim Talsu was a founding member and leading editor of *Minshu Chōsen*, which ran from the years 1946 to 1950. The journal was quick to align itself with North Korea and the progressive left in Japan, and it insistently called for the complete autonomy of “we the Korean people.” In doing so, it reversed the former relationship of metropole and periphery: Koreans in Japan were peripheral but constitutive members of a *minzoku* (people / ethnos) – but *not* a nationality, as I outline below – whose “legitimate” place was on the Korean peninsula. At the same time, the Japanese language of the journal constrained the reading audience to Japan and complicated the position of Korean writers, to whom Japanese was no longer *kokugo* (national language) but *Nihongo* (Japanese language). I demonstrate this point through close readings of Kim Talsu's short story “Gomi” (Trash), which was first published in 1942 in *Bungei shuto* and re-published with significant revisions in two parts (entitled “Gomi” and “Jinkaisen kōki” [Trash Barge Postscript]) in 1947. By examining the differences in the 1942 and 1947 version and

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(New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), particularly Chapter 7, Embracing Revolution; and J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

contextualizing both versions against essays written by Kim and fellow *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* member Nakano Shigeharu, I am able to map the evolving position of Koreans in Japan and the eventual emergence of “zainichi” as a distinct discursive term.

### **TRAVELING ACROSS THE NATION: MIYAMOTO YURIKO**

Miyamoto Yuriko was born Chūjō Yuri, the eldest daughter of the prominent architect Chūjō Seiichirō (1868–1936). Educated at Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School (present-day Ochanomizu University Junior and Senior High School) and Japan Women's College, Miyamoto was an astute and precocious student. Her first novel, *Mazushiki hitobito no mure* (A Flock of Poor People, 1916), was published in her first year at Japan Women's College by *Chūō kōron*, to great acclaim. She followed it with several other short stories and novels, of which *Nobuko* (1924–26) is perhaps the most famous. Often taken as a semi-autobiographical story, it depicts the psychological frustrations of a young woman who struggles to balance the obligations of married life with her desire for creative and social freedom. In 1930, following a prolonged stay in Soviet Russia, Miyamoto joined the All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts (NAPF); in 1931, she joined the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and there met the literary critic and activist Miyamoto Kenji, whom she later married in 1932. Their married life together was short-lived, however, as Miyamoto Kenji was arrested for his communist activities in 1933 and imprisoned until the end of the war freed him in 1945. Miyamoto Yuriko herself was arrested repeatedly between the years 1932 and 1942, and it is thought that the deteriorating health caused by her incarcerations contributed to her early death in 1951.

In *Banshū heiya*, which began serialization in *Shin Nihon bungaku* in March 1946, Miyamoto vividly chronicles the postwar confusion and chaos of a Japan still reeling from the

aftermath of defeat.<sup>185</sup> News of the war's end reaches the novel's protagonist, Hiroko, just as it reached thousands of others in reality, all at the same moment: through the radio broadcast made by the Emperor at noon on August 15, 1945. For Hiroko, defeat soon transforms into hope – and more specifically, into the possible release of her husband Jūkichi, who has been in jail as a political prisoner for the past twelve years. But for the island nation of “Japan,” defeat is a much more ambiguous, intangible thing: “August 15, from noon until one o'clock in the afternoon. History turned an enormous page without a sound.”<sup>186</sup>

For Japan *was* now an island nation, and not an empire anymore. Along with calling for the country's unconditional surrender, the Potsdam Declaration limited Japanese sovereignty to “the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine,” as previously outlined in the Cairo Declaration of 1943.<sup>187</sup> Taiwan and Manchuria were to be put under the control of the Republic of China, and Korea made independent again. But at the time when Miyamoto was writing *Banshū heiya*, the political status of Koreans both in Korea and in Japan remained far from independent. Even before August 15th, the thirty-eighth parallel had already been chosen by U.S. officials eager to establish spheres of influence on the peninsula; by 1948, two separate Korean governments had emerged. Meanwhile, Koreans in Japan during the Allied Occupation were officially still counted as Japanese nationals, albeit without certain key citizenship rights (such as suffrage) given to “Japanese proper.” With the Alien Registration Law

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<sup>185</sup> Serialization of *Banshū heiya* was complicated due to the irregular publication of *Shin Nihon bungaku* starting in July 1946. Original publication is as follows: section 1 in March 1946 issue of *Shin Nihon bungaku*; sections 2-5 in *Shin Nihon bungaku*, April 1946; sections 6-11 in *Shin Nihon bungaku*, October 1946; sections 16-17 (end) in January 1947 issue of *Chōryū* under the name “Kokudō” (National Highway). Sections 12 through 15 would not be published until the complete novel was released in book form by Kawade Shobō in April 1947. *Banshū heiya* is anthologized in *Miyamoto Yuriko zenshū* (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1979-1986) vol. 6, among other collections.

<sup>186</sup> *Shin Nihon bungaku* 1:1 (March 1946), p. 69.

<sup>187</sup> The complete text of the Potsdam Declaration has been made available online by the National Diet Library: <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c06.html>

of 1947, Koreans in Japan were forced to register as aliens. In 1952, they were stripped of Japanese citizenship.

The impact of these major developments may be glimpsed in a small but telling change made to the *Banshū heiya* text upon republication. In the book version released by Kawade Shobō in April 1947, the sentence quoted in the first paragraph has been revised as follows: “From noon until one o’clock in the afternoon on August 15, as all of Japan (*Nihon*) was stunned into speechlessness, history turned a colossal page without a sound.”<sup>188</sup> One can argue that *Nihon* before August 1945 was a word that was oriented outwards, encompassing and eclipsing its outer peripheries; as argued in Chapters 1 and 2, it often promised – but failed to materialize – a vision of an inclusive, multiethnic community. By 1947, however, there was no question that *Nihon* had been reoriented inwards and spatially reconfigured. It is because of this new reconfiguration of borders (physical and ethnic) that Miyamoto is able to conjure up a multitude of silent listeners, united in their shock and uncertainty.

Examining the structural role played by Koreans in *Banshū heiya* reveals the ways in which the idea of an ethnically homogeneous Japan was constructed vis-à-vis its former colonial subjects. Only a few days after Japan’s defeat, Hiroko receives word that her brother-in-law Naoji was in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb fell, and that no word has been heard of him since. Concerned about her in-laws’ welfare and recalling her husband’s injunction to look after his mother, Hiroko sets out by train from the northern reaches of Japan’s main island, Honshu, all the way to her mother-in-law’s home in Yamaguchi Prefecture, located at the island’s western tip. The journey is a long and arduous one, full of unexpected stops, schedule delays, crowded cars, and food shortages. At one point, she finds herself on a train with a boisterous group of Koreans intending “to repatriate to their home (*kokyō*) Korea, which was now striving for

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<sup>188</sup> Miyamoto Yuriko, *Banshū heiya* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 1947), 9.



independence.”<sup>189</sup> Although Hiroko cannot understand a word of their Korean conversation, their lively, cheerful attitudes hearten and attract her. Suddenly a nameless girl begins to sing “Arirang,” arguably Korea’s most famous folk song. The contrast between the joyous singing girl and the “dark, fetid train car” (p. 68) deeply moves Hiroko, and she listens to the song with silent concentration.

“All of Japan was stunned into speechlessness”: the later sentence revision takes on particular weight and importance in this light. Slipping in the gap between narrative interiority and external motion, between pauses of silence and moments of stillness, the Koreans in the novel serve as a powerful foil to the Japanese who surround them. Far from viewing them as a menacing presence, Hiroko is inclined to regard them with sympathy and a keen class consciousness. Her sense of camaraderie is further tempered by her acute awareness of her own position as a woman trapped in gendered expectations that bind her metaphorically to the train lines, and to the country those train lines traverse. Tellingly, the people she encounters in her travels are individuals who, in the masculinized, military time/space of an empire at war, would no doubt have been marked as peripheral, supplementary, abject, or Other: women, injured men, beggars, Koreans. With the radical discursive shift to a “postwar” time and space, however, the peripheral has suddenly become central. Although Miyamoto does not comment directly on this redefinition of periphery and center, it is the stark visibility of these moving, speaking, recovering individuals – and the conspicuous absence of soldiers, politicians, and able-bodied workers – that speak most eloquently of how the new spatial configurations are also social ones.

At the same time, however, what is noteworthy about this passage is the mechanics of translation at work in the text. When the Korean girl begins singing, the lyrics are not quoted but instead set apart from the rest of the text:

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<sup>189</sup> *Shin Nihon bungaku* 1:5 (October 1946), p. 67.

At that moment, the train gave a sudden shutter and began to move a little. Several voices hurriedly shouted something in Korean – probably *Get on quick*. The man leapt back on the train, and the train jolted and then ground to a stop once again. The people around him laughed. It was then that a girl’s clear, sweet voice rose up from the raucous crowd stuffed in the shadowy train compartment next door and began to sing the song of Ariran (Arirang):

Ariraan

Ariraan

Ariraan

Ariraan Crossing over . . . The voice sang the melody languidly, sinking into the swaying of the body like a hypnosis . . . The girl sang Ariran as if soaring up from the dark, fetid compartment, with a wonderful joyousness that could only be expressed through song. Hiroko listened to the song with her entire concentration. (p. 68)

Although the crowd of Koreans speak in Korean, the lyrics to the song are given not in Korean but in Japanese, and are undifferentiated from Hiroko’s Japanese narration. It is this translation into Japanese that allows the narration to slip from a description of the (othered) Koreans to the interiority of Hiroko who watches them. This translation is unspoken and unnoted, with no clear translator at its source. Is the Korean girl singing in Japanese? Is Hiroko replacing the Korean lyrics with the Japanese ones she knows? Although the oral roots of “Arirang” can be traced back at least as far as the mid-Chosŏn period (1392–1910), its codification as a *national* folk song (and, later, a transnational pop song) occurred under and in reaction to the colonial experience.<sup>190</sup> In effacing the mechanics of translation from the page, however, Hiroko also effaces the specific history of colonialism, and her own problematic position within it.

As Hiroko listens to the song, she gazes at the pines growing along the tracks from her seat in the unmoving train. Pines and Koreans are linked again at the very end of the novel, in a

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<sup>190</sup> E. Taylor Atkins has written about how “Arirang” was embraced by *both* Korean nationalists and Japanese colonizers during the colonial period, precisely as assimilation efforts increased. Atkins argues that its “persistent theme of loss spoke to Koreans of their lost sovereignty and to Japanese of the ravaging effects of modernity on traditional lifeways.” See Atkins, “The Dual Career of ‘Arirang’: The Korean Resistance Anthem That Became a Japanese Pop Hit” in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 66:3 (August 2007), 645–687. Atkins also notes that there were (and still are) many different “Arirangs” and that it may be more productive to talk of “Arirang” in terms of a skeletal framework, rather than as an “original” song and its variants.

passage that subtly inverts the previous one. Having learned that Jūkichi will be freed from prison due to the abolishment of the Peace Preservation Law, Hiroko sets off on a journey again – this time from west to east, to Tokyo. Once again she faces train delays, weather disasters, and uncertain roads. On the Banshū plain, located in the southern part of Hyōgo Prefecture, she encounters two young Korean men walking along the highway while whistling a jaunty tune. Hiroko observes, “All the Koreans she had seen in her journeys had been moving ever west – towards the Strait, always towards the Strait. But these youths were headed east.”<sup>191</sup>

The two begin to sing, and the novel concludes with the following observation:

The rumbling sound of the cart moving over the ruts was strangely harmonious with the cheerfulness of the youths. And it blended with the many different feelings that overflowed from Hiroko’s heart . . . The small neighborhood hedges passed by. Beyond the Akashi pine forest lay the ruins of a large factory, rusting away. Each sight left Hiroko with an indelible impression as she gazed at them. All of Japan [*Nihon*] was on the move. Hiroko felt this keenly. (p. 171, end)

Unlike her journey west, Hiroko’s return east – to Tokyo, to the center, to where a freed Jūkichi awaits – is marked by the restoration of sound and movement. All along, the voices of the Koreans have been threaded through the disparate elements of the plot. It is here that they find their final synthesis: through Hiroko, whose vision is able to encompass a “Japan” moving in synch with her at last. In this way, Koreans in the narrative work as both counterpoint and harmony; they stand in contrast to the Japanese, but also lead them forward to a future better than the past.

And yet here I am reminded of another image, from a mere two years ago: that of Kitahara and Juzen from Obi Jūzō’s “Tōhan” discussed in Chapter 2, huddled together on a mountain in the snow. Just as Juzen’s body disappears into Kitahara’s interiority in “Tōhan,”

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<sup>191</sup> “Kokudō” in *Chōryū* 2:1 (January 1947), p. 171.

here too do the Koreans' bodies disappear into a Japan that has no place for them. While many scholars have rightly dismantled the myth of mono-ethnicity in post-imperial Japan,<sup>192</sup> my focus here is to examine why such a swift shift in the conceptualization of Japan was possible. In Chapters 1 and 2, I argued that while the category of the imperial subject theoretically superseded ethnicity, Korea was always still differentiated from "Japan proper" through discourses of blood-based affiliation and national language as well as state institutions such as the family register. These methods of differentiation remained in place even after the war and could be easily mobilized for a range of purposes, whether arguing for Korean autonomy or the unity of Japan as a peaceful island nation. Thus it was possible for writers such as Miyamoto Yuriko – progressive, keenly sympathetic, and politically active – to replicate the same unequal structures of representation even as they tried to decisively break from the past. The Koreans in *Banshū heiya* are made into positive symbols of hope and independence, but by othering them as separate from and alien to Japan the nation. While this othering may seem diametrically opposite to the *naisen ittai* discourse of the colonial period, both work on similar processes of differentiation: only by marking the Koreans as apart *ethnically* can they be effectively mobilized to join the Japanese *spiritually*, in this case for the cause of democratic revolution.

The logic of ethnic nationalism, in which ethnic belonging to the nation is privileged over all other identities, was embraced in the immediate postwar period by writers not only in Japan but in Korea as well.<sup>193</sup> The predominance of ethnic nationalism had immediate consequences

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<sup>192</sup> Some examples of many include Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: Time Space, Nation* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1998); Oguma Eiji, *Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 1995); John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); and Chōng Yōnghye, "*Tamigayo*" *seishō: aidentiti, kokumin kokka, jendā* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003).

<sup>193</sup> Gi-Wook Shin has noted that ethnic nationalism in Korea developed during the colonial period in response to (and counter against) colonial racism and assimilation efforts, and he traces the different manifestations ethnic nationalism took after the division of the peninsula in 1945. See *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

for the Korean population in Japan, as they were associated with the Korean – and not Japanese – nation. However, in an essay on *Banshū heiya*, the scholar Haya Mizuki has argued that the unusual scene featuring Koreans traveling from west to east, away from Korea, shows that already during this early postwar period there were Koreans who had no choice but to stay in Japan, due to complicated economic, political, and social factors.<sup>194</sup> Yi Yōngch’ōl, in contrast, has criticized Haya on this issue of choice. He emphasizes instead the subjectivity and active political role played by Koreans in Japan, arguing that “they were not simply passive objects that were ‘liberated’ or an abstract ‘Korean people,’ but individuals who could share in the joy of liberation precisely because they had resisted the Japanese state along with their oppressed peers.”<sup>195</sup> He links the Korean youths in *Banshū heiya* to Korean intellectuals such as Kim Talsu, people who had been sympathetic to the prewar Japanese communist movement and who occupied central positions in pro-communist zainichi organizations such as Chōren (League of Koreans in Japan, discussed below).

While Korean leftist writers and activists made public efforts to work with their Japanese peers, most notably by joining organizations such as the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and *Shin Nihon bungaku kai*, they were also keenly aware of the marginalized status they held as ethnic minorities in a country that refused to offer them legal protection as such. The period from 1945 to 1952 has often been skipped over in favor of the late 1950s and early 1960s by zainichi scholars, who see the origins of a recognizable body of so-called zainichi literature in self-identified zainichi authors such as Kim Talsu, Kin Kakuei (Kim Hagyōng, 1938–1985), and Ri

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<sup>194</sup> Haya Mizuki, “*Banshū heiya* ron: hyōshō to shite no “Chōsenjin” in *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō* 71:4 (April 2006), pp. 158-164.

<sup>195</sup> Yi Yōngch’ōl, “Miyamoto Yuriko *Banshū heiya* shiron” in *Chōsen daigakkō gaku* 8 (2008), p. 179. Interestingly, Kim Talsu wrote positively about *Banshū heiya* in his essay “Nihon bungaku no naka no Chōsenjin,” published in *Bungaku* in January 1959. He does not address the question of why the youths may be heading east but groups them with the other “liberated Koreans” (p. 20), perhaps because the terms of his essay – where “Koreans” and “Japanese” stand in as monolithic terms – would have prevented him from doing otherwise.

Kaisei (Yi Hoesŏng, 1935– ). In this chapter and the next, however, I argue that an examination of the literary texts produced during the Occupation period is crucial for understanding the distinct genre of *zainichi* literature that emerged later. The writers affiliated with *Minshu Chōsen* were quick to politicize their status as Koreans *in* Japan but not *of* it – non-complicit victims of the Japanese state, in other words, and therefore the most qualified voices to criticize it. In reifying the binary between Korean/Japanese, however, they also led *zainichi* literature to the same fate: it was conceptualized as literature written in Japanese (*Nihongo bungaku*) but not “Japanese literature” (*kokubungaku / Nihon bungaku*).

## KOREANS IN JAPAN

Before beginning any literary analysis, I will need to briefly explain the major political developments that took place during this tumultuous time. By the end of the war there were over two million Koreans living in Japan. The population was a diverse and fluid one, with constant border crossings despite the necessity of travel certificates.<sup>196</sup> Early migration to Japan was composed largely of male laborers brought over to work at factories or on construction sites. The men often lived close together in hastily constructed barracks – Koreans were consistently denied housing by Japanese landlords even after the war – and considered their sojourn a temporary one. By the early 1930s, however, the number of long-term residents had almost doubled. Men who had established themselves in Japan first later sent for their wives and children, and many of these families helped friends and family back home immigrate to Japan as well. As a result, communities sprang up that were defined as much by regional affiliations as they were by larger connections of ethnicity. In Aichi Prefecture, for example, 47.1% of the

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<sup>196</sup> Tonomura Masaru, *Zainichi Chōsenjin shakai no rekishigaku-teki kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ryokuin Shobō, 2004), pp. 31-2. The statistics quoted in this section are also from the same book.

resident Korean population in 1940 came from South Kyōngsang alone, while residents from South Chōlla (which included Cheju Island at the time) composed 36.5% of the Korean population in Osaka.

Close ties were maintained with the home villages and counties in Korea through branch organizations. Travel routes between Korea and Japan facilitated the transportation not only of people but also of information, goods, and money throughout the colonial period. As the Second Sino-Japanese War progressed, demand for labor rose and with it a new influx of Korean workers. The conscription of Koreans for labor – including women forced into military prostitution as so-called “comfort women” – has been discussed at length by a number of prominent scholars, including Pak Kyōngsik and Ueno Chizuko.<sup>197</sup> However, it is important to remember that a stable resident population continued to exist throughout World War II, consisting of not only first-generation but now also second-generation individuals that would form the core of the postwar zainichi community.

The multiplicity of terms used pre-1945 to describe the Korean population in Japan – *zairyū Chōsenjin*, *naichi zaijū hantōjin*, *hantō dōhō*, *Chōsenjin rōdōsha*, or sometimes simply *Chōsenjin* in context – suggests that, while a recognizable Korean population did exist in Japan from the 1920s onwards, it must be distinguished discursively from what would be known as the zainichi population post-1945. Even in 1945 and 1946, the terms used to talk about Koreans in Japan were far from stable, changing according to the speaker and audience. Many Japanese leftist writers, for example, chose to refer to Koreans in Japan as “our Korean brethren” (*Chōsen dōhō*) in order to emphasize Korea’s right to independence and the common grounds of Koreans and Japanese engaged in class struggle. This same term was also used frequently by Korean

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<sup>197</sup> See Pak Kyōngsik, *Chōsenjin kyōsei renkō no kiroku* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1965) and Ueno Chizuko, *Nashonarizumu to jendā* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1998), among many others.

leftist writers in Japan to refer to their counterparts in Korea. The sections on *Minshu Chōsen* below explore this issue in further detail.

By 1947, when the system of alien registration was initiated for all non-Japanese residents, the number of Koreans in Japan had dropped precipitously, from two million to just under 600,000. Repatriation to Korea continued steadily, and only some 540,000 Koreans remained by the time of the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951. The peace treaty had grave consequences for the resident population: all former colonial subjects of Japan were stripped of Japanese nationality and denied the services and rights that came with it. This was true even for those whose *koseki*, or family register, was located in the metropole.<sup>198</sup> (The earlier 1950 Japanese Nationality Law had excluded anyone whose *koseki* was located outside the metropole. This meant that Japanese whose *koseki* had been moved to the colonies – through, for example, marriage with a Korean – also found themselves denied Japanese nationality after the war.) Because neither South nor North Korea was recognized by Japan at that time, Koreans in Japan were rendered stateless.

As Sonia Ryang writes in her introduction to the essay collection *Diaspora Without Homeland: Being Korean in Japan*, we may locate the origins of the *zainichi* community here, when “with the partitioning of the Korean peninsula into two mutually antagonistic and noncommunicating regimes amid the intensifying tension of the Cold War, a major portion of the Korean diaspora was effectively incarcerated inside the Japanese archipelago.”<sup>199</sup> Tonomura Masaru argues that this situation engendered two seemingly contradictory results. The first is the

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<sup>198</sup> For an important article that outlines the *koseki* system in both the prewar and postwar periods, see Chikako Kashiwazaki, “The politics of legal status,” *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* ed. Sonia Ryang (New York and London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>199</sup> Sonia Ryang, “Introduction” in *Diaspora Without Homeland* ed. Ryang and John Lie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), p. 4.



strengthening of a distinct sense of zainichi community in response to the legal and social changes described above, and especially to the reimagining of Japan (and Korea) as ethnically homogeneous. The second is the simultaneous assimilation of Koreans into Japanese society, due to factors such as the disruption of goods and information across the border and a rising number of Koreans born and/or largely raised in Japan.<sup>200</sup>

The creation of two separate governments on the Korean peninsula in 1948 only complicated these issues of nationality, ethnicity, and community, as both the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) tried to claim overseas Koreans as their own. The political and ideological split of the peninsula reproduced itself in Japan in the form of two competing zainichi organizations, the pro-communist Chōren (est. 1945) and the anti-communist Mindan (Korean Residents Union in Japan; est. 1948).<sup>201</sup> Both organizations were devoted to repatriation efforts, with the understanding that the partition of the peninsula would be only temporary. Chōren was instrumental in the establishment of *Minshu Chōsen* and other Korean-led publications, aiding them financially and encouraging members to contribute writings. Kim Talsu himself was an active member of Chōren; he would write an eloquent account of September 8, 1949, the day when the organization was forced by SCAP and Japanese authorities to dissolve due to its left-wing activities, for the May 1950 issue of *Minshu Chōsen*.

There were many reasons why Koreans remained in Japan, rather than repatriating home. The unstable political climate on the peninsula meant that individuals and families could not be

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<sup>200</sup> Tonomura, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, p. 459.

<sup>201</sup> Chōren is an abbreviation of *Zai-Nihon Chōsenjin renmei* or *Chae-Ilbon Chosōnin yōnmaeng* in Korean. Mindan is an abbreviation of *Zai-Nihon daikan minkoku mindan* in Japanese or *Chae-Ilbon taehan min'guk mindan* in Korean. David Chapman writes that technically Mindan was itself the result of a merge between two previous groups, *Chōsen kenkoku sokushin seinen dōmei* (a splinter group of Chōren), and *Shin Chōsen Kensetsu dōmei*. See Chapman, *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 27. Chōren was eventually succeeded by Chōsen Sōren, an abbreviation of *Zai-Nihon Chōsenjin sōrengōkai* (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) in Japanese or *Chae-Ilbon Chosōnin ch'onryōnhaphoe* in Korean.

sure of what awaited them, should they return. Furthermore, the strict restrictions on how much money and goods one could take – a maximum of 1000 yen and 250 pounds of luggage – was a high disincentive to those who had amassed property or even a modicum of savings in Japan. On the other end of the spectrum, the most disenfranchised communities often lacked the financial means to secure the train fares that would take them to the departure ports and access to accurate information on the repatriation measures. Some had no families or friends in Korea who might help them relocate; others thought of Japan as home, and spoke Japanese as their first language. Indeed, John Lie and Tessa Morris-Suzuki, among others, have shown how illegal immigration back to Japan *from* Korea was undertaken by Koreans fleeing the impoverishment of “home.”<sup>202</sup>

Looming in the shadow of all these changes was GHQ/SCAP, which censored all publications in Japan from September 1945 through October 1949, as previously mentioned. As early as spring 1946, SCAP was showing concerns about the “presence of a restless, uprooted Korean minority in Japan.”<sup>203</sup> SCAP’s main priority was not to safeguard the rights of minorities in Japan but to create a democratic, pro-U.S., and (after the infamous “reverse course” starting from late 1947) anti-communist Japan.<sup>204</sup> Its reach was hegemonic but ostensibly invisible, as even the mention of censorship itself was vigorously censored. Scholars disagree on the scope and significance of these censorship policies. Etō Jun, for example, famously called Occupation-period Japan a “sealed linguistic space” (*tozasareta gengo kūkan*) that warped Japanese literature

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<sup>202</sup> John Lie, *Zainichi (Koreans in Japan)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “Invisible Immigrants: Undocumented Migration and Border Controls in Early Postwar Japan” in *Journal of Japanese Studies* 32:1 (Winter 2006), pp. 119-153.

<sup>203</sup> Quoted in Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ* trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 452.

<sup>204</sup> The “reverse course” refers to a shift in U.S. policy towards Japan, in which emphasis was shifted from democratization and social reform to integration into U.S. anti-communist containment policy, both economically and politically.

and the Japanese people's perceptions of their own history.<sup>205</sup> Jay Rubin, on the other hand, is inclined to view Occupation censorship as “giving Japan's writers a freedom they had never had before,” especially in the realm of the erotic.<sup>206</sup> If anything, he argues, it was the U.S. “reverse course” that had a detrimental effect on literature.

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive analysis of Occupation censorship, I am mindful of Tomi Suzuki's reminder that “an assumption that there either is or is not censorship – that a complete absence of censorship is somehow possible – obscures the varying forms of censorship, which have always been connected to indoctrination and education as well as to the regulation and control of social communication.”<sup>207</sup> Just as censorship can take on a variety of forms and strategies, so too can the strategies used against it. In the case of *Minshu Chōsen*, for example, one can argue that the choice to include the popular buzzword *minshu* (democracy) in the title was a highly strategic one, designed to appeal to SCAP as well as to the Japanese consumers who might buy it. At the same time, the word was also meant to evoke a specifically Marxist bourgeois-democratic revolution, as called for by the JCP and the newly-formed North Korean Provisional People's Committee.

According to the Database of Newspapers and Magazines Published during the Post-war Occupation Period from 1945 to 1949, which is based on the Gordon W. Prange Collection housed by the University of Maryland, the first record of SCAP censorship of *Minshu Chōsen* was in the June 1946 issue regarding an article entitled “Sekai heiwa to Chōsen” (World Peace and Korea). The censors ordered two quotations regarding the Allied Powers to be deleted

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<sup>205</sup> Etō Jun, *Tozasareta gengo kūkan* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjūsha, 1989).

<sup>206</sup> Jay Rubin, “From Wholesomeness to Decadence: The Censorship of Literature Under the Allied Occupation” in *Journal of Japanese Studies* 11:1 (Winter 1985), p. 101.

<sup>207</sup> Tomi Suzuki, “History and Issues in Censorship in Japan” in *Censorship, Media, and Literary Culture in Japan: From Edo to Postwar* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2012), p. 11.

because the sentences implied “criticism of Allies.” Criticism of Allies was by far the largest category of offense in *Minshu Chōsen*, followed by related criticism of the South Korean government.<sup>208</sup> The instances of censorship increased dramatically following the so-called “reverse course,” and continued steadily until the official end of SCAP censorship in 1949. While the essays and short stories I analyze below had no visible marks of censorship on the page, I argue that an acute awareness of the postwar systems of power was inscribed in the journal and its contents from the very beginning.<sup>209</sup> In the next sections I focus on the literary strategies – narrative form, style, tropes, structures – in works by both Korean and Japanese writers in order to elucidate the many ways that texts participated in and embodied the contradictions of the Occupation period.

### ***MINSHU CHŌSEN & SHIN NIHON BUNGA KU KAI***

Kim Talsu was 25 years old when Japan surrendered the war. Born in southern Korea in 1919, he came to Japan at the age of 10 with virtually no knowledge of Japanese and very little resources to acquire it. By 1945, however, he had gained entrance into Nihon University, secured a job as a newspaper reporter for first Kanagawa Shinbunsha and then Keijō Nippōsha, published the short story “Gomi” (Trash, 1942) in *Bungei shuto*, and established a small circulating journal (*kairan zasshi*) entitled *Keirin* (Silla) with a handful of other Korean writers in Tokyo. By the

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<sup>208</sup> For a detailed discussion of the various “categories of suppressions and deletions” created by the CCD, see Yamamoto Taketoshi, *Senryōki media bunseki* (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppanyoku, 1996), particularly Appendixes 4 and 5; and John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998), particularly page 411.

<sup>209</sup> Kobayashi Tomoko notes that although most journals published in Japan were moved to post-publication censorship by the GHQ/SCAP authorities by the end of 1947, *Minshu Chōsen* remained subject to pre-publication censorship until the very end due to the politically sensitive nature of the journal. Article suppression and outright bans on publication became particularly prominent after controversies over ethnic Korean education in Japan exploded in 1948 with the Hanshin Education Conflict (*Hanshin kyōiku tōsō*), when the Japanese Ministry of Education (acting on instructions from GHQ) ordered that all Korean schools be closed down. Kobayashi, “*Minshu Chōsen no ken’etsu jōkyō*” in *Kikan Seikyū* 19 (Spring 1994), pp. 176-185.

time of his death in 1997, he had earned a reputation by his peers as the first and foremost zainichi author of the postwar period, and his work in translating, editing, critiquing, and compiling Japanese-language works by other Korean writers helped contribute to the codification of the zainichi genre.

In the 1964 essay “8/15 zengo” (Before and After 8/15), Kim recalls that he woke up on the morning of August 15<sup>th</sup> only to hear on his old, battered radio that a “grave announcement” would be announced at noon that day. A premonition struck him: “*This is it!*, I thought, and needless to say I sprang up from my bed as if I had wings.”<sup>210</sup> Buoyed by hope, he dressed himself in formal Korean clothes and hurried to his brother’s house. Like the protagonist in *Banshū heiya*, Kim listened to the now-famous announcement while huddled around the radio with his family and friends. Like Hiroko as well, the announcement at first shocked the listeners in silence. But in Kim’s version, that silence was broken by one triumphant shout: “Our Korea will now be free!” (p. 25)

The contrast in images is stark. In the former, a silence that tapers into confusion and fragmentation. In the latter, jubilation and an immediate flurry of communal activity. Kim writes that he and his friends formed the *Yokosuka zaijū Chōsenjin dōshikai* (Association of Korean Comrades Living in Yokosuka) in his brother’s house the very next day. *Minshu Chōsen*, which Kim often described as a successor to *Keirin*, was launched less than a year later. While the first issue lists Kim Wōngi as the editor, by the second issue this position was officially given to Kim Talsu. Funding for the launch was provided by members of the Kanagawa Prefecture branch of Chōren, and articles on Chōren’s activities and goals would feature prominently throughout the journal’s run. Although the journal’s run spanned only from 1946 to 1950 with a total of 33

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<sup>210</sup> “8/15 zengo” in *Kim Talsu hyōronshū: Waga minzoku* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1976), p. 24. Originally published in *Eiga geijutsu*, August 1964 issue. Original title: “Chōsenjin no baai.”

issues, its importance to and influence in the creation of a self-identified “zainichi” community would be profound.

The first issue lists twelve different names in the table of contents, but in actuality the bulk of the content was written by only two people, Kim Talsu and Wŏn Yongdŏk, writing under a variety of pseudonyms. The number of contributors steadily increased with each issue, however, with the majority of writers affiliated in some way with Chōren, the JCP, and/or *Shin Nihon bungaku kai*. Not surprisingly, the journal consistently showcased its allegiance to progressive politics in general and the North Korean government in particular. It also tended to have a strong literary bias, perhaps because of Kim Talsu’s involvement as editor; for example, it produced no less than three tokushū dedicated to literature alone. Important literary works that debuted in *Minshu Chōsen* include Kim Talsu’s novel *Kōei no machi* (Streets of the Descendants, 1946-7); Kim Saryang’s play “Bokutoru no gunpuku” (in Korean, Poktol ūi kunbok; Poktol’s Military Uniform, 1946), translated from Korean by Kim Wŏnki in 1947; and Hō Namgi’s long poem *Chōsen fūbutsu shi* (Poem of Korean Scenery, 1948).

*Minshu Chōsen* was launched during a time of great activity in the Japanese publishing industry. The major literary journals *Bungei shunjū* and *Shinchō*, which had been forced to go on hiatus the last months of the war, resumed publishing in November 1945. They were soon joined by a flurry of new ventures that included *Shinsei* (Vita Nova) in November 1945, *Ningen* (Humanity) in January 1946, *Kindai bungaku* (Modern Literature) in January 1946, and *Shin Nihon bungaku* in March 1946. Koreans in Japan too were no less involved in this postwar publishing boom, most notably when it came to newspapers. Examples of periodicals written by and for Koreans in Japan include *Chosŏn minju sinmun* (朝鮮民主新聞, Korean Democratic Newspaper; est. October 1945), published in Korean; the Korean-language *Uri sinmun* (우리新

聞, Our Newspaper; est. July 1946), later renamed to *Kaebang sinmun* (開放新聞, Liberation Newspaper) and published in both Korean and Japanese; and *Chosŏn sinbo* (朝鮮新報, Korean Newspaper, est. June 1946), published at first in Japanese and then in Korean starting from July.<sup>211</sup>

The founding issue of *Minshu Chōsen* opens with the following statement:

In the course of progressive democratic revolution, where have Koreans positioned themselves in historical reality, and how are they attempting to execute its historic mission? In other words, what are Koreans thinking, what are they saying, what are they trying to do? The objective circumstances and subjective trends regarding the issue of trusteeship (*shintaku tōchi*) have become the particular focus of world attention. Here and now, through this booklet, we will declare the proper path we should pursue; correct Japanese people's perceptions of Korean history, culture, and tradition, which have been distorted by the past thirty-six years; and present our vision of future politics, the economy, and society to those wise readers of the world wishing to understand the Korean people.<sup>212</sup>

In this opening statement, two broad aims are spelled out. The first looks back at the correction of past injustices, by having Korean writers (“we”) address Japanese readers. The second looks forward at the construction of a politically progressive, democratic future, one that stands in opposition to the Western powers reflected in the euphemistic term “trusteeship.” In this regard, the *Minshu Chōsen* founders can be said to have operated under a Marxist understanding of historical development prevalent at the time among intellectuals in postwar, (post)colonial Asia. According to J. Victor Koschmann, in Occupation-period Japan “the primary

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<sup>211</sup> The same newspaper company would also produce *Shin sekai shinbun*, the Japanese version of *Chosŏn sinbo*. For more information on the many different newspapers produced during the Occupation period in Japan, see Kobayashi Sōmei, *Zainichi Chōsenjin no media kūkan: GHQ senryōki ni okeru shinbun hakkō to sono dainamizumu* (Tokyo: Fūkyōsha, 2007).

<sup>212</sup> *Minshu Chōsen* 1:1 (April 1946), p. 1.

front for political struggle could be defined as democracy versus feudalism (or imperial absolutism, the emperor system, etc.).”<sup>213</sup> He goes on:

According to the historical-materialist analysis . . . Japan was at the stage of completing its bourgeois-democratic revolution and top priority had to be given to that task. Why did this analysis of the situation provide the occasion for a debate on subjectivity? Because, put crudely, the accepted Marxian framework prescribed that each stage of historical development would be led by the social subject appropriate to it. (p. 1)

Koreans in Japan could participate in *Japan's* bourgeois-democratic revolution, despite the nationalist framework in which this revolution had to take place, because it was understood to be an anti-imperial, anti-fascist movement necessary for the emergence of an industrial proletariat class and, eventually, a new historical stage of socialist liberation no longer dependent on the nation-state model. Furthermore, by following the “top-down” approach to war responsibility, where blame was primarily assigned to military and political leaders, Koreans could create a space for collaboration with their peers in Japan and elsewhere. When it came to literature, the founders of *Minshu Chōsen* followed the historical materialist framework of *Shin Nihon bungaku*, particularly the base-superstructure model that posited “realist” literature as the only artistically and politically valid form of fiction.

However, one can also argue that this strategy of united democratic revolution allowed Japanese intellectuals to defer individual war guilt and prevented any sustained conversation on the causes and effects of Japanese imperialism, a topic I address in Chapter 4. What I wish to point out at present is that the *Minshu Chōsen* preface not only emphasized the subjectivity (*shutai*) of the “Korean people,” whose role in history was active, disciplined, and perceptive, it also implied that a proper understanding of the Korean people was necessary for *the world to*

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<sup>213</sup> J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 1.



achieve its anti-imperial goals.<sup>214</sup> By bringing the particularized zone of “Chōsen” into the hegemony of democracy, the journal founders insisted on the possibility of an international framework not centered on Japan. The former relationship of metropole and periphery was now reversed: Korea was the originary center, and Koreans in Japan a peripheral but constitutive part of the “Korean minzoku.”<sup>215</sup>

Significantly, while the “we” of *Minshu Chōsen* would always remain Korean, the addressee would not always be explicitly marked as either Korean or Japanese, but instead defined as anyone “wishing to understand the Korean people” – in Japanese. The editor’s remarks at the end of the first issue touch upon this issue of language. While the editor acknowledges that several Korean-language publications have already been launched in Tokyo, “we believe that freely using Japanese – despite the fact that it was acquired under a cursed destiny – to create a journal or two like this one is absolutely necessary, for both we Koreans (*wareware Chōsenjin*) and Japanese” (p. 50). The term *wareware Chōsenjin* is powerfully inclusive; it not only encompasses all Koreans living in Japan but also explicitly links them to the broader reach of *minzoku* and to the “native” country of Korea. Using the language of a “cursed destiny” to link all these communities together would have been strongly symbolic: *kokugo* refashioned into *Nihongo* *within* Japan, rather than outside it, and as a tool of rebuke for the sins of the nation’s past.

In the December 1946 issue of *Minshu Chōsen*, the word “*kokugo*” is explicitly used by Kim Talsu in his editor’s remarks. He begins the piece by reiterating that the journal was created

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<sup>214</sup> In the August/September 1946 issue of *Minshu Chōsen*, this point is driven home by an advertisement by Chōren, which states in large, bold print: “The happiness of the Japanese people (*jinmin*) is the happiness of the Korean people. Our happiness is peace for all of humankind” (p. 120).

<sup>215</sup> See in particular the article “San/ichi undō to Chōsen bungaku” by Son Injang in the March 1947 issue and “Sekaishi-teki jōsei to Chōsen” by Hosokawa Karoku in the June 1947 of *Minshu Chōsen* for examples of this positioning of Koreans in Japan as important but peripheral members of the Korean *minzoku*, working in tandem with but sharply distinguished from the Japanese.

by Koreans but not necessarily *only* for Koreans. While acknowledging that “Koreans want to forget the Japanese (*Nihongo*) that was forced upon them in order to fully revive the national language (*kokugo*; here, Korean) that was restored to them” (p. 88), he highlights the importance of Japanese-language writing as an aid in deepening the relationship between the two countries. This sentiment is echoed by Odagiri Hideo in an article from the same issue. In that article, entitled “Chōsen bungaku no kaika no tame ni” (For the Sake of the Flowering of Korean Literature”), Odagiri calls for “a partnership between Japan’s progressive literary movements and Korea’s literary movements” (p. 59) and a deeper bond between “the flowering of a free Korean literature and the flowering of a free Japanese literature” (p. 60). Perhaps because of its dual target audience of both Koreans and Japanese, *Minshu Chōsen* (and by extension its “zainichi Korean writers”) is identified by Odagiri as a perfect mediator between the seemingly monolithic categories of Korean and Japanese literature. (It is in Odagiri’s article that the word *zainichi* makes its first appearance in *Minshu Chōsen*, but it would not be until 1948, after the launch of the alien registration system, that the term became commonly used to refer to the resident Korean population in Japan.)

It is here that I wish to consider, one more time, that pivotal moment on August 15<sup>th</sup> when “history turned an enormous page.” In *Banshū heiya* and “8/15 zengo,” the news of Japan’s defeat is heard by the marginalized members of the *naichi*: two women, a child, a man sent back from battle because of a physical injury, Korean colonial subjects. For them, the defeat signals a radical moment of change and the possibility of claiming for themselves the right to be the historical agents of the future. But what I want to emphasize is that which is not stated: the ability to understand Japanese as the condition for claiming subjective agency. It is easy to overlook the fact that no Korean women are recorded in Kim’s version of events. It is easy to

overlook them because they were not, in fact, there: even if they had been physically present, they were invisible and silent – supporting actors only, with no speaking roles. This is the same dilemma we saw in previous chapters, carried over unnoticed across the supposed dividing line of August 15<sup>th</sup>. What would have changed for the women (and men) who could not understand the Japanese of the radio broadcast? How would they have comprehended their own position within the exploding discourses of liberation and nationhood?

If I seem insistent on this point, it is because I believe it all too imperative to consider not only the absence of abject voices but also the conditions that would allow that absence from being noted or critiqued. In the *Minshu Chōsen* preface, the editor makes an appeal to the “wise readers of the world” – in the Japanese, “kōko no shoken” (江湖の諸賢), a playfully formal and academic turn of phrase that has its origins in ancient Chinese culture. It may be that the editor meant to draw upon a shared literary history whose roots anteceded the colonial period, or that he wished to emphasize his own academic qualifications. But whatever the purpose, what is significant is the fact that he *could* choose this phrase, despite the fact that the “world” it conjured up would have excluded more individuals than it encompassed.

In the aftermath of the war, both Korean and Japanese intellectuals were faced with the task of not only censuring the fact of Japanese imperialism in the past but also eradicating its influence in the present. For the members of *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* and *Minshu Chōsen*, this meant shifting from a literature of the state to a literature of the “people”: an unfettered democratic revolution rooted in the concrete anchor of the everyday. One could argue that the inclusion of Koreans in organizations like the JCP or *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* was essential, because it proved that these organizations could provide an international “united front” against feudalism and fascism. In the December 1946 issue of *Minshu Chōsen*, the *Shin Nihon bungaku*

*kai* posted a statement entitled “Chōsen no sakka e no aisatsu” (A Message to the Writers of Korea) in which Koreans – as well as “writers from China and every other country in the world” – were invited to join the organization.<sup>216</sup> The statement notes that Japanese imperialism was a barbaric war of aggression that grievously harmed world peace and “the laborers and farmers within the country (*kokunai*), as well as their culture.” After warning that “the roots of feudalism and fascism in Japan have not been completely destroyed,” the statement declares that the members of *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* are working to develop “a new literature of the *minzoku* from within the depths of the common people (*minshū*).” The statement concludes: “We pledge to cross all national borders and fight with you to eradicate feudalism and fascism once and for all.”

A similar call to arms directed at “the people of the world, and in particular the people of China and Korea” had already been made in the founding issue of *Shin Nihon bungaku* in March 1946.<sup>217</sup> Miyamoto Yuriko herself would describe this movement, in which politics and literature were fused together, as an attempt to express the “poetry and reason” inherent in lived experience in a declaration written for the inaugural preparatory issue of *Shin Nihon bungaku*.<sup>218</sup> The title of her declaration, “Utageo yo, okore” (Singing Voices, Arise!), evokes the metaphor of a free and harmonious chorus of people whose voices rise high from below. At the same time, Miyamoto’s choice of grammar is telling. The imperative form of the verb “arise” is used, implicitly suggesting the presence of a leader who must direct the masses when and what to sing, and who uses her single voice to represent a multitude. But although Miyamoto does urge her

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<sup>216</sup> *Minshu Chōsen* 1:6 (December 1946), p. 10. Unless otherwise noted, quotations are from page 10.

<sup>217</sup> “Senden” in *Shin Nihon bungaku* 1:2 (March 1946), p. 63. The first issue was called an inaugural preparatory issue (*sōkan junbigō*) and the next issue, which was printed in March, was called the founding issue (*sōkangō*).

<sup>218</sup> Miyamoto Yuriko, “Utageo yo, okore: Shin Nihon bungaku kai no yurai” in *Shin Nihon bungaku* 1:1 (January 1946), p. 9.

fellow writers to consider their own war complicity, her declaration stops short of addressing the conundrum of literary representation itself.<sup>219</sup>

Of course, the issue of representation is one that had been raised before, with the rise of proletarian literature, and indeed many members of *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* and other leftist organizations had been connected to the earlier proletarian movements of prewar Japan. In the immediate postwar period, however, Japan had to contend with not only its colonizing past but also its colonized present, made starkly visible (although textually censored) by the presence of the Allied forces. In her essay, Miyamoto does not address this double bind of colonizer/colonized or her own position in relation to the masses. Instead, she ends “Utageo yo, okore” by looking ahead to “the literature of tomorrow” (p. 5). When she finally brings up the role of *Shin Nihon bungaku kai*, she does so in the passive tense: *Shin Nihon bungaku kai* was formed; this magazine *is* being published. One may argue that in not naming any specific subject of action, Miyamoto finally leaves the question of representation to the readers, inviting them to consider their own complicity and role as literary mediators. Sharalyn Orbaugh writes in her seminal study of the Japanese fiction of the Occupation period:

It was here [in Miyamoto’s piece] that several issues implicated in a passionate postwar literary debate first were aired: the relationship between war responsibility and literature; the nature of the Japanese ‘collective self’ versus an Anglo-European ‘individual self,’ and the relationship between this difference and wartime complicity; the nature of “democracy” and “humanism” . . . and so on.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Intense debates occurred between the writers of *Shin Nihon bungaku* and the rival journal *Kindai bungaku* on the problem of literary representation. For example, the members of *Kindai bungaku* frequently criticized members of *Shin Nihon Bungaku* for adhering too rigidly to the historical materialist position; the latter countered that too much emphasis on subjectivism and literary autonomy was exactly what led to the failure of the prewar literary movements to counter Japanese fascism.

<sup>220</sup> Sharalyn Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation: Vision, Embodiment, Identity* (Boston: Brill, 2007), 316-7.

Before, I briefly described a pivotal scene in *Banshū heiya* where a group of Koreans spontaneously begin singing on the train. To Hiroko, the Koreans are a symbol – something that communicates a meaning greater than itself. But to the “writers of Korea” hailed in “Chōsen no sakka e no aisatsu,” participation in democratic revolution meant seizing the right to speak for and *about* themselves. This meant contending not only with the notion of an Anglo-European self, as mentioned in the above observation by Sharalyn Orbaugh, but also with the legacies of the *Japanese* literary self, especially as embodied in the so-called I-novel vein. For writers like Kim Talsu, Korean may have been the language of the family but Japanese was the language of literature and academia, and the only language that could give them a sizeable reading audience in Japan.<sup>221</sup> Indeed, the very concept of literature had been born out of the colonial experience and was inseparable from it; how, then, to establish a “legitimate” Korean literary canon that could stand against Japanese imperialism and exonerate the authors who lived through it?

Like their Japanese peers, many Korean intellectuals in Korea and in Japan found one answer in turning to the “common people” for inspiration for their literature. The March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement of 1919, one of the largest and most widespread displays of Korean protest during the colonial period, was frequently cited by contributors to *Minshu Chōsen* as the true origin of Korean democratic culture.<sup>222</sup> But the task of defining Korean literature was made more complicated for these writers by the fact that they had to do it *in Japanese*. In an article published in the November 1948 issue of *Bungaku* (Literature), for example, Kim Talsu couples the flowering of Korean literature with the eased restrictions on Korean language use after the

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<sup>221</sup> Kim Talsu confesses in his essay “Rōdō to sōsaku” (quoted in the epigraph of this chapter, and analyzed in later sections) that when he first met Kim Saryang, he didn’t know how to read Korean yet. In “Kim Saryang: hito to sakuhin” (originally published in *Chōsen hyōron* in 1954) he recalls that when Kim Saryang read the manuscripts for his Korean-language plays out loud to Kim Talsu, he would translate them into *Japanese* first.

<sup>222</sup> See, for example, the tokushū on the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement in the March 1947 issue of *Minshu Chōsen*. Kim Talsu also writes explicitly on the topic of the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement and literature in his article “Chōsen bungaku ni okeru minzoku ishiki no nagare” in *Bungaku* 16:11 (November 1948), quoted in the following sentences.

March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement and argues that Korean literature “is impossible . . . without the Korean language” (pp. 683-4). And yet less than a year before that, Kim had also edited a special edition of *Minshu Chōsen* dedicated to “Korean literature written in Japanese.” His editorial comments follow below:

Is [this literature] a plus for our Korean literature? We do not feel that it is a minus, at the very least. Of course, its existence will most likely seem like an aberration when it comes to our Korean literature. But we believe that such aberrations show the “rich potential of Korean literature,” and that there is great significance in taking advantage of the very language that had once been forced upon us, a symbol of misfortune.<sup>223</sup>

At this stage, whether or not one acknowledged Japanese-language writing by Korean finally depended on the relationship between writer and audience. In the editorial comments, Kim clearly aligns himself with the Korean (language) literature of the peninsula by using the inclusive “we/our.” But that “we/our” also echoes the rhetoric of the founding issue, which argued that one could wield Japanese as a tool for educating Japanese readers. If Korean-language literature followed the logic of kokugo (refashioned in this case as Korean), where the language was an intrinsic and indivisible expression of the minzoku, then Japanese-language literature instead followed the logic of Nihongo, where language could be a tool or a neutral medium chosen for a specific purpose.

Still, as later essays by Kim would prove, it was often the case where Japanese was *not* a choice, but an inevitability; not a tool, but a fundamental part of oneself. Here I would like to briefly introduce one key essay by Kim entitled “Ichi Chōsenjin, watashi no bungaku jikaku” (How One Korean Became Conscious of Literature), first published in *Sekai* in June 1954. In the essay, Kim reflects on his early childhood in Korea, his subsequent move to Japan at the age of

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<sup>223</sup> *Minshu Chōsen* 1:14 (September 1947), p. 65. Use of quotation marks in original.

eight, and his youth spent working as a scrap collector or junkman (*kuzuya*) in the streets of Tokyo and Yokosuka. His first encounter with Japanese fiction were the children's magazines he found in used bookstores and in the trash he picked up: *Shōnen kurabu* (Boys' Club), *Kingu* (King), *Kōdan kurabu* (Kōdan Club), and more. Kikuchi Kan, whose stories were often featured in these magazines, became a particular favorite of his at that time. But what irrevocably changed Kim's life was the discovery, in the trash, of several volumes from Kaizōsha's immensely popular "one yen book" (*enpon*) series *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* (Complete Works of Contemporary Japanese Literature Collection) and Shinchōsha's competing series *Sekai bungaku zenshū* (Complete Works of World Literature) – in particular, the Shiga Naoya volume from the former, and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* from the latter.

It was through Shiga, Kim recalls, that he first learned of the I-novel, "where Japanese authors attempt to write about the self called 'I' and the events that occur around it" (p. 10). The I-novel "was a good influence, but in some ways it remains as a bad influence, too." He continues:

In other words, I decided I wanted to write about Koreans and their lives. And I wanted to *inform* others, I wanted to appeal to them. In particular, I wanted to inform – I thought I *had* to inform – the Japanese people who held various feelings or ideas (almost all of them mistaken) about Koreans and their lives. (p. 10-11, emphasis in original)

Hence the creation of *Minshu Chōsen*, and the publication of his own fiction.

Tomi Suzuki has described the I-novel as a mode of reading, one where "it is ultimately the reader who assumes a 'hidden contract' in the text."<sup>224</sup> Rather than reading the above passage as a wholesale rejection of the I-novel, I would argue that Kim powerfully problematizes – without dismantling – the relationship between reader and text that *is* the I-novel. In other words,

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<sup>224</sup> Suzuki, *Narrating the Self*, p. 10.



Kim wishes to make the “hidden contract” visible and center-front by deliberately calling upon the reader to interpret the text against the extra-textual narrative of Kim’s own life, which is at the same time the life of a Korean. And while the so-called I-novels of Shiga Naoya may have implicitly invited an evaluation of Japanese society at large (often contrasted, whether positively or negatively, to the “West”), Kim explicitly and insistently calls for such an evaluation in his fiction through the linking of Kim/Koreans and reader/Japanese.

The fiction of Miyamoto Yuriko has also often been discussed in the I-novel vein, including the novel that started off this chapter, *Banshū heiya*. With its semi-autobiographical details, *Banshū heiya* invites readers to contextualize Hiroko’s life against that of Miyamoto Yuriko, whose well-publicized experiences as a political prisoner and whose wartime literary silence would have lent legitimacy to the protagonist Hiroko’s criticisms against the former empire. Furthermore, Hiroko’s self-identification as a member of a larger “Japanese” nation conditions her reaction to the Koreans and her participation in a society no longer of the state but of the people. In Kim’s case, however, it is precisely the supposed transparency or naturalness of national self-identification that is problematized. What separated Kim Talsu from other Korean writers of Japanese-language fiction, meanwhile, was his acute awareness that the “Kim/Koreans” connection had already been paradoxically breached by the Japanese language.

In order to fully explicate this point, I turn now to Kim’s “Gomi” (Trash), a work of fiction whose publication life spanned across the 1945 divide. The very title of the short story richly connotes the ways the byproducts of colonialism transform (and are transformed by, literally and figuratively) the abject colonial subjects who inherit them.<sup>225</sup> Like Kim, the

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<sup>225</sup> Seiji Lippit provides an illuminating analysis of the representations of waste, decay, and death in Yokomitsu Riichi’s *Shanghai*. Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). On the one hand, Lippit argues, Sanki’s body becomes itself a national territory intimately connected to the flows of capital in the semi-colonial city Shanghai. At the same time, the slum city itself “is a space of abjection and

protagonist of “Gomi” turns the Japanese trash he collects into capital to be used for the sake of Korea. But also like Kim, whose inheritance of the Japanese language can never be untangled from the colonial past, the would-be capitalist of “Gomi” is unable to extricate himself completely from the restrictive systems of imperial control.

Because “Gomi” was rewritten and reprinted multiple times, I find it necessary to first establish the overarching plot lines of each manuscript before delving into a comparative literary analysis. When necessary, I distinguish between the different versions by their publication date. Thus, the story published as “Gomi” in 1942 is indicated as “Gomi” (1942). The revised 1947 version was published in two parts, under the titles “Gomi” and “Jinkaisen kōki,” respectively. “Gomi” (1947) therefore refers to the first part of the 1947 story, and “Jinkaisen kōki” to the second part. Although the parts have different titles, it should be stressed that the two parts have to be read together and should be thought of as one full text.

### “GOMI” (1942)

In 1942, Kim Talsu published the short story “Gomi” under the pseudonym Kanemitsu Jun / Kim Kwangsun (金光淳; in the Sino-Japanese reading, Kin Kōjun) in the March 1942 issue of *Bungei shuto*, the same coterie journal that had previously published Kim Saryang’s “Hikari no naka ni” in 1939.<sup>226</sup> Running only ten pages long, the story may be described as a rough sketch of its central protagonist, a Korean junkman called 玄八吉, and his life in wartime Japan. In the opening scene, the Korean junkman calls upon the help of a friend whose name is given as

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exclusion, a repository for the waste products of the economy that are disengaged from mechanisms of national identification. The revolutionary city . . . is a space of contact and conflict between these two sites” (p. 90).

<sup>226</sup> *Bungei shuto* puts a space between 光 and 淳, which suggests that they are treating Kim’s pseudonym as a Japanese name. A space between 金 and 光, however, would result in a Korean name.

敬泰. On the very first page we run into the issue of language once again, as none of the characters' names are given glosses. 玄八吉 is a hybrid name. The surname 玄 is patently Korean, pronounced Gen in the Sino-Japanese reading and Hyōn in Korean; the characters 八吉, in contrast, can be read as Yakichi in Japanese (among other possibilities) or P'algil in Korean.<sup>227</sup> Meanwhile, the first name 敬泰 can be read as Takahiro or Takayasu in Japanese or as Kyōngt'ae in Korean. Because the surname of 敬泰 is never revealed, it is in fact impossible to determine his ethnicity with any certainty. While P'algil's familiarity with Takahiro/Kyōngt'ae seems to suggest that the latter is also Korean, the deliberate ambiguity opens up an intriguing space for doubled meanings and possible subversion of the kōminka paradigm, as detailed in previous chapters.

The pages that follow contain a rapid series of explanatory flashbacks that show how P'algil came to gain the sole rights to the waste produced by D. Factory. Having come from a place so poor “there was nothing left to steal, even if you tried,” P'algil is astonished at the wealth of the metropole, where people have the luxury of throwing things away. At first he takes whatever choice items he finds in or near garbage cans, on the simple assumption that they are all free to take. But when he is detained by the police for stealing – despite the fact that “he deeply believed in the superiority of those he took from. His stealing was done objectively and honestly” (p. 41) – he gives up trash picking and becomes a junkman, or a person who buys old or broken goods from individuals to sell to wholesale dealers. He is able to do this because he

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<sup>227</sup> In the reprinting of “Gomi” found in the *Kim Talsu shōsetsu zenshū* (1980), the gloss of パルギル (Parugiru; Japanese katakana rendering of P'algil) is added to the character's name. I have therefore chosen to use “P'algil” in this dissertation. However, it must be emphasized that different kinds of readers would have pronounced/interpreted the unglossed name differently, depending on their own ethnicity, subject position, and preference. The *zenshū* glosses P'algil's last name as ピヨン (Pyon), but this may be a misprint; in a later version published in a 1996 anthology series entitled “*Gaichi*” no *Nihongo bungaku sen* (volume 3: Korea) edited by Kurosawa Sō, the gloss has been changed to ヒヨン (Hyon).

picks up a few words of Japanese (*naichigo*) that allow him to bargain with his Japanese customers. “If nothing else,” the narrator remarks, “he was blessed with the ability to benefit from civilization (*bunmei*)” (p. 42).

Perhaps because of this ability, P’algil boldly sets his sights on the industrial waste from D. Factory, which had seen a marked increase in activity with the start of the Second-Sino Japanese War. The right to the factory’s waste officially lie with a man named Nojiri,<sup>228</sup> who sifts through the waste for scrap iron and other materials made valuable by the war. By custom the trash left over is dumped into the water, to be sifted through a second time by the fishermen who live nearby and eventually sold by the fishermen to junkmen. P’algil attempts to buy from the fishermen one day but is swiftly thrown out when he is caught cheating by trying to manipulate the weighing scales. Upset and desperate, P’algil escapes to a local Shinto shrine to nurse his wounds; there, he is suddenly “assaulted with homesickness” (p. 44). He looks towards the direction of Korea, but when he does, his gaze is caught by the sight of the D. Factory trash barge in the water and the “three or four females workers” (p. 44) sifting through the trash. In a flash, he knows: he wants that barge.

Immediately the next day, P’algil ambushes Nojiri at his home, figuratively and literally: he latches himself onto Nojiri’s leg and begs. Nojiri finally agrees to give P’algil access to the trash for a monthly fee of 300 yen. Things go well for P’algil until the day he gets a visit from a Korean man named 徐民喜. Again, the surname is in this case undoubtedly Korean, pronounced Sō (Sino-Japanese reading: Jo), but the first name can be read as Minhūi in Korean or Tamiki in Japanese. Minhūi, we learn, works as an insurance salesperson as well as an organizer for the

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<sup>228</sup> The Chinese characters are 野尻. Nojiri’s ethnicity is also unstated, but the surname does not exist in Korean.

local *Kyōwakai* chapter.<sup>229</sup> He wants to persuade P’algil to transfer his trash barge rights, not to him but to a wholesaler interested in the D. Factory waste. (A few days earlier Minhūi had been approached by this wholesaler, who used the promise of his business as bait to convince Minhūi to “become a bad guy” [p. 47] and work on his behalf.) But P’algil balks and brings in Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae to intercede in the dispute. This is the point in the narrative where readers are brought back to the present day. In the end, Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae manages to convince Minhūi to let P’algil keep his trash. The following conversation then ensues:

Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae clapped Sō Minhūi on the shoulder. Strangely, within the atmosphere of defeat he could still sense the affection between the two of them.

Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae walked along the plank to P’algil and said, “There’s nothing to worry about. Work hard, buy lots of land back in your hometown [*kyōri*], and return soon.”

P’algil sprung to his feet and fell into the ocean with a great splash. He raised both hands and beat at the waves like a madman. Among the splashes came a shout: “*Aigu* (I’m happy), *Aigu* (I’m happy)!” (p. 49, end)

Ko Youngran [Ko Yōngran] has discussed how the colonies were transformed into markets for the sale of commodities from the metropole, using the phenomenon of the *enpon* boom and the popularity of the proletarian journal *Senki* (Battle Flag) as specific examples from the publishing industry.<sup>230</sup> In “Gomi” (1942) we see a similar logic at play: P’algil, a disenfranchised colonial subject, is able to generate capital in the metropole from the surplus or waste material from Japan’s war efforts, capital that may then be used to repossess the land that had been taken away from him by colonization. Many of the Japanese junkmen who would have

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<sup>229</sup> *Kyōwakai*, or “Harmonization Association,” was a naichi-based network that was guided by the Ministry of Home Affairs before and during the war. Each branch was responsible for monitoring the local Koreans and encouraging loyalty to and assimilation into the Japanese empire.

<sup>230</sup> Ko Youngran [Ko Yōngran], “Kakuchō suru ken’etsu ‘teikoku’ to ‘higōhō’ shōhin” in *Ken’etsu, media, bungaku: Edo kara sengo made* (Tokyo: Shin’yōsha, 2012), pp. 122-9. An English translation by this author may be found in the same volume.

presented serious competition had “had to switch to construction work or so forth [for the war effort],” leaving only “those who couldn’t bear to give up their professions.”<sup>231</sup> At the same time, it must be emphasized that P’algil’s labor as a scrap collector does not undermine the colonial hierarchy so much as work strictly within its rules. His initial efforts to work outside the established system are branded as “illegal” and they land him in jail, forcing him to realize that the wealth of the metropole can only be his by distant association. Furthermore, the money he gains by working within “legal” channels is to be used to buy back land in Korea, but through the same colonial systems that had disenfranchised him in the first place.

P’algil’s success is also predicated on the unpaid labor of his unnamed wife, who appears at the end of the story as a silent shadow, picking at the trash on the barge. The origins of P’algil’s Korean wife is completely unknown; her fate, likewise. The Japanese women, in contrast, are represented as the “vulgar” wives of rich families who come out to bargain ferociously with P’algil over their trash (p. 43). Class and gender again are working here in complicated refractions. While the Japanese women he meets are socially above him in class, the only capital they can generate is supplementary and limited to the private realm of the household. Meanwhile, while P’algil is denied the role of the soldier due to his ethnicity, he still possesses the ability to move between the realms of the private (the Japanese home) and the public (the scrap market). But this ability also sets him in opposition to his Japanese peers, who are similarly marginalized because of their inability or unwillingness to serve as either soldiers or war construction workers. He can only best the itinerant fishermen by beating them at their own game – that is, by going directly to Nojiri and, by manipulating the existing legal system, acquiring the rights to the trash.

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<sup>231</sup> Page 42. The word Kim uses for “switch” is *tenkō*, which also connotes the ideological conversions taking place during this time.

Finally, the story concludes with a confrontation between three very different men: P'algil, Minhŭi, and Takahiro/Kyōngt'ae. Both Minhŭi and Takahiro/Kyōngt'ae appear to have some social and financial influence in the local Korean community, but while the former's power depends upon his position in the *Kyōwakai*, the latter's power is left unspecified. Depending on whether one thinks of Takahiro/Kyōngt'ae as Japanese or Korean, interpretations of the "atmosphere of defeat" mentioned on the last page may radically differ. A Japanese wartime censor reading literally, for example, might assume the character was Japanese, and the scene an innocuous description of the Japanese man's generosity in helping out a lower-class Korean man in need. Another reader, perhaps one with more radical leanings, might interpret the final scene as a politically charged and symbolically laden image of Korean "resistance" against Japan's eventual defeat. Because the wording "the two of them" in the original Japanese is ambiguous, it can be applied to any combination of the individuals present, depending on one's interpretation: the two Koreans P'algil and Minhŭi standing together against the Japanese man Takahiro; the Japanese-speaking *kōmin* Kyōngt'ae and Minhŭi standing distinct from P'algil; and so on.

In this burgeoning battlefield of open meanings, what does "return" mean, and *where* is one supposed to return to? If P'algil and Kyōngt'ae are both Korean, then "return" becomes a hopeful word, and Korea the reference point around which everything is oriented. At the same time, it must be noted that this return is still predicated upon P'algil's economic success *in the metropole*, and cannot occur without it; only after having thoroughly integrated himself into Japan's imposed system of land ownership and colonial capitalism can he find a place for himself back home. Takahiro/Kyōngt'ae's final enjoinder to "work hard" is also ambiguous in this light. If one takes his ethnicity to be Japanese, it only repeats the hierarchies of colonialism we have seen in other stories. But even if he is assumed to be Korean, the command remains

one-directional and bisected by class. Takahiro/ Kyōngt'ae and Minhūi, after all, appear to enjoy a certain measure of economic stability; that, plus their relatively privileged social positions, may give them a border-crossing mobility not afforded to a laborer like P'algil. (It may be noted as an aside that Kim Talsu himself, for example, traveled back and forth in his capacity as a news reporter between the years 1940 and 1945.<sup>232</sup>)

One final puzzle left for the reader to decipher is the meaning of P'algil's final words. The Korean word *aigu* (or sometimes *aigo*) is an interjection used to express a variety of emotions: surprise, frustration, hurt, welcome, despair. It may also be shouted or wailed to express intense grief, especially during periods of mourning. When P'algil falls into the water, his cry of *Aigu* is glossed in Japanese in the text as "I'm happy" (*Ureshii*) but the translation appears incongruous with the situation at hand. It is possible that a native Korean speaker, upon hearing those words, would interpret them as a lament or a cry for help, but the text flatly rejects this possibility for the Japanese-speaking reader by providing a set gloss. Just as the enigma of Takahiro/ Kyōngt'ae is irreducible to the "either/or" of "Japanese or Korean," the disjunct between P'algil's Korean words and their Japanese translation can never be completely bridged. And yet, by introducing a note of discord in the final lines of the story, Kim Talsu transforms P'algil into a tragicomic character, rather than a farcical one. Like his predecessor Genryū from Kim Saryang's "Tenma," P'algil is able to embody the irreconcilable contradictions of colonialism in a way that the other Korean characters cannot, precisely because of his attempts to take advantage of a system that had been devised to take advantage of him.

In pointing out all the possibilities of meaning and referent/reference relations, I do not mean to endorse one reading over another. What I find significant about the story is that it *can*

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<sup>232</sup> "Kim Talsu jihitsu nenpu kō" in Choi Hyoson [Ch'oe Hyosŏn], *Kaikyō ni tatsu hito: Kim Talsu no bungaku to shōgai* (Tokyo: Hihyōsha, 1998), pp. 247-248.



support these different readings due to the narrative structure, without ever reducing itself to a final, single answer. More importantly, it does this *through* – not despite – the kōmin paradigm, wherein the identity of the “imperial subject” was made to supersede that of the ethnic and/or nationalized body. Even in the increasingly restrictive political climate of late wartime Japan, it was still possible to speak with irony, in a dialogic voice that echoed with the possibility of dissent – although, as this story proves, always only at the level of possibility.

Whether or not P’algil ever returns to Korea is a question that remains beyond the scope of the written page. By the time Kim Talsu published “Gomi” (1947), however, the contours of “Korea” had changed so much that the idea of return inevitably took on new and politically charged meanings. After liberation, Japanese settlers in Korea were stripped of their properties, but what to do with the land remained a pressing question for years after. The Soviet-backed North Korean Provisional People’s Committee, formed in February 1946, implemented in the spring of 1946 a massive land reform policy that confiscated the holdings of Japanese landlords as well “national traitors,” absentee landlords, and other targets and redistributed the land to the peasants who worked on it.<sup>233</sup> In the South, land reform of much more limited scope was conducted in March 1948 under the direction of the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), also based upon the transfer of land formerly owned by the Japanese to Koreans. The Land Reform Act was promulgated by the Republic of Korea in June 1949, but it was not until March 1950 that it would be finalized. In Japan, meanwhile, the social and political status of Korean residents was undergoing a series of changes, as detailed in previous sections. The impact of these changes on the evolution of so-called zainichi literature will be considered in the following pages.

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<sup>233</sup> As quoted in Charles Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 76.

### “GOMI” (1947) & “JINKAISEN KŌKI” (1947)

Kim Talsu significantly expanded and revised “Gomi” (1942) after the end of the war. He published the work in *Minshu Chōsen* in two parts, the first (entitled “Gomi”) in the February 1947 special issue on fiction and the second (entitled “Jinkaisen kōki,” or “Trash Barge Postscript”) in the next issue that followed. The revised story begins not in Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae’s study but with an introduction to P’algil:

Before he gained the rights to the trash from U. Dock, Hyōn P’algil was a constant source of trouble for the police. Like a cousin dropping in on his relatives, he would show up without fail, at a rate of around once every three days. If P’algil had failed to return home before it got dark, people in the village (*buraku*) would say, “Guess he’s gone to pay his respects to the head house (*honke*) again.”<sup>234</sup>

While the word *buraku* is today commonly associated with the *burakumin*,<sup>235</sup> during the colonial and immediate postwar period it was also strongly associated with the immigrant Korean population in Japan, which often built communities near or in traditionally burakumin urban areas due to poverty and discrimination. In fact, the word *buraku* is sometimes translated into English by scholars as “Korean ghetto” when spoken of in the context of zainichi literature and history.<sup>236</sup> In this opening scene, then, P’algil is presented both as a member of an

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<sup>234</sup> *Minshu Chōsen* February 1947, p. 17. P’algil’s name remains unglossed in this version. Nojiri’s name, however, is glossed.

<sup>235</sup> While there have always been social groups defined as “other” or “outcaste” in Japan, during the Edo period the *burakumin* status became hereditary, tied to occupations (such as butchery and tannery) considered “unclean” according to the Buddhist and Shinto belief systems. Although class distinctions were formally eliminated by the Meiji government in 1871, discrimination against the burakumin – who for a long time could often still be identified by their occupations, their local addresses, and their koseki details – has persisted to the present day. As Sharalyn Orbaugh observes, however, contemporary uses of the word burakumin should not indicate “that contemporary *burakumin* are the direct descendants of an unchanged genetically or culturally definable group of people; it is merely a convenient shorthand term for referring to an important and remarkably consistent *role* in the conceptualization of the social body.” Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction*, pp. 184-5.

<sup>236</sup> See, for example, Lie, *Zainichi*, p. 5.

established Korean community and as an oppositional figure contrasted against the Japanese authorities – something which would have no doubt been impossible to depict in the strict censorship climate of 1942 imperial Japan. The mention of the word *honke* – a deliberately ironic reiteration of imperialist discourse that used the metaphor of “head house” and “branch house” to justify colonial expansion, as mentioned in Chapter 2 – emphasizes the absolute colonial hierarchy between Korean and Japanese. Later details about P’algil’s life back in Korea and his family life in Japan (in this version, his wife is given a name: *Sunii*, written in *katakana* only) further deepens the portrait of a Korean man tied by memory to a community back in the peninsula and by practical necessity to the Korean community in Japan.

Along with providing a lengthy explanation of the junkman occupation, Kim Talsu greatly expands upon the confrontation between P’algil and the fishermen. When P’algil tries to manipulate the weighing scales in his favor, the fishermen verbally abuse him as an “unruly bastard” (*futei yarō*) and physically beat him. The words they use echo the ethnic slur “unruly Korean” (*futei senjin*), dramatically overlaying the Japanese fishermen’s violence with memories of previous violent colonial encounters. In response, P’algil cries out “Aigo” – the first introduction we have of the word, here unglossed but strongly linked to his fear and anguish – and flees from the fishermen. The tide has come up, however, and he is forced to wade into the water; this sends him into a crying panic because “he didn’t know how to swim, having been raised in a mountain village” (p. 24). It is only through a heroic effort that he manages to wade to safety. While there is a certain humor in the scene, the narrative slide into P’algil’s interiority as he thinks of everything he is working for and everything he’s given up adds a sympathetic note that also foreshadows the ending of the story.

Kim Talsu concludes “Gomi” (1947) with the scene between P’algil and Nojiri.

Although P’algil is illiterate, he fervently memorizes “those two characters that made up Nojiri’s name” (p. 27) and searches every house nameplate in the neighborhood for them. Unlike “Gomi” (1942), in this version Nojiri beats at P’algil’s head with his walking stick when P’algil refuses to let go of his legs. Despite this, P’algil is adamant: “[He] raised his face up from the ground and looked up pleadingly at Nojiri. Tears flowed from his eyes, and blood gushed from the various wounds on his forehead and face” (p. 28). Up to this point, the narrative had retained the humor of the 1942 version, exaggerating the almost farcical contrast between the older, well-dressed, distinguished Japanese man and the poor, unkempt, cowering Korean man at his feet. Here, however, the tone of the narration shifts into darker territory with the introduction of blood, and P’algil’s continued pleas become impossible to dismiss as frivolous. Faced with the physical evidence of his own violence, Nojiri offers to help clean up P’algil’s wounds and invites P’algil into his home. It is here that “Gomi” (1947) ends, capped with a note by the author stating that the story will be continued in “Jinkaisen kōki.”

As in the 1942 version, in this “Gomi” Kim deftly manipulates the gap between P’algil’s perceptions of himself and the perspective given to the reader, infusing his characterization of P’algil with ironic humor. Like Kim Saryang’s “Tenma,” the ironies of the narrative invite readings in which colonial reality is made into an extra-textual referent. At the same time, the rich addition of details surrounding P’algil’s circumstances creates a narrative that is at once more resistant to simple allegorical interpretation and yet still wholly embedded in the meta-narrative of empire. The violence that explodes onto the page in “Gomi” (1947) is material and singular, enacted upon P’algil’s body by specific Japanese antagonists, but it is also the consequence of a imperial system that has embarked on a war where “it feels like everyone in the

entire world has been made into a junkman” (p. 21). At the end of Miyamoto Yuriko’s *Banshū heiya*, Hiroko’s gaze was caught by the sight of two Korean men, who never looked back at her. Here, the first half of the story ends with Nojiri and P’algil staring at each other, albeit from (literally) different positions – the consequences of which are taken up in part two, “Jinkaisen kōki.”

“Jinkaisen kōki” begins as “Gomi” (1942) did, with P’algil visiting a man to ask for help. In this version, however, the third-person “Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae” has been changed to the first-person “I.” The narrative tense is also different, from “Gomi” (1947) as well as from “Gomi” (1942): with the introduction of “I,” we are launched into a retrospective narration that frames the entire first part as a memory, reconstructed in the (unspecified) present. We learn that at the time of the story, “I” had been working as a reporter for a local newspaper. “As a condition for being hired I was using my Japanese name [*Nihonmei*],” the narrator says, “but because at my core I was a Korean – after all, you never could tell what a Korean was really thinking – I wasn’t allowed to report on the local government or anything like that” (p. 93). Instead, he is assigned to crime, where he has no choice but to write about the “gambling or thieving by Koreans” (p. 93) when they occur. Gradually he gains the trust of the police; this allows him to act as an intermediary for the “desperate Korean brethren” (p. 93) who come to him with their problems. All these people wanted to do was “save up money and return home as soon as possible” (p. 94); the narrator’s own desire, in turn, was to spend his life writing about them.

Thus while the split between Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae is also preserved in a way in “Jinkaisen kōki,” it is sublimated by the first-person narration into an essentialist strategy of identity politics. The narrator’s privileging of his “core” Koreanness would suggest, for example, that Kyōngt’ae would be the “correct” reading of the name 敬泰. By using a Japanese name directed at a

*Japanese audience*, the narrator is able to manipulate the colonial hierarchies in his favor; the social position and economic security enabled by his Japanese name are transformed into tools to help his Korean peers. In other words, Japanese identity for the narrator is situational, strategic, and temporary, while Korean identity is innate and unchanging. While this possibility had always been implicitly suggested by the ambiguity of the unglossed name 敬泰 in “Gomi” (1942), it is only in the new discursive space of the “postwar” that this possibility could be rendered as explicit reality. This also helps to explain why Kim might have chosen to transform “Takahiro/Kyōngt’ae” into “I”: through the retrospective narration, the split subject is able to reclaim wholeness for himself, healing the trauma of colonial experience by narrativizing it as *memory*.

While Sō Minhūi is still the set villain of the piece, the new details that are provided about his life and personality in “Jinkaisen kōki” transform him into a foil for the narrator. Always sharply dressed and with nearly flawless Japanese, Minhūi is easily taken for a Japanese man by the casual observer. His wife is in fact Japanese, and “I” speculates that this marriage may be one reason why he was hired by the prestigious A. Insurance. Unlike “I,” Minhūi’s performance as a “Japanese” man is desperately sincere and fueled by “contempt” for his Korean origins (p. 98) – in other words, he is what, in the immediate postwar period, Koreans nationalists would label a collaborator. Interestingly, in the 1947 version no mention of the *Kyōwakai* is made. Instead, it is revealed that P’algil fears Minhūi not because of the latter’s Japanese connections but because “fellow Koreans . . . knew everything about each other. You couldn’t play dumb with them” (p. 96). Ironically, Minhūi harbors a fear of his fellow Koreans for similar reasons; he avoids them because he is afraid his own Korean ethnicity might be

exposed as a result. His anxiety only reinforces the idea that Koreanness may be hidden, but it can never be completely erased.

P'algil worries that Minhŭi will be able to see past P'algil's bluffs and intuit how profitable the trash barge really is. As in "Gomi" (1942), the narrator agrees to meet P'algil at the docks to serve as mediator for the dispute. As he waits with P'algil for Minhŭi to arrive, he tries to smile but finds that "it was too serious a scene to smile. I looked at [P'algil] and was suddenly struck with sadness" (p. 98). Deleted in this version are allusions to a "sense of defeat." Instead, when "I" asks Minhŭi to give up his bid for the trash barge, Minhŭi capitulates with good-humored resignation, saying simply, "I've lost" (p. 99). With this change, the dividing line between loss and liberation is sharply redrawn from Japanese/Korean to Korean/Korean. The united front presented by P'algil and "I" has successfully defeated the manipulations of the collaborator Minhŭi (who, it turns out, had been manipulated in turn by a Japanese wholesaler named Nakamura). Having successfully protected P'algil's interests, "I" walks across the plank to P'algil. And it is here that we become witness to a final division.

In "Gomi" (1942), Takahiro/ Kyōngt'ae urged P'algil to "work hard, buy lots of land back in your hometown, and return soon." In this version, the words that the narrator speaks to P'algil have been altered, with all references to buying land dropped. Instead, he exhorts P'algil to "work hard and return home" (p. 99). Due to the wording of the Japanese, the sentence may also be translated as "work hard *to* return home." The meaning of the word "return" is here clear and indisputable: return from Japan to Korea, from temporary residence to native permanence. As if to underline this point, the *kanji* characters used for "home" is *kokyō* but the word is glossed to read *kuni* (country; region; home), strongly linking together the nation with the individual, and one's country to one's sense of home. The colonial setting of the story thus takes

on an emphatically postcolonial significance and serves as a silent rebuke. In Occupation-period Japan, where the Allied forces were visible reminders of Japan's neocolonial state and Korean residents were still denied the same rights as Japanese nationals, the idea of return as true liberation would have had a compelling force.

Considering these changes, how is one to read the final lines of the story? Previously in this section, I argued that the change from third-person to first-person narration allowed Kim to transform the fractured *kōmin* subject – what Leo Ching has called “a subjective struggle over, not between, colonial identities”<sup>237</sup> – into the wholeness of the self-articulating, politicized ethnic national. But it is in the final lines of the story, with its contentious re-introduction of the word “aigu,” that we finally see how these fractures of the past remain preserved *in language*. In “Jinkaisen *kōki*” as in “Gomi” (1942), the injunction to “return home” is still one-directional and oddly isolating. P’algil stands distinctly apart from “I” and Minhūi, who are linked together by their privileged positions as educated, Japanese-language speakers in the metropole. While the narrator’s facility with the Japanese language is what gives him the power to assist P’algil, it also ironically marks him apart from P’algil at the same time. Only P’algil, it seems, has the ability to return home, because that word to him has always meant Korea. For the narrator, on the other hand, home and country cannot help but take on a plurality of meanings because they have to be spoken by him *in Japanese*. The home/country split is neatly demonstrated in the story textually, as previously mentioned: while *kokyō* and *kuni* can be wrenched together artificially, the one is ultimately irreducible to the other.

Further complications of translation arise with the final lines, which are mostly unchanged in content from the 1942 story. Because the word “aigo” had already been introduced earlier in this version as an interjection signaling distress, *before* the introduction of “I” as a

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<sup>237</sup> Ching, *Becoming “Japanese,”* p. 96.



frame narrator, its reappearance at the end of the story only emphasizes the disjunct between the word and the provided translation. Unlike “Gomi” (1942), this disjunct drives a wedge not only between the Korean subjects and the Japanese reading audience but also between the Koreans themselves. In this case the translation of “aigu” (a variant of aigo) as “ureshii” (“I’m happy”) emerges out of the first-person narration, which is retrospective in nature and told in a way that assumes or envisions a (Japanese) reading audience. Because it is “I” who is providing us with the translation, the significance of its meaning then depends on how one interprets the dynamics of this relationship between “I” and the audience, as well as between “I” and P’algil.

Here one might recall the opening statement of *Minshu Chōsen* and its goal of presenting material that would allow the reader to “understand the Korean people” – a wish echoed by the narrator himself, in his role as news reporter and writer. Although a character within the story, “I” is also, in part, a fictional projection of Kim Talsu himself, as the added details about the character – his occupation, his status in the community, his facility with the Japanese language – encourage the reader to associate the narrator with the author. By revising “Gomi” (1942) into a two-part tale split between P’algil and “I,” Kim uses the reading mechanism of the I-novel against itself. The I that speaks is an I that simultaneously encompasses all of his “Korean compatriots.” At the same time, the fact that this narrative structure *was* split points to internal divisions that could not be easily overcome. To illustrate this point, I turn finally to “Rōdō to sōsaku” (Labor and Writing, 1955), an essay by Kim Talsu that specifically addresses the question of I-novel writing and ethnic representation; and “Yonin no shiganhei” (Four Volunteer Soldiers, 1947), a short non-fiction piece by fellow *Shin Nihon Bungaku kai* member Nakano Shigeharu that provides a clue into locating “home” for Koreans in Japan.

## BACK TO THE I-NOVEL & CONCLUSION

“Rōdō to sōsaku” was first published in the *Iwanami kōza* series *Bungaku no sōsaku to kanshō* (The Creation and Appreciation of Literature) in 1955.<sup>238</sup> The essay, like “Ichi Chōsenjin, watashi no bungaku jikaku,” describes Kim’s childhood and introduction to literature via Shiga Naoya and others, but it also addresses those readers who have come to assume that Kim is a member of the bourgeois because the majority of his stories “feature a so-called member of the intelligentsia as the protagonist” (p. 14). In reality, however, Kim grew up among laborers and was so poor he “envied anyone who was able to work in a factory.” Why, then, would he choose to write about the intelligentsia? Kim answers: “I write about the so-called intelligentsia because I am keenly aware that I am *not* one of them” (p. 35).

This sentence is the key to understanding Kim’s approach to fiction, at least as he envisioned it at the time of his writing the essay. Kim admits that he felt attracted to the I-novel style of Shiga Naoya, which “narrowly follows a human’s fundamental way of life or what you might call his autonomy” (p. 30), but chose in the end to follow the example of Russian literature, which actively explores the broader realm of society and human thought.<sup>239</sup> It is no coincidence that he speaks about his literary awakening in relation to his childhood experiences in Japan, where his Japanese peers would jeer “Korean!” at him as an insult. Faced with a reality where the autonomy of the Korean individual could be effaced by the blanket generalization of “Korean people,” Kim would turn this translation from the individual to the social in his favor. The social,

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<sup>238</sup> The quotations in this dissertation are from the reprint found in *Kim Talsu Hyōronshū: Waga bungaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1976), pp. 13-38.

<sup>239</sup> The perceived distinction between Japanese I-novel fiction and European (particularly Russian) fiction, where the former is judged negatively against the latter, was not new to Kim. In 1924 Nakamura Murao compared the “state-of-the-mind novel” (*shinkyō shosetsu*), in which the author appears to speak directly to the reader, with the third-person “authentic novel” (*honkaku shōsetsu*) as represented by Tolstoy, Chekhov, and other Russian writers. Subsequently even critics who disagreed with Nakamura’s conclusions would implicitly or explicitly maintain this distinction between “Japanese” and “European” fiction. See Tomi Suzuki’s analysis in *Narrating the Self*, pp. 48-65.

it is implied, is always dialectically contained *in* the individual, and it is the writer's task to find a narrative method (*hōhō*) able to express both.

Writing on the double nature of Kim Talsu's fiction, Christopher D. Scott has argued that Kim's short stories "Me no iro" (Eye Color, 1950) and "Fuji no mieru mura de" (In a Village From Which Fuji Can Be Seen, 1951) work as I-novels and anti-I-novels both.<sup>240</sup> Both works center around the tense relationship between the unnamed narrator "I" and the burakumin writer Iwamura Ichitarō. In the former story, Iwamura asks "I" to publish his story (in a journal identified as "M.C."); in the latter story, "I" visits Iwamura's home and is accidentally "outed" as a Korean man to Iwamura's family. While Kim's fiction has often been read within the standard I-novel paradigm even by critics today,<sup>241</sup> Scott writes that in fact it both obeys and disobeys I-novel conventions and that Kim's "ambivalence toward the I-novel reveals the split subjectivity . . . of the zainichi Korean writer struggling to find an authentic voice in the Japanese language" (p. 41). However, because the "authentic voice" of the I-novel was always coded as middle- or upper-class, male, and Japanese, Kim's "duplicitous and deceitful" (p. 46) appropriation of it could act as a potent critique against what was considered a "native" literary form.

In this sense, Kim's work is not a self-portrait of zainichi Koreans, as Kawamura Minato suggests. Rather, it is a portrait of the difficulties of writing an authentic or representative "zainichi Korean self." For, as we have seen, the "zainichi Korean self" in Kim's work is always made to feel like an imposter. (p. 56)

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<sup>240</sup> Christopher D. Scott, *Invisible Men*, previously cited. Scott translates "Me no iro" as "Dirty Looks." The expression literally means "color of the eyes" but can be used idiomatically to refer to someone's expression; in the story, it is used to express the looks of suspicion and distaste felt by the burakumin character Iwamura (p. 33).

<sup>241</sup> Most notably by Kawamura Minato, who in his book *Umaretara soko ga furusato* places Kim squarely within the I-novel tradition. Kawamura, *Umaretara soko ga furusato* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1999).

Scott also notes that there was an immediate backlash against “Me no iro” and “Fuji no mieru mura de” from the burakumin community, precisely because readers tended to conflate “I” with Kim himself. Kim’s strenuous insistence on separating “I” from the author in “Rōdō to sōsaku” makes sense in light of this history. At the same time, the essay also raises the important question of class as another dividing factor that intersects with, but is not equal to, ethnicity. Rather than view the proletariat and the intelligentsia as diametrically opposed, Kim insists on using the one to inflect and refract the other. Speaking on the rash of “working-class writers” that proliferated immediately after the war, Kim writes:

Instead of absorbing and assimilating into ourselves everything the so-called intellectuals had to offer, wasn’t there a trend of rejecting and alienating them because “intellectuals = petite bourgeoisie”? We act as if there’s nothing bourgeois in us, but hiding in our attitude is a huge complex.<sup>242</sup>

For the author, exploring what is bourgeois in oneself becomes a crucial form of “self-critique” (p. 36). When framed within the context of literary production, it becomes the structural basis for socially engaged fiction. Thus the split between P’algil and the unnamed narrator, replicated in the textual split between “Gomi” (1947) and “Jinkaisen kōki,” exemplifies the sometimes contentious relationship between the laboring self (*rōdō* in the essay’s title) and the writing self (*sōsaku*). Just as the narrator and “Iwamura” can be considered “two manifestations of a deeply conflicted narrative voice,”<sup>243</sup> so too can P’algil and the narrator here. By reframing the story as a retrospective narration, Kim brings to the forefront the dilemma of the Korean writer of Japanese-language fiction, who must speak *as a Korean* in order to dispel negative stereotypes about *the Koreans*. This is something the “I” in the story does willingly and ably. But

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<sup>242</sup> Kim, “Rōdō to sōsaku,” p. 37.

<sup>243</sup> Scott, *Invisible Men*, p. 46.

in doing so in Japanese, he inevitably sets himself apart from P'algil (who speaks in a Korean that resists easy translation) as well as from his Japanese readers (who are shown that the Japanese that "I" speaks *is* translation). The divisions in the story between the characters also suggests the material, political, and ideological fragmentation of Korean communities due to and following the end of the war.

Published in the same issue of *Minshu Chōsen* that featured Kim Talsu's "Jinkaisen kōki," Nakano Shigeharu's short but rich nonfiction piece "Yonin no shiganhei" also touches upon this issue of language politics and literary representation. "Writing about [my experiences as fact] is good because then I don't forget them later," Nakano acknowledges, "but it becomes a disadvantage when writing fiction" (p. 51). The four-page text centers around Nakano's encounter with four young Korean men heading back to Korea, shortly after the end of the war. Although the four are dressed in Japanese soldiers' uniforms, Nakano realizes they are Korean from their speech (although they speak fluent Japanese, it is a *learned* Japanese – polished, region-less, too perfectly "standard") and from their expressions (free of the anxiety that shadows the faces of their Japanese peers).

Although the youths are keenly aware of Korea's independence, Nakano observes that "they had not yet broken free from feeling as if the Japanese government still controlled Korea. Their material bodies were not fully alive to the fact that they were foreigners (*gaikokujin*) traveling through Japan, now just another a foreign country, on their way home to their fatherland" (p. 53). They had never heard of "revolutionary writers" (*kakumei sakka*) from Korea, such as Im Hwa (1908–1953) or Kim Saryang, and they knew less about the political situation in Korea than Nakano did. To them, Nakano muses, he was simply "another Japanese person returning from war, but also an individual human being whom they found they could trust" (p.

70). Nakano ends his piece by briefly comparing his experience to Hiroko's encounter with the Korean youths in *Banshū heiya* and marveling at the fact that none of the Japanese passengers on the train had noticed that he "had been talking to Koreans . . . or that the four Korean youths had been talking to a person who was Japanese" (p. 54). In other words, the Japanese conversation alone would not have been enough to clue in a casual bystander on the ethnicity of the speakers, Nakano included.

While Nakano is like Miyamoto Yuriko in his portrayal of the Korean youths as fellow comrades and symbols of liberation, a sense of the uncanny threads through his writing like a fading echo – what Freud characterized as "that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar."<sup>244</sup> In his epilogue of *Race for Empire*, T. Fujitani describes the Koreans in Nakano's text as having an "almost disembodied Japaneseness."<sup>245</sup> Their Japanese is uncanny because it is both familiar and strange, a language without a home. The Koreans are quick to embrace their involuntary membership in a newly liberated Korea – involuntary because of the legal and institutional strictures that have re-defined them as aliens in Japan, and because of the ethnic nationalism that claims them as always-already Koreans. But as with the "I" in "Gomi" (1947) and "Jinkaisen kōki," their uncanny inheritance of Japanese – which is simultaneously a product of colonialism and the very means in which colonialism is perpetuated, even into the "post"-colonial period – belies the retrospective coupling of nation to home. After 1945, *kokugo* was refashioned into *kugō* in Korea. But as I argue in detail in Chapter 4, denying the historicity of "national language" did not heal the trauma of colonialism; it embodied it.

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<sup>244</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny* trans. David McLintock (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 124.

<sup>245</sup> Fujitani, *Race for Empire*, p. 375.

To return to an earlier question: where was “home” for the Koreans who remained in Japan? As mentioned previously, the word *zainichi* began to be used consistently over all other possible terms by the writers and editors of *Minshu Chōsen* starting in 1948, following the initiation of the alien registration system in Japan and the creation of two separate governments on the Korean peninsula. The San Francisco Peace Treaty of September 1951, which went into effect April 1952, marked the formal end of the Allied Occupation of Japan. But while Japanese newspapers celebrated the return to independence, *zainichi* Koreans were faced with an uncertain and dark future. As mentioned before, the San Francisco Peace Treaty stripped Koreans of Japanese nationality, effectively turning those Koreans remaining in Japan stateless. By the time Kim published “*Rōdō to sōsaku*,” the Korean War had already made its devastating mark on the peninsula and solidified the antagonism between the two Korean governments. The word *zainichi* was beginning to take on the tragic irony it holds today: living in Japan, but not of Japan; a resident, but not necessarily by choice.

At the same time, Nakano’s essay reminds us that the creation of a so-called *zainichi* community did not happen in isolation from the rest of Japan. As mentioned before, there is a brief moment in the essay when Nakano too is disembodied in a way, when he realizes that no casual witness would have been able to know that “the four Korean youths had been talking to a person who was Japanese.” Here, the ideology and material practice of *kokugo* is once again turned back on itself. The impeccable (though homeless) Japanese spoken by the Korean youths complicates the boundary lines of Korean ethnicity, it is true, but it also simultaneously de-centers and de-stabilizes the ethnic identity of the “native” Japanese man. While Nakano uses the word *Nihongo* instead of *kokugo* in his piece, the faint sense of unsettledness that pervades his

writing shows that the two terms cannot be cleanly severed from their imperial pasts, nor can the artificial distinction between them ever be completely maintained.

During the brief but intense changes of the Occupation period, Korean writers were able to explore the possibilities of their new status as “liberated” people. The discourse of particularity that had limited and defined Korean writers during the colonial period was embraced by these postwar writers as a way to critique and challenge the ethnocentric assumptions of their Japanese readers. Like Miyamoto Yuriko, Kim found a compelling rebuke against Japanese imperialism in the everyday lives of common Koreans. But whether or not he intended his writing to be read against the grain of his own life, it is true that his prominent status as an educated, politically astute, Japanese-language writer was an uncommon one, no matter his laboring background. Although “Gomi” (1947) and “Jinkaisen kōki” were written before the word *zainichi* had gained common currency in Japanese society, already in Kim’s fiction we see an acknowledgement that the experience of being Korean in Japan spanned the 1945 prewar/postwar divide and could not be contained in a single name, a single story, or a single I. That many Japanese readers would persist in reading Kim’s fiction as straightforward I-novels – despite his constant dismantling of the protagonist-narrator-author relationship – shows how entrenched the I-novel paradigm was and continues to be. More importantly, it illustrates how language itself can be a colonization of sorts. The “forked tongue” of the postcolonial writer could be used against one’s former masters, it is true, but it also could betray oneself.

As I have mentioned throughout this chapter, the postwar discourse on democratic revolution and postcolonial subjectivity relied on a model of the ethnic nation that underwent various manifestations across Asia. Kevin Doak argues that in Japan ethnic nationalism was



seductive because it “could suggest social solidarity in the face of capitalist elites and, equally important . . . could be used to mobilize culture and tradition against westernization.”<sup>246</sup> In Korea, especially in the North, it was also seen as a weapon against Japan. In Chapter 4, I turn to the *shinnichiha* (in Korean: *ch'inilpa*) debates that occurred among Korean writers in Korea and Japan during the immediate postwar period. The insistence on nationhood as the defining context for evaluating the legacy of Japanese imperialism would have a huge impact on this issue, in Japan no less than in Korea. By focusing on the binary between collaboration and resistance, the Korean leftist writers who dominated the literary scene were able to “solve” the thorny issue of language, nation, and identity. In Japan, this led to the establishment a self-identified genre of *zainichi* literature that was (it was declared) free from the colonial taint of the past – despite the fact that it was written in Japanese, itself the embodiment of colonialism writ large.

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<sup>246</sup> Kevin Doak, “What is a Nation and Who Belongs? National Narratives and the Ethnic Imagination in Twentieth-Century Japan” in *The American Historical Review* 102:2 (April 1997), p. 308.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**Reconstructing National Identities:**  
**On Collaboration, Wartime Responsibility, and Colonial Memory**

*At times, the sea's sobs tossed me gently,  
 Her dark, yellow petals brushed against me;  
 I was like a woman on her knees,  
 A martyr weary of poles and zones.*

[...]

*Enough tears! Dawns break hearts.  
 Every moon is wrong, every sun bitter;  
 Love's bitter bite has left me swollen, drunk with heat.  
 Let my hull burst! Let me sink into the sea!*

– from “The Drunken Boat,” Arthur Rimbaud (trans. Wyatt Mason)

**INTRODUCTION**

In August 1991, prominent *zainichi* (resident) Korean writer and critic Kim Sōkpōm (1925–) was blocked from entering South Korea, his visa application denied on the grounds of his *Chōsenjin*<sup>247</sup> status, which indicates Korean ethnicity but stands consciously separate from *Kankokujin* (“South Korean”) nationality. Kim soon channeled his indignation into a scathing 142-page essay in Japanese condemning the neo-colonial conditions that continued to dictate political structures on the Korean peninsula.<sup>248</sup> Criticizing politicians such as former South Korean president Syngman Rhee (Yi Sūngman; 1875–1965) as well as “collaborationist” colonial intellectuals such as Yi Kwangsu, Kim’s message was unequivocally clear: by allowing former pro-Japanese collaborators to escape punishment after Liberation, true justice had been

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<sup>247</sup> Contemporary use of the word *Chōsenjin* (Korean person) in Japan can (but does not always) indicate Koreans who align themselves with North Korea. Many *zainichi* Koreans, such as Kim, have also chosen to keep the *Chōsenjin* designation as a protest against the division of the peninsula.

<sup>248</sup> Kim Sōkpōm, “‘Shinnichiha’ ni tsuite” in *Tenkō to shinnichiha* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993). The essay was first serially published in *Sekai* from June 1992 through February 1993 under the title “Kokoku e no toi.” In this chapter, I make use of the Iwanami Shoten version.

thwarted. Only by purging these individuals from power once and for all would Korea – undivided, integrated, and autonomous – recuperate the losses of the past.

The polemical stance of Kim’s essay, which presents “collaboration” and “resistance” in absolute terms, both replicates and reciprocates a strand of South Korean academic discourse beginning to gain steam in the early 1990s. Although efforts had been made during decolonization to oust pro-Japanese collaborators from all spheres of government, the outbreak of the Korean War saw the peninsula newly polarize along pro-communist / anti-communist lines. Many former “collaborators” were able to re-present themselves in the South as anti-communist patriots; in the end, these individuals proved indispensable for bolstering Syngman Rhee’s fledgling administration, and the question of collaboration was erased from South Korean public discourse.<sup>249</sup>

My purpose here is not to detail the political and social developments that contributed to South Korea’s sense of neo-colonial crisis, but rather to put stress on the imagined boundaries assumed by the discursive signs central to it: *nation*, *collaborator*, *Japanese*, *Korean*. These terms, which retrospectively remap onto history the configurations of contemporary political necessity, are put into precariously sharp relief when spoken by someone outside their borders, beyond their scope of legitimacy: the words cannot help but double back on themselves. What happens, for example, when a first-generation Korean immigrant to Japan like Kim Sōkpōm speaks the word *nation* in the tongue not of his birth, but of his residence – in the tongue, that is, of his former colonial master? To whom is the word *collaboration* oriented? In speaking it, how

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<sup>249</sup> The debate on “pro-Japanese” collaboration was jumpstarted again in 1966 with the publication of Im Chongguk’s *Ch’inil munhak non* (Seoul: P’yōnghwa Ch’ulp’ansa, 1966), as mentioned in Footnote 15 of the introduction. Koen de Ceuster notes that the book was slow to gain notice at first but that Im went on to become one of the most influential scholars working on the collaboration issue in South Korea, particularly during the push for democratization that occurred under Roh Taewoo’s presidency (No T’aeu; 1988–1993). See Koen De Ceuster, “The Nation Exorcised: The Historiography of Collaboration in South Korea” in *Korean Studies* 25:2 (2002), p. 220.

does Kim maneuver past his own ambiguous status as a nation-less outcast of a forgotten empire?

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which the insistence on nationhood as the defining context for evaluating the legacy of Japanese imperialism produced (not simply shaped) the controversial “collaboration” debates that occurred in Korea and Japan in the immediate postwar period. This chapter therefore serves as a complement to Chapter 3, which dealt with the cultural ascendancy of Marxism in Japan and the political influence of the pro-North Korea zainichi organization Chōren. Chōren did not emerge uncontested. It faced strenuous opposition from SCAP, which viewed its North Korean affiliation with deep suspicion and succeeded in shutting down the entire organization in 1949 as part of its “reverse course” policy; and it found a rival in the pro-South Korean zainichi group Mindan. The issue of collaboration cannot be discussed apart from this rivalry, which was itself embroiled in the geopolitical restructuring of “East Asia” occurring in the midst of a nascent Cold War. It also cannot be discussed apart from the simultaneous reconceptualization of Japan’s imperial past as only that of military aggression. Although debates over Japanese “war responsibility” (*sensō sekinin*) continue to be waged even today, little attempt has been made to interrogate the discursive limits of the term itself. In the sections that follow, I will show how and why “war responsibility” and “collaboration” emerged as distinct discourses with seemingly no overlap, in tandem with the supersedence of the imperial with the national.

As in previous chapters, I begin by providing background on the various political alliances, tensions, policies, and organizations that informed the texts that are central to my analysis. These texts include Yi Kwangsu’s confessional essay “Na ūi kobaek” (My Confession, 1948); the postwar writings of Chang Hyōkchu, an author I introduced in Chapters 1 and 2; and

the long novel *Yoidorebune* (Drunken Boat, 1949) by Tanaka Hidemitsu.<sup>250</sup> All three writers were introduced in previous chapters as vocal advocates for *kōminka* (imperialization) during the late colonial period, and an examination of their post-1945 writings (and post-1945 reputations) will therefore help show how *kōminka* was subsequently remembered and reconceptualized in accordance with the new national configurations that emerged after Japan's defeat. The different border crossings and displacements that can be found in the fiction of these writers also serve as a useful entry point in understanding both the continuities and discontinuities that occur across the supposed August 1945 divide.

## REINVENTING THE NATION

In 1946, the writer Hwang Sunwŏn (1915–2001) moved from the Soviet-occupied north down south to Seoul. A landlord's son, Hwang had been educated at Waseda University during the late colonial period and had already published several volumes of poetry and short stories by the time the war ended in 1945. As mentioned in Chapter 3, however, by 1946 the Soviet-backed North Korean Provisional People's Committee had already begun to implement land reform policies that targeted the landowning class (both Korean and Japanese). Hwang used his experiences in the north as basis for his 1954 novel *K'ain ūi huye* (Descendants of Cain), which

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<sup>250</sup>*Yoidorebune* (Drunken Boat) is a reference to “Le Bateau ivre” (Drunken Boat), a 100-line verse poem by Arthur Rimbaud written in 1871. Ro Tenshin, the heroine of *Yoidorebune*, is said to have written a poem in Korean with the same title as the Rimbaud text during her schoolgirl days. See Tanaka Hidemitsu, *Yoidorebune* in *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* 2 (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1965), p. 269. The Rimbaud poem describes the voyage of an unmoored boat in a language infused with images of intoxication, desire, freedom, and despair. In *Yoidorebune*, the Japanese protagonist Kyōkichi gets one of his Korean friends to provide him a Japanese translation of Ro's poem. The following is a representative quote: “The agony of being intoxicated alone . . . The ship lurches, aimless. On a drunken ship, I bury my face in my sake cup for life” (p. 269). Although the poem was praised as being “extremely passionate and bold,” Kyōkichi cannot help thinking of the “misfortune of Oriental people (*tōyōjin*), who have to ape the West when it comes to anything modern (*kindaiteki-na mono*).”

was an immediate success when it was first published in Seoul and which continues to enjoy a place in the “South Korean” literary canon.<sup>251</sup>

*K'ain ũi huye* chronicles the ostracism and eventual displacement of the protagonist Hun, a landowner's son and unwilling heir to all the privileges that position once entailed. While some former tenant farmers do not hesitate to immediately seize power through the various people's committees that spring up with the arrival of the communists, the novel also highlights other responses of confusion, ambivalence, and fear due to the social turmoil brought about by the land reforms. In one key scene, a party official organizes a peasant assembly meant to judge and sentence all those who had “collaborated with the Japanese colonialists” (p. 80), exploited the peasant workers, and blocked “the democratic development of our country.” While many of those gathered quickly realize that they have “nothing to lose, and plenty to gain” (p. 82) by condemning all former land holders, the proceedings are comically undercut by the confusion of an old man named Ko, who cannot follow the communist rhetoric and does not understand what any of it means. The scene critically exposes the blindspots of such people's assemblies, which purported to act on behalf of the people but made no attempt to listen to them, and it casts a sympathetic light on those swept up in the monolithic binaries of collaboration and resistance, colonialism and liberation, colonizer and colonized.

Novels like *K'ain ũi huye* reveal how Koreans on both side of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel were urgently concerned with securing an independent Korean state, one that was also properly “postcolonial.” However, while accusations of collaboration were strong and strenuous in the early days following liberation, no wide consensus was reached on what defined a collaborator and who deserved to be punished as one. As Koen De Ceuster details in his cogent article of

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<sup>251</sup> Hwang Sunwŏn, *K'ain ũi huye* (Seoul: Chungang Munhwasa, 1954). Page numbers refer to the English translation by Suh Ji-moon and Julie Pickering published under the title *The Descendants of Cain* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).

collaboration historiography in South Korea, the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) did not hesitate to rely on former Government General employees as advisors and bureaucrats during its fledgling stages.<sup>252</sup> Fearing a possible power vacuum, USAMGIK largely refused to prosecute Koreans accused as collaborators.

It was only with the establishment of the Korean Interim Legislative Council (*Kwado ippŏp ũilhoe*) in October 1946 that the issue of collaboration resurfaced as a legal matter. A draft law introduced by the council defined national traitors (*minjok panyŏkcha*) as “those who opposed independence or otherwise caused harm to the people or the nation through collusion with Japan or other foreign powers,” and Korean collaborators (*puil hyŏmnyŏkcha*) as “those who during the Japanese occupation period had ingratiated themselves with the Japanese authorities or those who inflicted injury upon their compatriots through ‘evil deeds.’” (p. 212) An Anti-Traitor Law (*Panminjok haengwi ch’ŏbŏlbŏp*) was introduced in September 1948 by the Constitutional Assembly (*Chehŏn kukhoe*) and implemented by a ten-member investigation committee but was increasingly opposed by Syngman Rhee, who argued that the law created internal divisions when it was precisely national unity that was needed. After a number of high profile political scandals, including the arrest of three assembly members on charges of collusion with the North, the special committee resigned en masse in July 1949 and was replaced with a new committee more amenable to government control.

By the time of the Korean War, debates over collaboration in South Korea had begun to lose ground to an anticommunist statism. One of the legacies of these debates, however, was the condemnation of Yi Kwangsu as perhaps *the* emblematic pro-Japanese collaborator. This final assessment of Yi Kwangsu endures into the present day; it can be amply witnessed, for example,

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<sup>252</sup> Koen De Ceuster, “The Nation Exorcised,” pp. 210-11. USAMGIK was the South Korean counterpart to SCAP in Japan; it operated from September 1945 to August 1948, after which control was ceded to the First Republic of South Korea with Syngman Rhee as the first president.

in Kim Sökpöm's "Shinnichiha ni tsuite" (On Pro-Japanese Collaborators) mentioned in the introduction of this chapter. Yi was arrested in February 1949 by a special committee of the South Korean National Assembly whose purpose was to investigate, arrest, and punish collaborators in accordance with the Anti-Traitor Law. Although the case was dropped some months later, he never again achieved the same popular and critical success of his earlier years, and the "collaborationist" literary works produced late in his career were excised from the literary canon in South Korea.

Even before his imprisonment, Yi Kwangsu had already begun to write the long confessional essay "Na ūi kobaek" (My Confession) starting in 1948. Part autobiography and part apologia, the essay details pivotal moments such as Yi's childhood exposure to Chinese literature and Tonghak learning, his involvement with the March 1 Movement, and – in one of the shortest sections of the essay – the events and pressures that led to his "collaboration" with Japanese authorities after the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Yi's contention that he collaborated for the sake of "preserving the *minjok* (people/ethnos)"<sup>253</sup> is harshly dismissed in "Shinnichiha ni tsuite" by Kim Sökpöm, who argues that Yi's lack of remorse and shame is damning testimony of a collaboration that went beyond strategic performance into the territory of ideological indoctrination:

Just what is collaboration for the sake of preserving the *minjok*? Collaboration for Yi Kwangsu meant becoming Japanese (*Nihonjin-ka*), himself included; it meant becoming a child of the emperor (*tennō no akago*). How can becoming Japanese lead to preserving the *minjok*? "Preserving the *minjok*" and "becoming Japanese" are irreconcilable . . . In "My Confession," he cleverly avoids the phrase "becoming Japanese" and all the actions he did to achieve it by replacing the phrase with the empty word "collaboration" (*kyōryoku*).<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Yi Kwangsu, "Na ūi kobaek" in *Yi Kwangsu chōnjip* vol. 13 (Seoul: Samjungdang, 1962), p. 267.

<sup>254</sup> Kim, *Shinnichiha*, p. 80.



In the above passage, Kim uses the context of Yi's actions (of becoming Japanese) in order to judge the validity of his postwar confession. Significantly, he uses the word *kyōryoku* (collaboration) to describe the act of collaboration, but *shinnichiha* (pro-Japanese; in Korean, *ch'inilp'a*) to refer to Yi himself. Like the English word "collaboration," *kyōryoku* (in Korean: *hyōmnyōk*) can be used in either a positive or pejorative sense, in a wide variety of contexts. In contrast, the term *shinnichiha* (Korean: *ch'inilp'a*) has come to overwhelmingly connote postwar ethnonational judgments of colonial complicity with imperial Japan, and therefore betrayal of the Korean nation. This affective register is suggested by the very characters that make up *shinnichiha/ch'inilp'a* (親日派), which can be literally translated as "faction close to / intimate with Japan."<sup>255</sup> Michael D. Shin has noted that the singling out of Yi Kwangsu as a paradigmatic "pro-Japanese collaborator" after 1945 can be explained in part by the public's affective identification with Yi, which in turn transformed into a national trauma.<sup>256</sup>

While Kim Sōkpōm is right to insist that the idea of becoming Japanese is not the same as collaborating *with* the Japanese, it needs to be emphasized that "becoming Japanese" during the colonial period meant becoming an imperial subject above all else, and that a particularized Korean ethnicity was not necessarily antithetical to that process. As Theodore Hughes points out, the overriding association of the imperial with the "Japanese spirit," culture, and emperor was primarily a post-1945 reinterpretation.<sup>257</sup> Meanwhile, the figure of the collaborator emerges

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<sup>255</sup> I am indebted to Theodore Hughes for this insight into the affective/intimate connotations of belonging embedded in the word *shinnichi/ch'in'il*. The term also opens up the question of degree/relation in a way that the English word "collaboration" does not, as it defines collaboration through a quality of "closeness" in both act and identity.

<sup>256</sup> Michael D. Shin, "Yi Kwangsu: The Collaborator as Modernist against Modernity" in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71:1 (February 2012), p. 116.

<sup>257</sup> Theodore Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 192.

through a kind of inversion, as it is “the accusation of collaboration that effects the formation of a bounded-off, normative regime of national identity. To confess or to denounce, then, is less to perform oneself or others as collaborationist than to produce the ethnonation that the collaborative act presupposes” (p. 193). It may be said that by insisting on the binary of collaboration and resistance, Kim Sökpöm is attempting to recuperate some of the agency of resistance for the politicized, postcolonial subject: *I know better; I resist the call of collaboration.* At the same time, it is the creation of this artificial division that produces the anxiety being overcome: one must *first* classify Yi as a collaborator in order to justify or banish him; and only once he is identified as a traitor does it then become necessary to exorcise the pain of his “betrayal.”<sup>258</sup>

On the other end of the spectrum, Kim Saryang has earned a posthumous reputation as an “anti-Japanese” writer, due in large part to his now well-known escape from Korea in early 1945 to join the North China Korean Independence League (*Hwabuk Chosön tongnip tongmaeng*).<sup>259</sup> After liberation, he made his way back down to Korea from China and became the vice-chairperson for the North Korean literary organization *Chosön munhak yesul ch’ongdongmaeng* (Korean Literature and Arts Federation). Although his leftist pedigree ensured him a very different reception from Yi Kwangsu, Kim Saryang too found himself having to justify his writings in Japanese during the colonial period. In 1946, he participated in a roundtable talk later published under the title “Munhakja ūi chagi pip’an” (The Self-Reflection of Writers”) in the

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<sup>258</sup> This idea of betrayal may be found in “Shinnichiha ni tsuite” on page 92, when Kim outlines Yi’s “path to pro-Japanese collaboration and betrayal of the minjok.”

<sup>259</sup> Kim now enjoys a unique position in the literary histories of East Asia. He has been retrospectively embraced in Japan as a pioneer in *zainichi* (lit. “residing in Japan”) literature, due in no small part to the efforts of Kim Talsu and Kim Sökpöm in compiling and publishing Kim Saryang’s works in Japan; revived in North Korea as a leftist Korean writer, as detailed in this chapter; and held up as an example *par excellence* of anti-Japanese “resistance” in South Korea (after the ban on North Korean writers was lifted in 1988).

October 1946 issue of *Inmin yesul* (The Peoples' Arts); also participating in the roundtable were the fellow leftist writers Kim Namch'ön (1911–1953?), Yi T'aejun (1904–?), Han Sölya (1900–1976), Yi Kiyöng (1895–1984), Yi Wönjo (1909–1955?), Han Hyo (1912–?), and Im Hwa (1908–1953).<sup>260</sup> When confronted with the question of self-criticism and regret, Kim admits that at the time he thought “one might be able to write more freely [in Japanese] than in Korean” but now worries that he “made a mistake in the content” (p. 166) of his writing.

While Yi Wönjo prove sympathetic to this line of thinking, Yi T'aejun objects strenuously: “Before 8/15, it was our culture and not literature that was in greater danger; and more in danger than culture was our language” (p. 169). He goes on to reproach those Koreans who “easily” chose Japanese over Korean. And although he makes a concession that one has to make a distinction between “people who collaborated with the Japanese ideologically, and people who wrote in Japanese just for the terminology,” his final analysis is that those who “wrote even a single word more of Korean” were to be admired over those who refused to write at all (p. 170). Although the argument ends without resolution, what all the participants agree upon is the need to use individual action (*haengdong*) and political orientation as the basis for judging the collaborative act.

The participants' shared emphasis on self-criticism through deep reflection and public confession also suggests that the line between North Korea and South Korea was never as neat nor as stable as the terms used to describe them – North vs. South, left-wing vs. right-wing – might suggest. Kim Il-sung [Kim Ilsöng] was quick to tout his credentials in North Korea as an

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<sup>260</sup> Reprinted in Song Kihan and Kim Oegon (eds.), *Haebang konggan üi pip'yöng munhak* vol. 2 (Seoul: T'aeaksa, 1991), pp. 164-172. The page numbers cited in this chapter are for this 1991 reprint. For a detailed, incisive discussion of this roundtable talk and the larger suppression of the Japanese language in post-liberation Korea, see “Chapter 4: Toward a Monolingual Society” in Serk-Bae Suh, *Empire and Nation: The Debates of Japanese and Korean Intellectuals on Nation and Culture from the 1930s through the 1950s* (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2006).

anti-Japanese and anti-colonial leader in contrast to the U.S.-led South. Chapter 3 of this dissertation mentioned how those accused as collaborators were purged from government and their land confiscated. Indeed, as Charles Armstrong notes, land reform in North Korea was meant to eliminate the feudal vestiges of land relationships; the dual attempts to “break the power of the landowning classes and eliminate Japanese collaborators” actually served a single purpose, as these categories were often one and the same.<sup>261</sup> The legacy of collaboration would come to haunt the families of the accused as a strict social hierarchy solidified, with workers and peasants at the top and descendants of collaborators/landlords at the bottom. However, Armstrong has also shown how the DPRK legal system drew upon Japanese colonial law as well as Soviet law and made use of much of the policing and surveillance superstructure put in place during the colonial period, illustrating the impossibility of drawing a clean line between “colonial” and “postcolonial” conditions.<sup>262</sup>

Even as the legacies of Japanese colonialism haunted state systems and the national infrastructure in both North and South Korea, another kind of haunting was taking place: that of the Japanese bodies physically still present in Korea. To return briefly to *K'ain ũi huye*, it is notable that while the party official condemns all “Japanese colonialists,” the only Japanese that make an appearance in the novel are the individuals seen wandering the country roads around the village and begging in the city streets of Pyongyang. Not only that, but the majority of these Japanese are destitute women “trying to pass as men”<sup>263</sup> or surviving by prostituting themselves to the Russian soldiers. Although they too are necessarily included in the category of colonizer,

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<sup>261</sup> Charles Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution: 1945-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003) p. 75.

<sup>262</sup> For an extended discussion, see Charles Armstrong, “Surveillance and Punishment in Postliberation North Korea” in *positions* 3:3 (Winter 1995).

<sup>263</sup> Hwang, *K'ain*, p. 141.

the attention given to their gendered fate reveals how such a category is entirely inadequate for understanding the subject positions of these women on the margins of a broken empire.

Furthermore, a careful distinction needs to be made between the perceived colonial responsibility of Koreans (as collaborators) and that of the Japanese (as colonizers). In Korea, the words *ch'inilp'a* (親日派; pro-Japanese), *puil hyōmnyōkcha* (附日協力者; collaborator with the Japanese), and *minjok panyōkcha* (民族反逆者, traitor to the people/nation) were used interchangeably to refer to a wide range of activities: collusion with Japanese officials to maintain or promote Japanese colonization; capitalist profiteering made at the expense of fellow Koreans; active promotion of *kōminka*; and so forth.<sup>264</sup> In all cases, it was the Japanese colonization of Korea that became the base context for definition, and ethnic Koreans who were the target of the terms. The word *ch'inilp'a* found its way to Japan soon after the promulgation of the Anti-Traitor Law and is still used when referring to Korean collaboration before and during the colonial period, as witnessed in Kim Sōkpōm's writings. When referring to Japanese involvement with the Japanese state, however, the term that was overwhelmingly used was *sensō sekininsha* (戦争責任者; someone responsible for the war). Here, the context was the 15 Year War and the military aggression waged against China and the Allied Powers.

That war culpability— and not culpability in the larger system of imperialism, in which of course the U.S. and other Allied Powers were also a part — became the dominant discourse in immediate postwar Japan had much to do with Occupation policy. Anxious to reconstruct Japan into a demilitarized and democratized nation-state that could serve as an important ally in East Asia, the U.S. consistently framed their policies in terms of the war, from the infamous

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<sup>264</sup> The 1948 Anti-Traitor Law lists these kinds of activities in detail. The full document can be accessed online at the *Kukka pōmnyōng chōngbo sent'ō* (Korea National Legislation Information Center) run by the Korea Ministry of Government Legislation here: <http://www.law.go.kr/lsInfoP.do?lsiSeq=3399#0000>

International Military Tribunal for the Far East (also known as the Tokyo Trials) to the heated debates over the emperor's status and political role. As mentioned previously in Chapter 3, SCAP avoided tackling the issue of colonization for fear the “restless, uprooted Korean minority in Japan” would destabilize reconstruction efforts.<sup>265</sup> Categorized simultaneously as a liberated people *and* as an enemy national by SCAP, Koreans in Japan found themselves hemmed in on both sides – often tragically, as was the case for the twenty-three Koreans who were arrested and executed in Japan as Japanese war criminals.<sup>266</sup>

It was not just SCAP, however, that structured discourse on Japanese imperialism around the “war of aggression;” Japanese intellectuals on all ends of the political spectrum embraced the term *sensō sekininsha* as the primary locus of debate. The journal *Shin Nihon bungaku*, for example, was one of the first organs to publicly raise the issue of war responsibility through Odagiri Hideo's essay “Bungaku ni okeru sensō sekinin no tsuikyū” (In pursuit of the war responsibility of literature, June 1946). Other early postwar essays include Hasegawa Nyozeikan's “Sensō to bungakusha no sekinin” (War and Writers' Responsibility, April 1946; published in *Ningen*), which compares the political autonomy, or lack thereof, of Chinese literature, Japanese literature, and Western literature; Yanaihara Tadao's essay “Nihon kokumin no shimei to hansei” (The Mission and Remorse of Japanese Citizens, August 1946; published in *Sekai*), which states that the three main priorities of Japan should be an unbroken imperial line, the integration of Eastern and Western civilization, and a peaceful nation (*heiwa kokka*); and Ōkuma Nobuyuki's “Hansei naki minzoku” (A People Without Remorse, September 1947;

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<sup>265</sup> Quoted in Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ* trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 452.

<sup>266</sup> See Utsumi Aiko, *Chōsenjin BC kyū senpan no kiroku* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1982).

published in *Bungei shunjū*), which argues that only collective remorse from the Japanese people will steer the country to a better future.

All of the above mentioned articles use the words “Japan” (*Nihon*) and “Japanese people” (*Nihonjin* or *Nihon kokumin*). As we saw in previous chapters, during the colonial period the borders of “Japan” were historically overdetermined, simultaneously standing in for the empire and for the nation. The postwar imaging of “Japan” as a nation-state consisting primarily of the islands Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, and Shikoku was therefore not a radical redefinition so much as the ascendancy of a discourse that had always existed in some form. The visibility of *senjū sekininsha* as an object of discourse relied on this latter understanding of Japan, defined against the monolithic third term of the West, and worked to perpetuate it. The question of the colonies was not suppressed so much as made irrelevant by the discourse on war responsibility, which privileged “Japan proper” as the objects of investigation and retrospectively cast its history in the nation-state frame.

As Seiji Lippit has shown, however, the huge influx of Japanese returnees (*hikiagesha*) ensured that the “postwar” in Japan entailed as much rupture as it did continuation. These returnees were composed not only of soldiers returning from the battlefield but also Japanese settlers returning from the colonies – which, to them, was often considered home. In his study of the early postwar fiction of Hotta Yoshie (1918–1998), Lippit points out that Hotta’s writings “can be seen to narrate a postwar return to the nation that is perpetually deferred, disturbed by the spectral memory of empire that continues to permeate the space of the reconstituting state.”<sup>267</sup> The experiences and life trajectories of “returning” Japanese bodies were themselves a constant reminder (and remainder) of an imperial history that had to be suppressed if the idea of

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<sup>267</sup> Seiji Lippit, “Spaces of Occupation in the Postwar Fiction of Hotta Yoshie” in *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 36:2 (Summer 2010), p. 294.

Japan as a postwar nation-state was to be viable, just as the reconfiguration of Koreans in Japan as “zainichi” emerged out of and simultaneously erased its colonial origins. Aside from a few notable exceptions, however, little scholarly attention has been paid to the intersection between these two sources of rupture – Japanese returnees and resident Koreans – and the literary negotiations that occurred between them. In the following pages, I will focus on the fiction of two writers, Chang Hyökchu and Tanaka Hidemitsu, in order to explore more fully how the suppression of colonialism shaped and determined postcolonial inequalities of ethnicity, gender, and class.

### **ESCAPE TO NOWHERE: THE POSTWAR WRITINGS OF CHANG HYÖKCHU**

Chang Hyökchu was one of the most prolific Korean writers of Japanese in the immediate postwar period, surpassing Kim Talsu by far and rivaling many of his Japanese peers in sheer writing output: from the years 1945 to 1952, he published at least 10 full-length novels and short story collections, several uncollected short stories, and countless articles.<sup>268</sup> Despite this record, however, his work has been virtually ignored by contemporary scholars across the field; when discussed at all, it is Chang’s prewar writings that have garnered the bulk of critical attention. Part of the reason for this postwar neglect stems from Chang’s problematic status as a pro-Japanese writer, which was attached to him not only for his openly imperialist writings during the colonial period but also for his supposedly apologist attitude and defense of Japan

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<sup>268</sup> A complete and accurate count of Chang’s publications is a difficult task, not least because he wrote under a number of different pennames. Born Chang Ūnjung (張恩重), Chang used the penname Chang Hyökchu (張赫宙; Sino-Japanese reading: Chō Kakuchū) when he first debuted as a writer. During the kōminka period he began to use the “Japanese” penname Noguchi Minoru (野口稔). After the war, he reverted back primarily to Chang Hyökchu. When he naturalized as a Japanese citizen in 1952, he changed his name officially to Noguchi Minoru but continued to use his Korean penname for roughly a year afterwards. After that he began to use the penname Noguchi Kakuchū (野口赫宙), but not always; between the years 1954 and 1975 he also wrote under the name Minoru Noguchi (ミノル・野口). See Yan Hisuku [Yang Hūisuk], “Chang Hyökchu sengo chosaku nenpu-kō” in *Nihon Ajia kenkyū* 8 (March 2011), pp. 111-120.



following the end of the war. In 1952 he naturalized as a Japanese citizen, taking on the name Noguchi Minoru; however, he continued to use the pen name “Chang Hyōkchu” (or, in Sino-Japanese pronunciation, Chō Kakuchū) consistently until 1953, after which he switched primarily to “Noguchi Kakuchū.”<sup>269</sup>

Chang’s naturalization was taken as further “proof” of his pro-Japanese collaborationist nature by some Koreans.<sup>270</sup> To his Japanese peers, however, his Japanese citizenship was always still framed in terms of his Korean origins and otherness. The December 12, 1952 issue of *Yomiuri shinbun*, for example, featured a sizeable article detailing Chang’s decision to naturalize. Describing him as a “Korean writer with a singular foothold in Japan’s literary circles,” the article emphasizes Chang’s desire to be the next Koizumi Yakumo (Lafcadio Hearn, 1850–1904). Having been publicly censured by both the North Korean government and the South Korean government for his controversial travel narrative *Aa Chōsen* (O Korea, 1952), Chang is quoted as wanting to “search out a new homeland in Japan.” The article then notes that there have already been around 100 successful petitions for naturalization since Korea’s independence and concludes with a brief summary of some of the conditions required for naturalization.

Despite the one mention of Korea independence, the article glosses over the historical conditions specific to the resident Korean population in 1952. During the Allied Occupation, of course, Koreans in Japan were still technically counted as Japanese nationals under the directive

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<sup>269</sup> When he debuted as a writer in Japan with his prize-winning story “Gakidō” in April 1932, his name was given in kanji characters only. An early article about Chang in *Yomiuri shinbun* (“Noridashita Chō Kakuchū-kun,” July 19, 1932) gives the pronunciation of his name as “Chō Kakuchū.” More common in both Japanese and Korean publications, however, was the practice of giving his name in kanji characters with no gloss, leaving open the question of pronunciation. Late in his career, Chang published several books in English under the name “Noguchi Kaku Chu,” including the 1991 book *Forlorn Journey* (New Delhi: Chansun International, 1991) and *Rajagriha: A Tale of Gautama Buddha* (Bombay: Allied Publishers Limited, 1992), which suggests that Chang would have wanted 野口赫宙 to be read as “Noguchi Kakuchū” (or Kaku Chu).

<sup>270</sup> Chang himself published a fictional account of his harassment at the hands of Chōren-affiliated Koreans in Japan, entitled “Kyōhaku” (Intimidation) and featured in the March 1953 issue of *Shinchō*.

of SCAP. With the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in September 1951 (and put into force starting in April 1952), all former colonial subjects were uniformly stripped of Japanese nationality and thereby effectively rendered stateless. Rather than acting as a vehicle for “Japanization,” then, the naturalization process in fact aided in the opposite. Because only foreigners could become naturalized citizens, the new visibility of the Korean population in Japan as potential targets of naturalization was part and parcel with their transformation from “imperial subjects” to “alien residents.” As I argued in Chapters 1 and 2, however, this transformation was not as radical as has been previously claimed, because the particularity of Korea (*Chōsen*) was constitutive of *kōminka* policy during the late colonial period. Indeed, the article’s marking of Chang as a *Korean* writer separate from (although participating in) the *Japanese* literary sphere is strikingly similar to the wartime discourse we saw on the position of Korean writers of Japanese. As during the colonial period, only those who could claim a complete confluence of Japanese ethnicity and Japanese citizenship would be counted as “Japanese proper”; those who could not would be doomed to be forever defined by that difference.

At the same time, the creation of two antagonistic states on the Korean peninsula sharply changed how Koreans could and did define themselves after 1945, and many of Chang’s early postwar writings grapple with precisely this issue. As perhaps evidenced by his decision to continue using “Kakuchū” as part of his pen name, Chang was only too aware of the larger social forces that sought to categorize him first and foremost as a Korean writer, despite a personal history that spanned across the prewar-postwar divide and several different “homelands.” In a long article entitled “Zainichi Chōsenjin hihan” (A Criticism of Zainichi Koreans) written in December 1949 for the short-lived general interests journal *Sekai shunjū* (World Chronicle),

Chang chronicles his confrontations with Chōren as well as Mindan.<sup>271</sup> He begins the piece by addressing the fact that most of his postwar writings avoid making any direct commentary on Korea. Chang reveals that he had avoided the topic out of fear for his life: “It was rumored,” he writes, “that I had been put on a list of pro-Japanese collaborators to be targeted and put to death” (p. 68). Members of Chōren had debated destroying his home; threats had been sent to not only his family but also to his publishers; he had been publicly called out as a pro-Japanese collaborator and physically intimidated by other Koreans.

Chang uses the article to decry the “antagonism between minzoku” (as represented by Korean “attacks and criticisms” against the Japanese) as well as the “divisions within minzoku” (as represented by the rivalry between Chōren and Mindan, and the former’s vitriol against collaborators). Caught between both sets of conflict, Chang partially attributes the source of the problem to the political conditions that force Koreans to choose between North Korea or South Korea, concluding that “as long as Korea remains divided, the conflicts among Koreans in Japan will not subside” (p. 74). In critiquing the political polarization of the resident Korean community, Chang reveals how the term “zainichi” cannot be understood apart from the organizations Chōren and Mindan, whose political stakes in the resident Korean community deeply influenced the ways that community was made visible in Japan. He also critiques the ineffectuality of political labels for describing the varied experiences of individuals, including “those who make economic stability their first priority, with no regard to the political affairs of their mother country (*bokoku*)” and “those Koreans who have already become Japanese citizens.”

One solution to ethnic conflict, Chang posits, is for Koreans to shed “their minzoku shell” and become “cosmopolitans” like the Europeans (p. 70). The comment is a problematic one, not

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<sup>271</sup> See Chapter 3 for background information on these two zainichi organizations.

least because it works within the assumptions encoded in the collaboration/resistance framework (even while arguing against it). That is, by reducing the solution to ethnic Korean conflict as a matter of individual action and choice – choosing to be cosmopolitan rather than a nationalist – Chang elides the ideological systems and historical conditions at work behind these “choices.” The same can be said of Chang’s later suggestion that those individuals who insist on a politicized Korean subjectivity should simply “return to Korea” (p. 75), leaving the masses to live their lives in peace in Japan. Embedded in this suggestion is the assumption that national politics can be neatly contained within their national borders – when it comes to Korea. Only in the seemingly neutral space of the universal (Europe, conflated in this case with Japan) can cosmopolitanism and humanism be used to transcend the collaboration/resistance binary.

Chang’s preoccupation with cosmopolitanism and humanism had already found articulation in his 1946 short story “Dasshutsu” (Escape), which was included in the collection *Hito no yosa to warusa to* (The Good and Bad in People) in 1947.<sup>272</sup> *Hito no yosa to warusa to* consists of six short stories written in the early postwar period. While all touch upon the upheaval, uncertainty, and change that rocked Japan following the end of the war, few deal explicitly with the political consequences of Japan’s defeat and the redrawing of its borders from empire to nation. Instead, the stories tend to consist of small vignettes centered around family life and/or the daily experiences of an unnamed male narrator (“I”). “Dasshutsu” is unusual, however, in that it explicitly establishes the ethnicity of its particular narrator as Korean. What

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<sup>272</sup> Chang Hyökchu, *Hito no yosa to warusa to* (Tokyo: Tanchō Shobō, 1947). The majority of the stories were published separately in various journal outlets. A note included at the end of “Dasshutsu” indicates that it was written in December 1946, but according to the information found in the *Senryōki zasshi shiryō taikai* (*bungaku hen* vol. 1), the first publication was in *Bunkajin* in June 1946. Page numbers refer to the book version. As noted in the *Senryōki zasshi shiryō taikai*, “Dasshutsu” was flagged by the censors for its negative depiction of Koreans but in the end allowed to be printed as is. This reminder of censorship may explain in part why Chang largely avoided writing about postwar relations between Korea and Japan, as this subject was carefully monitored by SCAP authorities.

follows is a close examination of the personal and political politics that evolve between this Korean narrator and his Japanese friend.

Although set diegetically in immediate postwar Japan, “*Dasshutsu*” moves back and forth from the prewar to the postwar, Korea and Japan, through the narrator’s memories.<sup>273</sup> The first flashback to the past is triggered by an unexpected visit from the narrator’s friend Hamada, who had left some years earlier for Korea. The narrator had heard that “there was almost no hope of return for the Japanese residing in the northern part of Korea after the end of the war” (p. 129), so Hamada’s appearance on the narrator’s doorstep is an unexpected but welcome surprise. As the story unfolds, the narrator discloses to the reader additional details on his friendship with Hamada and the latter’s involvement with and eventual marriage to a Korean woman named Kin Junki (金順姫, Kim Sunhŭi). In their conversation together, Hamada tells the narrator about his life in Korea during the war, the gradual dissolution of his marriage to Junki, and his eventual escape (*dasshutsu*) back to Japan.

The woman at the center of the story, Kin Junki, is seen only in memory; although she mediates the relationship between the two men, she herself never interacts with the two of them together, and her words are always captured in indirect speech, never in direct quotation. In an early flashback, the reader learns that Hamada and the narrator first met in Japan through their

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<sup>273</sup> Because the narrative, which is composed primarily of flashbacks, can be difficult to follow, I provide here a brief summary of each major scene, as it unfolds in the story: 1.) Postwar present. Hamada visits the narrator, and the two begin reminiscing about the past. 2.) Flashback: prewar past. The narrator describes his first meeting with Hamada and the development of their friendship. The narrator singles out one memory in particular, where the two went on a swimming excursion and happened to see a woman who looks like Junki. That is when Hamada and the narrator discovered they both knew Junki. 3.) Another flashback to an even earlier moment in time. The narrator recalls his first meeting with Junki, and how she had seduced him in order to get away from her husband. The narrator describes how he had fled to Tokyo with the expectation that Junki would follow him there, but she never came. 4.) Back to the time/place of scene #2. The narrator warns Hamada about Junki. Hamada insists he can save Junki. The two talk about the colonial defects of Korea/Junki. Hamada goes to Korea. About one year later, the narrator travels to Keijō and happens to run into Hamada there. Hamada says nothing about Junki, but tells the narrator he has decided to run a school for rural youths. The narrator goes back to Tokyo. The Second Sino-Japanese War starts, and the two lose contact with each other. 5.) Back to the postwar present. Hamada describes his experiences in Korea during the Second Sino-Japanese War and his eventual escape back to Japan after the war’s end. The story ends.

mutual involvement in a Christian church in Tokyo. They quickly established a friendship based on a mutual interest in painting and the fact that “both Japanese and Koreans could be the same type of Christian, with the same way of talking and the same facial expressions” (p. 131). One hot summer day, the two go out on an excursion to the river to paint and swim. While there, they happen to run into a group of girls playing in the water, one of whom bears a striking similarity to Junki. Hamada, stunned by this coincidence, finds himself confessing (*uchiakeru*) to the narrator about his love for Junki and his plans to start a new life with her in Wōnsan, a port city in the northern part of the peninsula. This revelation prompts the narrator to confess to Hamada his own sordid history with Junki, and to warn Hamada about Junki’s character.

As the narrator describes his past experiences with Junki, it becomes clear to the reader that the latter fits the mold of the prototypical femme fatale – someone who “plays at love” (p. 136) and revels in “bewitching” men, sometimes literally to their deaths.<sup>274</sup> Possessing “an incredible power to attract men,” she has the ability to turn her would-be suitors crazy with a single “mysterious gesture” (p. 136). Fittingly enough, Junki first launched herself into the public eye as an actress and aspiring playwright, and these professional ambitions gave her a pretext for gaining access to the men who make up the privileged literary circles in both Korea and Japan. This includes the unnamed narrator, who had first met Junki at a literary round-circle in Keijō hosted by a woman’s magazine. Junki’s literary visibility as an aspiring playwright and fiction writer had made her the talk of the town, although her marriage to a businessman had somewhat curbed her public appearances due to “the Korean custom of being strict about married women going out” (p. 137). Chafing against these restrictions, Junki lured the narrator into having an

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<sup>274</sup> Page 137. The word used for “bewitch” is *nōsatsu* (惱殺), which suggestively calls to mind the verbs *nayamu* (悩む; to worry, to be troubled) and *korosu* (殺す, to kill). The narrator believes that Junki indirectly caused the death of a young Waseda student named Sai [Ch’oe]. Sai’s official cause of death was chest trouble, but it is suggested that Sunhūi’s emotional manipulations drove Sai into a despair from which he never recovered.

affair with her, then deliberately exposed the affair to her husband in a bid to escape (*dasshutsu*, p. 140) her husband's household. In order to avoid further scandal and a possible legal trial, the narrator had come to Tokyo under the assumption that Junki would "flee" (*nigeru*, p. 141) to Japan separately and join him later. But Junki never did join him; instead, she used her escape to Tokyo to seek out new romantic adventures. Eventually the narrator's passion cooled, and he came to know "the woman's true identity" (*shōtai*, p. 141).

The narrator concludes his story by warning Hamada that "even if you go to Korea, you won't be able to capture that woman's heart." Junki's passion for men and her duplicity against them is perceived as an illness (*byōki*), or more accurately a kind of pathology – a structural deviation or abnormality as defined through a biosocial understanding of the human body. Junki's siren-like lure is both a tool and a state of being, a manifestation of a warped biological nature. Although the narrator argues that Junki's pathology cannot be cured, Hamada disagrees, telling the narrator that he "has a duty to save her" (p. 142). Hamada's remark sparks a discussion on the character defects of Koreans, and in particular their flightiness or restlessness. Both men agree that the latter are "acquired defects," not inherited ones, and Hamada goes so far as to assign ultimate blame to "the defects of Japan's colonial administration" (p. 156). Linking Korea's coloniality to Junki's personality, he continues:

"I think Junki's is a colonized character (*shokuminchi seikaku*). Instead of developing the good things about Korea, people indiscriminately insist on absorbing Japanese characteristics (*Nihonteki seikaku*), resulting in a strange character that is neither Japanese nor Korean. Junki's character was formed during the Ginza age, which meant that she was also negatively influenced by the women who haunt the Ginza area who also have a kind of colonized character." (p. 143)

In this speech, Junki's personality – her character – is doubly colonized. She stands first and foremost as an unnatural, hybrid product of Japan's colonization of Korea, and a symptom of

the latter's social ills. At the same time, however, Hamada makes a concomitant comparison to the women of Ginza – or rather, their mass media representations as *moga* (modern girls) who epitomized a consumer culture coded as Western and whose unabashed sexuality was itself highly commodified. As many scholars have shown, the figure of the modern girl “was an object of nationalist scrutiny and thus provoked a full range of nationalist desires . . . Her sexual adventurousness was viewed as inextricable from her implication in commodity culture and often both were seen as threatening to national sovereignty.”<sup>275</sup> In Hamada's analogy, the threat of female sexuality in fact acts as a transcendental signifier that allows him to set up the absolute hierarchy of Japan and Korea in transitive relation to the absolute hierarchy of the West and Japan. That is, Junki embodies the Japanese (political) colonization of Korea, but she *also* embodies the Western (cultural) colonization of Japan. Her body itself is a pathology brought on by the colonial condition, and as such it is denied any subjectivity or independence outside it. That privilege is granted instead to the male narrator and Hamada, who have the ability to diagnose the problem and potentially fix it.

In “Dasshutsu,” the excess signification of gender (where women are supplement to, and therefore never completely coincidental with, the ethnonation) mediates the relationship between the narrator and Hamada but does not enter into it. In targeting “Japan's colonial administration” as ultimately accountable for Korea's social ills, Hamada also follows the binary logic of collaboration and war responsibility, in which policy leaders and political figures are assigned the bulk of the blame; in contrast, the masses (“people”) are portrayed as blank slates that indiscriminately absorb whatever national characteristics are presented to them. The complicated and interrelated issues of modernity, cultural hegemony, and global capitalism can find no place

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<sup>275</sup> Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, “The Modern Girl as Heuristic Device” in *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 15.



in this binary, nor a consideration of the ways in which the state “worked through the very social fabric of the colony,” to borrow a phrase from Jun Uchida.<sup>276</sup> While both the narrator and Hamada stop short of offering up themselves as new leaders to replace the old, the structure of the story reinforces the idea that it is only the male elite who can stand in as both the subject and agent of the nation, and that it is only the horizontal homosocial bonds *between* these men that can achieve (inter)national reconciliation.

Another key flashback later in the story further illustrates this slippage between homosocial bonds and nationalized subjectivity. We learn that Hamada had written to the narrator from Korea regularly at first but then more and more erratically, leaving the narrator to guess that Hamada’s marriage to Junki had soured. Roughly a year after their last meeting in Japan, the narrator has occasion to visit wartime Keijō and ends up running into Hamada by chance in a café in the city. When the narrator asks Hamada how he’s been, Hamada says nothing of Junki; instead, he declares that Japanese rule in Korea is a failure and tells the narrator he wants to “atone for Japan’s sins myself” (p. 146) by opening up an informal school for rural youths that will teach them “the spirit of peaceful Japan, not militaristic Japan.”<sup>277</sup> After this exchange, the narrator reflects that “Hamada was trying to achieve with those youths what he had been unable to realize with Junki. Junki and the youths may have changed places, but Hamada’s ideals remained the same” (p. 147).

Although the narrator believes that Junki and the male youths had simply changed places in Hamada’s affections, what has actually been swapped is the role of Japan, from militaristic

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<sup>276</sup> Jun Uchida, “‘A Scramble for Freight’: the Politics of Collaboration along and across the Railway Tracks of Colonial Korea” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51:1 (January 2009), p. 122.

<sup>277</sup> The word used for “rural youth” is *nōmin seinen*, which can be literally translated as “agriculture youth” or “agriculture young men.” Hamada later laments to the narrator that these youths were particularly vulnerable to conscription as coal miners or volunteers soldiers.

aggressor to peaceful ally. It is this masculinized understanding of nation that allows Hamada to define Japan's "sins" as military aggression and the usurpation of Korean national sovereignty through colonization. In this context, his decision to atone for those sins by helping the young men of Korea is an unsurprising and perhaps even inevitable conclusion. In embracing his newfound calling as a teacher, Hamada attempts to transcend the militarized relationship between colonizer and colonized in favor of a humanistic bond between teacher and pupil, but what remains the same in both instances is the hierarchical position of Japan vis-à-vis Korea. Because it is Japan (the military aggressors) that is responsible for Korea's woes, it must be Japan (peaceful Hamada) that takes on the responsibility of fixing them. This change can only be effected, however, if the problematic trope of gender relations is replaced with that of class. Hamada's inability to "cure" Junki's pathology was doomed from the beginning because the cause of her ills (her wild sexuality, transgressive public mobility, and dangerous duplicity) were always rooted in the excesses of her abject, material, unchangeable body. By reframing the relationship between Japan and Korea as like that of the male intellectual and his lower-class male students, Hamada is able to conceive of a future where both may eventually be on the same footing.

In the diegetic present of the story, Hamada gives the narrator details on his escape (*dasshutsu*, p. 148) from Korea following the end of the war. Although Hamada had been set on staying in Korea, his students had urged him to flee for his safety, citing rumors of Soviet troops entering Korea and detaining Japanese residents as prisoners; the students had even gone so far as to secure a boat willing to smuggle him back to Japan. Upon the conclusion of Hamada's story, the narrator attempts to "imagine his experiences as if they were my own" (p. 150). For the

narrator, Hamada's experiences emblemize what it means to enjoy "the naked, honest fellowship between one human and another." The story ends with the following remark by Hamada:

"There were many Japanese people who were driven out, but I believe that my heart, at least, remains over there."

I sipped my tea in silence, digesting the significance of these words. (p. 150, end)

On the one hand, the conclusion reinforces the issues discussed above, in which heterosexual relations are replaced by homosocial ones. The devotion and affection between Hamada and the young men can be seen as a transcendental, universalistic relationship by the narrator precisely because he too is part of that homosocial space, rendering the problematic assumption of universal = male invisible. At the same time, it is significant that the narrator must first imagine himself as Hamada – another unequal substitution, as Hamada is never called upon to imagine himself as a Korean – in order to make his universalistic claims. Here we can glimpse the intervention of the narrator's Korean ethnicity, acknowledged but not engaged by Hamada or the parameters of the text itself. The deletion of Junki from the final pages of the story creates an aporia that haunts the question of the narrator's position vis-à-vis Hamada. The narrator cannot be put on the same plane as the rural youths, as it is the youths' potential as students that define their relationship to Hamada, their leader; nor can he be put on the same plane as Hamada, who is a nationalized subject of Japan and therefore the one with the ability to atone for its sins.

Further complicating the picture is the fact that it is exactly the postwar context of the nation-state that has allowed and determined this meeting between the narrator and Hamada in the first place. As Lori Watt has documented, the reordering of borders in Asia spearheaded by the Allied Powers following Japan's defeat in the war triggered a mass movement of bodies "back" to the national spaces they were now said to belong to. It is this same reordering of

borders that led to the creation of a specifically “zainichi” Korean population in Japan, as those who were unwilling/unable to repatriate to Korea found themselves stateless and relegated to alien resident status. At the time “Dasshutsu” was written, discourse on the *hikiagesha* (repatriate) was far from uniform or stable, and it was not until the late 1950s that the repatriate was made prominently visible in literature and film.<sup>278</sup> However, in this 1946 text one can already begin to see how “the tensions of empire took on new life in different forms” (p. 97) in the lingering memories and experiences of the former imperial subjects (Korean and Japanese) who were marked apart from “Japan” through the new appellations of zainichi and hikiagesha.

The narrator’s identity as a Korean *in Japan* – an ethnicized body like the Korean youths, but unlike them stripped of political agency – creates a charged subtext around the words “return” and “escape.” This subtext never breaks through to the surface of the text, which ends with the narrator’s silence. But as we saw with the 1944 text “Tōhan” from Chapter 2, sometimes silence can be the most damning testimony of all. By his own admission, Chang Hyōkchu deliberately avoided writing fiction that dealt explicitly with Korea in the early days of the Occupation period, for fear of a backlash from leftist resident Koreans who saw him as only a collaborator. “Dasshutsu” is a rare exception, but it is also a story that attempts to couch itself in universal terms, “between one human and another.” However, it is at the very moment the ethnicized Korean narrator is brought into Hamada’s story of redemption that the fiction of universality falls apart. Hamada’s position is similarly precarious; he too would have been particularized against “ordinary” Japanese citizens<sup>279</sup> as a reminder (and remainder) of an empire which had supposedly disappeared off the map through Allied intervention. Only when he is

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<sup>278</sup> See Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 138.

<sup>279</sup> In Japanese: *ippan kokumin* or *ippan no hito*. See Watt, *Empire*, p. 76-7 and p. 97.

defined against the ethnically Korean narrator or the sexually suspect Junki can Hamada claim to speak from a position of authority.

As “Dasshutsu” demonstrates, when faced with the zone of the universal the ability to speak as a human being first and as an ethnic or gendered body second depends only all too much on the subject position of the speaker himself or herself. In order to further explicate this issue, I turn now to the other side of the coin – to the reimagining of Korea’s colonial past through the eyes of one of its colonizers, Tanaka Hidemitsu. Tanaka’s 1949 novel *Yoidorebune* also features a romantic relationship between a colonized Korean woman and a colonizing Japanese man fraught with political implications. Although the woman in this case is portrayed in more positive terms than Junki in “Dasshutsu,” we will see how both characters occupy similar roles in mediating the transition from Japan as a multiethnic empire to a peaceful, homogeneous nation-state.

### **ON UNCERTAIN GROUND: THE WRITINGS OF TANAKA HIDEMITSU**

Measuring almost six feet tall and coming in at 175 pounds at the time of his death, Tanaka Hidemitsu was a man who appeared to his peers as larger than life, and whose meteoric rise to literary fame would be eclipsed by the brutal spectacle of his fall. Born in Tokyo in 1913 to a family of booksellers, Tanaka was exposed to literature at an early age. He was admitted into the Second Waseda Higher School (*Dai-ni Waseda kōtō gakuin*) in 1930, where he joined the school’s rowing crew. Shortly after gaining entrance into Waseda University in 1932, he travelled to the Los Angeles Olympic Games as part of Japan’s Olympic rowing team. It was also while at Waseda that Tanaka became involved in various communist organizations such as *Akahata* (Red Flag), but his association with them lasted only for a year. In 1935 he graduated

from Waseda and found employment at Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd., which soon sent him to work at their branch company in Keijō. During a brief trip back to Tokyo that same year, he was introduced to Dazai Osamu (1909–1948) through a mutual friend, and they started up a correspondence that would last until Dazai’s death in 1948.<sup>280</sup>

Dazai’s influence on Tanaka was profound. Tanaka thought of Dazai as a literary mentor, inspiration, and friend, and it was Dazai’s literary connections that gave him a foothold in the Tokyo publishing industry. It was primarily through Dazai’s enthusiastic championing, for example, that Tanaka was able to publish the novel *Nabe zuru* (Hooded Crane) in the literary journal *Wakakusa* (Green Grass) in 1939 and *Orinposu no kajitsu* (The Fruits of Olympus) in *Bungakukai* in 1940. Based loosely on his experiences in Los Angeles as an Olympic athlete, *Orinposu no kajitsu* won Tanaka the Iketani Shinzaburō Award in 1940 and garnered him widespread recognition from the literary circles in both Tokyo and Korea.<sup>281</sup> Tanaka remained in Keijō until 1942, and during that time he was actively involved in GGK-affiliated literary organizations such as *Ryokki*. Those experiences would later serve as material for his 1949 novel *Yoidorebune*, the topic of this section.

Tanaka continued to publish short stories and novels after his return to Tokyo in 1942. After the end of the war in 1945, he briefly joined the Japan Communist Party but left it a year later. What then followed was a long string of disappointments and scandals (spurred in no small part from Tanaka’s shock and depression over Dazai’s suicide in 1948): manuscript rejections,

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<sup>280</sup> Biographic information taken from “Tanaka Hidemitsu nenpu” in *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* volume 11 (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1965), *Nihon kindai bungaku daijiten* ed. Nihon kindai bungaku kan (“Tanaka Hidemitsu”), and Nagumo Satoru, *Tanaka Hidemitsu hyōden* (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 2006). *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* hereafter abbreviated to THZ.

<sup>281</sup> The Iketani Shinzaburō Award was established in 1936 by members of the *Bungakukai* coterie circle and the affiliated journal *Bungei shunjū* in order to identify and promote promising new writers. Named after the late novelist and playwright Iketani Shinzaburō, the prize was awarded for literary criticism as well as fiction; Yasuda Yojūrō and Nakamura Mitsuo, for example, were awarded the first prize in 1936 for their essays “Nihon no hashī” and “Futabatei Shimei ron,” respectively. The prize was discontinued after 1942.

hospitalization following a drug overdose, a highly publicized arrest after stabbing his lover in the lower abdomen, and more hospitalization. In November 1949, filled with sleeping pills and alcohol, Tanaka committed suicide at Dazai's grave. *Yoidorebune* was published posthumously by Oyama Shoten in December that same year, but it received relatively little critical attention at the time, and today Tanaka is remembered more for the sensational details of his death than for the literary oeuvre he left behind.

In a postscript dated September 1949 but only printed when *Yoidorebune* was released in book form in December that year, Tanaka writes that he made the following notes when plotting out the story:

Want to write something where the interests of the reader and author completely coincide. Make sure to really highlight the conflicts surrounding the incident of the secret emissary to Chongqing threaded throughout the story. Also, be careful about choosing which anecdotes weave through that main thread. Write about fictional events that could have been possible, but were in fact impossible; that could have been, but weren't.<sup>282</sup>

Loosely based on Tanaka's own life, *Yoidorebune* details the Keijō-based activities of the main protagonist Sakamoto Kyōkichi (the same name used for the protagonist of Tanaka's earlier novel *Orinposu no kajitsu*), who has been asked to help organize a welcome reception for visiting members of the Greater East Asian Writers' Meeting (*Daitōa bungakusha kaigi*) being organized by the Peoples' League (*Aohitokusa renmei*).<sup>283</sup> Because the members intend to travel by boat from the metropole and disembark at Pusan, Kyōkichi's job is to meet the members at Pusan, travel with them by train up to Keijō, and then make sure the welcome reception for them

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<sup>282</sup> "Yoidorebune batsu," in THZ 9 (Tokyo: Haga shoten, 1964), p. 411.

<sup>283</sup> The *Daitōa bungakusha kaigi* was more commonly referred to as the *Daitōa bungakusha taikai* (Great East Asian Writers' Conference), as detailed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Although the conference convened for the first time in November 1942, Tanaka changes the date in *Yoidorebune* to September 1943. *Aohitokusa renmei* (青人草連盟) is a fictional organization that closely resembles the real-life *Ryokki* (緑旗).

in Keijō goes smoothly. Over the course of four days, however, the reader sees Kyōkichi burn through the money given to him for the welcome reception on alcohol and prostitutes while wallowing in a “mire of decadence” (*taihai no doronuma*).<sup>284</sup> He also meets and falls in love with “the Korean poetess Ro Tenshin” (p. 230), gets embroiled in a spy drama involving secret papers and independence fighters, becomes the target of violence by Ro’s other jealous lovers, and finally gets thrown into jail by the military police for spreading “groundless rumors” (*ryūgen higo*). The story ends with the narrator telling the reader that while Kyōkichi would remain in jail until Japan’s defeat in 1945, he never forgot his love for Ro and, more importantly, “never sold out any of his friends” (p. 378).

Perhaps because of the close alignment between Sakamoto Kyōkichi and Tanaka Hidemitsu, in the rare occasions when *Yoidorebune* was mentioned by literary critics in the years following the end of the Allied Occupation of Japan, it was held up as a more or less faithful (if technically fictional) portrait of the political and literary environment of late colonial Korea. Kim Talsu, for example, wrote in 1961 that “if one wants to know about the Korean bundan at that time [late colonial Korea], one cannot overlook Tanaka Hidemitsu’s novel *Yoidorebune*.”<sup>285</sup> Kim’s sentiments were echoed by the literary scholar Hariu Ichirō in 1965, who remarked in the commentary to volume 2 of the *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* (Collected Works of Tanaka Hidemitsu) that *Yoidorebune* provided a “valuable historical perspective (*sokumenshi*) of the ‘Korean bundan’ during the wartime period.”<sup>286</sup> A decade later, in a series of English-language lectures delivered at McGill University, the historian and cultural critic Tsurumi Shunsuke would continue in this vein. Tsurumi also emphasized Tanaka’s real-life experiences, arguing that

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<sup>284</sup> THZ 2, p. 254.

<sup>285</sup> Kim Talsu, “Taiheiyō sensōka no Chōsen bungaku” in *Bungaku* 28:8 (August 1961), 82.

<sup>286</sup> Hariu Ichirō, “Kaisetsu: kōdōsha no kiroku” in THZ 2 (1965), p. 415.



“Tanaka Hidematsu’s unflinching understanding of his own ignominious experience of *tenkō* [ideological conversion] allowed him to understand the suffering of Korean writers on whom *tenkō* was imposed.”<sup>287</sup>

In comparison to the largely positive evaluations provided by the leftist intellectuals who dominated the literary scene during the first two decades after Japan’s defeat, more recent postcolonial scholars in Japan have criticized Tanaka for his inability or unwillingness to acknowledge his own complicity in Japan’s imperial project. In 1986, for example, four years after Iwanami Shoten published Tsurumi Shunsuke’s intellectual history of wartime Japan, Kawamura Minato devoted 140 pages to lambasting Tanaka in his book “*Yoidorebune*” *no seishun: mō hitotsu no senchū, sengo* (The Youth of the “Drunken Boat”: An Alternative Wartime, Postwar).<sup>288</sup> In the seminal essay that shares its title with the book, Kawamura views *Yoidorebune* as a postwar apologia meant to justify the author’s wartime activities as a soldier, colonizer, and active advocate of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. Kawamura argues that even though the novel does reflect “the (conscientious!) self-hatred and self-condemnation of a Japanese intellectual living in Korea, it does not confront the politics and imperial logic that exceed and eclipse individual psychology” (p. 39, parenthesis in original). Scholars such as Nam Bujin [Nam Pujin] and Nagumo Satoru have since followed Kawamura’s lead, providing analyses that compare Tanaka’s wartime writings to his postwar novels, as well

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<sup>287</sup> Tsurumi Shunsuke, “The Korea Within Japan” in *An Intellectual History of Wartime Japan, 1931-1945* (New York: Routledge, 1986), p. 58. The lectures were given from 1979-1980 and later published in Japan in Japanese by Iwanami Shoten in 1982. In the English-language book version, Tsurumi translates *tenkō* as “a conversion which occurs under the pressure of state power” (p. 12). He emphasizes the specific history of the term by linking it to the specific political conditions of interwar and wartime Japan, when leftist politicians, writers, and sympathizers were made to recant their Marxist convictions in support of the imperial state.

<sup>288</sup> Kawamura Minato, “*Yoidorebune*” *no seishun: mō hitotsu no senchū, sengo* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1986).

as to the Japanese-language works of Korean colonial writers such as Yi Sōkhun (*sōshi kaimei* name: Maki Hiroshi; mentioned in Chapter 2).<sup>289</sup>

Putting aside the details of these studies for now, what I wish to emphasize at the moment is the fact that all of the above-mentioned scholars, from Kim Talsu to Kawamura Minato, share a preoccupation with what Tanaka identified as the side anecdotes of *Yoidorebune* – namely, those characters and incidents that can be traced back to “non-fictional” history, rather than the entirely “fictional” elements of the story’s overarching spy plot. While their conclusions may differ, their critical strategies all depend upon the unacknowledged assumption that history (“reality”) can and should be separated from its telling (“fiction”), and that one can be used to refute or support the other. This assumption, furthermore, both emerges out of and naturalizes the I-novel paradigm, previously discussed in detail in Chapter 3. In other words, it is only after first linking Tanaka to the protagonist Sakamoto Kyōkichi (and thereby separating out a neutral “history” that retrospectively provides the contextualization necessary for the I-novel) that the reader can argue for *Yoidorebune* as either a sincere, faithful reflection of Japan’s past sins or a distorted mirror of it.

On the one hand, it may be said that Tanaka’s insistence that the “interests of the reader and author completely coincide” deliberately encourages one to read *Yoidorebune* in the I-novel mode. On the other hand, this argument does not fully account for why Tanaka decided to make “the incident of the secret emissary to Chongqing” the main plot of his novel, nor does it help us uncover, in Vincent B. Leitch’s words, the “social discourses encoded in archival regimes of

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<sup>289</sup> See, for example, Nam Bujin, *Kindai bungaku no “Chōsen” taiken* (Tokyo: Bensei shuppan, 2001); Nagumo Satoru, *Tanaka Hidemitsu hyōden* (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 2006); and Ch’u Sōkmin, “‘Tenma’ to *Yoidorebune* no hikaku kōsatsu: Sakamoto Kyōkichi to Tanaka Hidemitsu o chūshin ni” in *Higashi Ajia Nihongo kyōiku, Nihon bunka kenkyū* 2 (March 2000), pp. 337-358.

reason” that can be most productively laid bare by the model of the text.<sup>290</sup> Therefore rather than examine one plot strand or another, in the sections that follow I examine the ways in which these plot strands intersect with and support each other. I also situate Tanaka’s work within the larger discourses of war responsibility and collaboration. In doing so, I wish again to move beyond the nationalist binaries in which these topics have been primarily discussed in the past, as represented by the different terms “shinnichiha” (in Korean: ch’inilpa) and “sensō sekininsha.”<sup>291</sup> Instead, I will show how the construction of these terms depended on a revisioning of the past that privileged the male, nationalized, and properly “post”(war/colonial) subject as the double-agent of narrative, and therefore of history.

### **YOIDOREBUNE: DECADENCE, DISORDER, DETECTION**

*Yoidorebune* opens with a memory. “That evening,” the first sentence declares, “Kyōkichi recalled the drunken pranks he and Noritake used to do in their university days.”<sup>292</sup> Like “Dasshutsu,” then, we are thrown into a narrative situated uneasily within the doubled lens of present and past. The reader soon learns that Kyōkichi had run into his old friend Noritake by chance on the streets of Keijō earlier that evening: “They had gone out drinking together, just like the old days. After getting drunk at a restaurant in Asahi-chō, they had ended up at the plaza in front of the Chōsen Bank. It was there that he suddenly remembered their old pranks” (p. 229).

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<sup>290</sup> Vincent B. Leitch, *Cultural Criticism, Literary Theory, Poststructuralism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 3. Leitch uses the phrase ‘regimes of reason’ as “substitute for the linked concepts of ‘ideology’ and of ‘social formation’” (p. 3). He notes, “If only because the word and concept *ideology* have come in recent times to possess contradictory significations connected with contending political allegiances, I prefer to use regime of reason/unreason to do some of the work of ideology” (p. 3).

<sup>291</sup> As mentioned previously, “shinnichiha” (lit. “pro-Japanese faction”) is used to refer to Korean collaborators and “sensō sekininsha” (lit. “someone responsible for the war”) is used to refer to Japanese citizens, primarily those who had been in a position of power or authority during the war.

<sup>292</sup> THZ 2, p. 229.

Back then, Kyōkichi and Noritake had vandalized local stores and police boxes out of a sense of nihilism, having “lost their faith in everything after committing the act of *tenkō*.” Spurred on by those memories, Kyōkichi dares Noritake to defecate in the empty fountain located in the middle of the plaza. Instead of feeling amused when Noritake accepts the challenge, however, Kyōkichi sees instead the “unbearably sad wretchedness” of the scene. As Noritake defecates, he shouts out a defiant message to the empty night: “Oi, there’s a Japanese person here! Hey, you Japanese, eat my ass!” (p. 230)

As previously mentioned in this chapter, Tsurumi Shunsuke has characterized *Yoidorebune* as a novel that highlights the injustices suffered by Koreans by the Japanese during the colonial period. He identifies the opening scene as a key moment where Tanaka’s personal and political position vis-à-vis the imperial state manifests itself. Tsurumi writes:

The bared buttocks and the excrement of the Japanese intellectual are turned into symbols of the relations between the Japanese and Koreans. The idea of the ladder of civilization, to which both Japanese leftists and rightists adhered, is absent, and thus the old frame of reference is destroyed. A new viewpoint emerges, and the Koreans (and the Japanese) are seen in terms of their suffering. This new frame of reference demands that the Japanese respect the Koreans, who live under a far greater burden than themselves.<sup>293</sup>

Tsurumi makes an important observation when he points to the symbolic function of “the excrement of the Japanese intellectual.” Just as the materiality of Noritake’s bodily functions disrupts the functional order and purpose of the fountain, so too do his words disrupt the symbolic order of colonial rule: calling out not to Koreans but to his Japanese peers, Noritake

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<sup>293</sup> Tsurumi Shunsuke, “The Korea Within Japan,” p. 57. In both the English and Japanese versions of the essay, Tsurumi quotes Noritake as saying “King of Japan, eat my ass!” (in Japanese: 「日本人王、わが尻を食らえ」, p. 127), but both the original *Yoidorebune* text published in *Sōgō bunka* and the THZ version have the line as “Hey, you Japanese” (in Japanese: 「日本人よ、わが尻を食らえ」). Because Tsurumi does not cite his sources in this instance, it is unclear whether he is using a different text or if he simply misquoted the line.

turns the gaze of the colonizer back on itself, disrupting the unchallenged totality of that gaze with the abject excesses that mark and trouble its borders.

With that said, however, what are we to make of the fact that it is Noritake – a minor character in the story, and more often a target of ridicule rather than admiration – who makes such a seemingly symbolic gesture, rather than the protagonist Kyōkichi? As Kyōkichi watches on the sidelines, he is distracted by the scent of perfume and turns away from Noritake to find its source. In that moment, any response or introspective musings Kyōkichi may have had are instantly cancelled out, and the scene swiftly shifts its focus on a new key player: Ro Tenshin (盧天心, Ro Ch'ōnsim), the Korean poet, actress, mistress, and spy.

With the introduction of Ro, Tanaka is able to set up the interwoven plot elements previously mentioned in a single stroke. We quickly learn that Kyōkichi had met Ro once before, at a literary roundtable that was later published under the title “A Roundtable with Returned Soldiers and Writers” (*Kikan gunjin to bunjin to no zadankai*).<sup>294</sup> At the time, Kyōkichi had noted how Ro’s “voluptuous” (*nikkanteki*) body stood in contrast to her demeanor, which was “like a lamb that had wandered into their midst” (p. 230). That evening, “that lamb had worn a strangely tense expression” (the first clue the narrator gives the reader about Ro's true political orientation). Running into her now, Kyōkichi is reminded of the rumors that currently surround her: after enduring an unhappy marriage and several broken relationships, Ro is said to have become the mistress of Sai Ken'ei (崔健榮, Ch'oe Kōnyōng), a prominent Korean intellectual and vocal supporter of the colonial government. As Ro, Kyōkichi, and Noritake (having finished his bodily business) converse in the plaza together, Kyōkichi finds himself thinking that “her

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<sup>294</sup> THZ, p. 230.

unhappiness came from something Kyōkichi and Noritake both shared – it came from an excess of dreaming” (p. 232).

Kyōkichi’s conscious conflation of Ro’s position with his own is perhaps one of the reasons why Tsurumi Shunsuke was able to sum up the story as a meditation on “the relations between the Japanese and Koreans.” As we saw in “Dasshutsu,” the heterosexual relationship between a man and a woman could be used as a metaphor to describe the asymmetrical relationship between colonizer and colonized.<sup>295</sup> But I would argue that what this scene actually reveals is that the seemingly neutral categories of “Korean” and “Japanese” have already been gendered at the moment of their emergence. Indeed, the reason that they *can* appear neutral is because these gendered differences are naturalized and mobilized by the text, through the paradoxical reliance on women’s bodies as “the generator of signs and the signs themselves.”<sup>296</sup> In *Yoidorebune*, Ro’s material body links together different communities of men through the workings of “carnal desire” (*nikuyoku*, p. 255) and “the satisfaction of the body” (*nikutai no manzoku*, p. 257). In doing so, Ro illuminates the complicated political antagonisms among those different communities, but is not herself an active member of them.

While I will discuss this issue in detail later in this chapter, for now it may be helpful to provide a detailed example in order to clarify my argument. Having successfully collected the members of the Greater East Asian Writers’ Meeting at Pusan and guided them to Keijō, Kyōkichi and Ro go out drinking together in Chongno, the city’s “Ginza for Koreans” (p. 297).

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<sup>295</sup> As mentioned in previous chapters, however, during the colonial period the relationship between Japan and Korea was also described in gendered terms in order to *justify* colonization, as the former was like “a man holding out his hand in marriage to a female Korea” (Kim Saryang, “Tenma,” p. 377).

<sup>296</sup> Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity, and the Aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 226. In her book, Bronfen draws upon psychoanalytic theory and Claude Lévi-Strauss’s articulation of women as privileged commodities in systems of exchange that are “both socio-economic and semiotic” (p. 225) in order to demonstrate how female bodies – and in particular, dead ones – operate as aesthetic/textual tropes in 19<sup>th</sup> century Western literature and art.

As they navigate the narrow streets, they run into a belligerent group of Japanese soldiers. The soldiers immediately set their sights on Ro, mistaking her for a Korean prostitute and assuming Kyōkichi is her Korean patron. Kyōkichi starts shivering involuntarily at the sight of the soldiers, trapped in a sudden sensation that “he was Korean himself” (p. 298). As in the hailing of the policeman described by Louis Althusser, Kyōkichi’s self-identification as a Korean is not separate from state authority as represented by the soldiers but in fact produced through the face-to-face confrontation with it. The process of interpellation is, here literally, a bodily performance: the Japanese soldiers take Kyōkichi’s reaction as proof of Korean ethnicity, and their derisive attitude in turn dictates Kyōkichi’s own. At the same time, it is also an internalization – or rather, it is the external manifestation of Kyōkichi’s internalized subjugation vis-à-vis the state.

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I described how the *kōminka* movement was also a kind of social interpellation that demanded the full assimilation of the colonial subject. It may be argued that *Yoidorebune* offers both a chronicle and critique of *kōminka*, as reinterpreted through a postwar lens. Tellingly, the confrontation between Kyōkichi and the Japanese soldiers had been foreshadowed in an earlier flashback scene involving Kyōkichi and the Japanese owner of a restaurant in Chongno. The reader learns that Kyōkichi had once witnessed the brutal beating of a Korean youth by the Japanese restaurant owner, who had caught the youth trying to skip out on the bill. When Kyōkichi tried to break up the fight, the owner had unleashed the following rant:

“Even the police are Korean these days. The conniving bastards think they can make a fool out of the Japanese (*Nihonjin*). It wasn’t like this when we first came here from Japan (*Nihon*). Koreans twitched with fear whenever they passed by us. But ever since the war started, they’ve been saying that Koreans are Japanese too. So the Koreans have gotten all puffed up, and now they think they can get away with running out on their bill at a Japanese person’s restaurant.” (p. 294)

The above passage suggests that in its attempt to mobilize Korean and Japanese subjects to the cause of war, *kōminka* only exacerbated anxieties over ethnicity and increased attempts by Japanese colonizers to police its borders. In previous chapters, I argued that being an imperial subject and being “Japanese” were by no means one and the same during the *kōminka* period. It is only in the postwar period that *kōminka* and “being Japanese” could be unproblematically conflated together, the context of empire having given way to the context of the ethnonation. As a postwar text, *Yoidorebune* relies upon this conflation while also attempting to subvert it by showing how a Japanese man could “become” Korean in resisting the colonial state. When Kyōkichi is insulted by the Japanese soldiers, he thinks to himself, “*You bastards think that just because you’re Japanese soldiers, you can insult Koreans. You stupid, arrogant dogs*” (p. 298). His sense of repugnance is so strong that he inadvertently voices his thoughts aloud – in Korean. But it turns out that one of the soldiers can understand Korean, having been born and raised there, and he goes into a frenzy because he thinks Kyōkichi “is making fun of [him] for being a second-generation settler.” The complicated slippages between identity among the Japanese men here aptly illustrate how “resistance” emerges as the belated twin of assimilation – what Se-mi Oh describes as the “outcome of direct confrontation with this oppressive nature of colonial modernity and of creative maneuvers within this very context.”<sup>297</sup> Although Kyōkichi too is a beneficiary of Keijō’s colonial modernity, he is able to repudiate his own complicity in it by reproducing the colonizer-colonized relationship in miniature, as it were. Meanwhile, the Japanese soldier’s obsession with his own colonial origins reveals the flip side of this relationship – namely, that it is a *constructed* one, and therefore constantly in need of maintenance and reinforcement.

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<sup>297</sup> Se-mi Oh, *Consuming the Modern*, p. 12.



In the next moment, a curious thing happens. Recognizing the threat of violence, Ro Tenshin steps in and chides the men: “Is this how soldiers of Japan – the leader of Asia, and a civilized country – should behave?”<sup>298</sup> As soon as the soldiers’ attentions shift back to Ro, Kyōkichi makes his escape. He solicits the help of two Korean policemen standing on the next street over, thinking that “they would surely save Ro Tenshin because they were Korean policemen,” but he does not join them himself; instead, he watches from behind a building corner, “ready at any moment to flee” (p. 299). The introduction of the Korean policemen aptly underscores the memory of the Japanese restaurant owner and his bitter remark that “[e]ven the police are Korean these days.” Their appearance also restores the precarious boundary of Japanese/Korean and erases the slippages of identity that had occurred between them. At the same time, however, I would argue that it is another body – that of Ro Tenshin, absolutely female and absolutely Korean – that provides the key structure in engendering these slippages of identity, as well as their subsequent erasure.

Drawing upon the theory of triangular desire first articulated by René Girard in *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick characterizes male homosocial desire as “the *structure* of men’s relations with other men,” one that is both asymmetrical and historical.<sup>299</sup> She further argues that “the status of women and the whole question of arrangements between genders is deeply and inescapably inscribed in the structure even of relationships that seem to exclude women” (p. 25). Sedgwick’s formulations help us begin to understand the structural function of Ro Tenshin in *Yoidorebune* (not to mention Kin Junki in “Dasshutsu”). Like a filmic transition in which sound from one scene overlaps with images from the next, Noritake’s

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<sup>298</sup> THZ, pp. 298-9.

<sup>299</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 2 (italics in original).

irreverent challenge to “you Japanese” in the novel’s opening pages gives way to Ro’s physical body and charges it with symbolic resonance. As we saw, Kyōkichi is able to articulate his opposition to the colonial state by drawing a parallel between himself and Ro: like Ro, who finds herself caught in a web of romantic entanglements, Kyōkichi sees himself as an unwilling pawn in an increasingly corrupt game of politics. In order to draw such an analogy, however, Kyōkichi must temporarily suppress Ro’s ethnic difference and his own gendered body.<sup>300</sup>

As the theories of Girard and Sedgwick might suggest, the confrontation with the Japanese soldiers again occurs through the catalyst of Ro’s body, as it is the object that structures the soldiers’ desire. In the moment that Kyōkichi “becomes” Korean, however, Ro’s body curiously disappears from the text. It *must* disappear from the text, I would argue, in order for that moment of affinity to work: the switch between the seemingly neutral terms *Japanese* and *Korean* can occur only because “neutral” has been coded as urban, educated, and male. It is therefore telling that when Ro speaks, reinserting herself into the picture, the moment collapses; the asymmetry between the characters inverts itself, with Kyōkichi at its apex and Ro once again relegated to the role of the Korean Other. Unassimilable and yet indispensable, Ro Tenshin’s body provides the structure around which the events of *Yoidorebune* can coalesce.

Unassimilable and yet indispensable: these are also qualities that may be said of a double agent or spy,<sup>301</sup> and indeed the Japanese soldiers’ reaction to Ro’s outspoken criticism is to

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<sup>300</sup> This also explains why the romantic relationship that ensues between them is constantly defined in the humanistic, universalistic terms of “man” and “woman”: in order for Kyōkichi and Ro to be represented as a viable force of united “resistance” against colonialism, their relationship must paradoxically be stripped of the gendered and ethnic differences that define it and in fact make it possible.

<sup>301</sup> Neil Gotanda, for example, examines how suspicion of Asian minorities in the U.S. as unassimilable and therefore more readily open to disloyalty and espionage were mobilized post-9/11 in the essay “The Racialization of Islam in American Law” in *Race, Religion, and Late Democracy* ed. John L. Jackson and David Kyuman Kim (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2011). Tina Chen discusses in detail the identity politics of Asian Americans in different historical contexts, conceptualizing “Asian Americans as ‘double agents’ who work both to establish their own claims to a U.S. American identity and to critique the American institutions that have designated them as ‘aliens’

accuse her of being one. The comment hits closer to home than the soldiers realize, as Ro is in fact a double agent working for an underground independence movement. Like Kin Junki in “Dasshutsu,” Ro possesses a voluptuous sexuality that she uses to manipulate men in positions of power. Not surprisingly, it is revealed that Ro also has a background in acting; her English-language performances in theatrical adaptations of *Little Women* and *Jane Eyre* were so riveting that “she was flooded with love letters” during her university days.<sup>302</sup> Unlike Junki, however, Ro uses her talents not for her own private aims but for the sake of the nation – for the sake of reclaiming Korean independence.

Ro Tenshin’s status as a celebrated poet and her connections to the colonial government give her privileged access to the inner workings of the Greater East Asian Writers’ Meeting. It is therefore Ro who ties together all the plot strands of Tanaka’s novel, through her various complex affiliations. As a spy, of course, her first duty is to make contact with the other spy embedded in the group. Knowing that she might be seized and searched by Japanese officials at any time, Ro uses the chance encounter with Kyōkichi at the plaza to hide the secret papers on his person without his knowledge. In the course of their interactions, however, she genuinely falls in love with him; at the end of the novel, she gives up her life in order to protect his own.<sup>303</sup> Even before that climactic final scene, however, her death had been presaged by the

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whose incorporation into the body politic is thus always already suspect.” See Tina Chen, *Double Agency: Acts of Impersonation in Asian American Literature and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. xviii.

<sup>302</sup> THZ, p. 232.

<sup>303</sup> Ro is shot by Toda, a high-ranking member of the *Aohitogusa renmei* (青人草連盟). It is suggested that Toda’s fervent devotion to *kōminka* is a symptom of mental degeneration (see, for example, pages 343-4 in *Yoidorebune*). Toda’s paranoia steadily grows during the closing ceremony for the Conference, and he ends up convincing himself that Kyōkichi is “a spy for the Commies” (p. 364). Believing that Kyōkichi is with Ro, Toda bursts into her room and shoots her dead. In fact, Kyōkichi had retreated to another room with a *kisaeng* named Zen Setsujō (Chōn Sōlnang). It is later revealed by Noritake that Ro had asked Zen to safely hide Kyōkichi until the danger to him had passed. Noritake concludes, “She died protecting you to the very end . . . You could say that she died in order to save you” (p. 374). Kyōkichi’s arrest is not directly linked to Ro’s death, but it was earlier implied that Toda had possibly given information to the police about Kyōkichi’s subversive activities.

metaphorical erasure of her body from the text through a farewell letter sent to Kyōkichi just before the start of the closing ceremonies. In the letter, Ro bids Kyōkichi farewell, telling him that having “mostly succeeded in passing on information to the secret emissary” (p. 332), she intends to escape to China. Kyōkichi tears up the incriminating letter and flings the pieces out the window. As he does so, he recalls the story of *Swan Lake*: “The scraps of snow-white paper flew wildly about like cherry blossom petals, and for a moment it felt as if he were watching Ro Tenshin transform into a swan and soar away” (p. 333). It is not a surprise that Ro never again appears in person, and that the reader never directly witnesses her death; rather than Ro herself, it is her function as catalyst that is made to matter.<sup>304</sup>

From narrator to narrated: by conflating Ro’s body with her writing, and transforming the content of her writing (the letter’s confession) into a form (the swan maiden myth), the novel succeeds in sublating the espionage plot and the Greater East Asian Writers’ Meeting plot into a rare moment of resolution. When Kyōkichi hears of Ro’s death from Noritake, he decides he cannot stay in Keijō any longer, lest his alcoholism drive him “to become a fascist and, after that, a madman like Toda” (p. 375). He tells Noritake that he’ll return to Tokyo instead, to “live a dull life completely removed from politics and work hard at writing.” Before he can do so, however, he is arrested by the police and thrown in jail for the remainder of the war. Although Kyōkichi’s incarceration would suggest the exact opposite of his goal – instead of a life free of politics, a life defined utterly by it; instead of writing, forced silence – it is precisely this arrest that in fact generates the act of writing and retrospectively legitimates it. In order to demonstrate how Tanaka Hidemitsu accomplishes this historical transformation of memory into the categories of

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<sup>304</sup> The motif of *Swan Lake* returns to haunt Kyōkichi. For example, while fleeing from the military propaganda and political hypocrisy of the closing ceremony, he thinks again of the swan maidens, “who will never again return. All that’s left is this barren soil, soiled with iron scraps and blood and flesh” (p. 360). When Noritake finally tells Kyōkichi of Ro’s death, Kyōkichi’s first thought is that “a beautiful swan was tainted and killed because of a single sleazy drunkard – me” (p. 374).

colonial collaboration and wartime responsibility, I turn now to the detective fiction aspects of *Yoidorebune*, and its appropriation of the postwar climate of “decadence.”

As mentioned in the previous section, the opening scene of *Yoidorebune* introduces the reader to a world where the body (and its bodily functions) take precedence over the politics of the colonial city. Soon after their initial meeting, Noritake remarks to Kyōkichi and Ro that “we’re monsters made up of stomachs and genitalia” (p. 233); Kyōkichi later echoes the sentiment when he tells Ro that he is “a chameleon of the stomach and genitalia. Someone who will become anything according to the circumstances in order to satisfy those two things” (p. 245). Such comments may encourage one to situate *Yoidorebune* within the postwar debates over *daraku* (decadence/fall) and *nikutai bungaku* (the literature of the flesh) as represented by Sakaguchi Ango (1906–1955) and Tamura Taijirō (1911–1983), respectively.

In 1947, Tamura Taijirō published an influential essay entitled “Nikutai ga ningen de aru” (Flesh is Human), in which he extolled the ability of the human body to resist or counteract the pernicious ideology of the state.<sup>305</sup> “Only the flesh is true (*shinjitsu*),” he declared: “The agony of the flesh, the desires of the flesh, the intoxication of the flesh, the bewilderment of the flesh, the slumber of the flesh – only these things are true” (p. 368). He went on to call for a “literature of depravity” (*haitai bungaku*) that would “graphically depict today’s realities . . . the realities of a defeated nation” (p. 370). Tamura’s belief in an ethics grounded on the concrete, material body may be said to overlap with the concerns of the *buraiha*, or “decadent school” of literature, which included authors such as Sakaguchi Ango, Oda Sakunosuke (1913–1947), Dazai Osamu, and Tanaka Hidemitsu himself. While their writings and preoccupations are too diverse

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<sup>305</sup> Tamura Taijirō, “Nikutai ga ningen de aru” in *Gunzō* 5 (May 1947). As Douglas Slaymaker points out, however, Tamura “roots that freedom from the body in the (male) body” (p. 44) making the gendered carnality of his female characters a problematic issue. See Slaymaker, *The Body in Postwar Japanese Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2004), especially chapters 2 and 3.

to neatly sum up in one label, it may be argued that their shared emphasis on nihilistic recklessness, dissolution, and excess was not simply a response to the chaotic conditions of immediate postwar Japan but an attempt to transcend or disrupt the prewar-postwar continuities of the authoritarian state.

Tanaka's *Yoidorebune* is couched as a retrospective narrative that speaks more to this postwar re-articulation of the past than it does to the "actual" conditions of the past itself. At several points in the novel, the narrator uses the phrase *sono koro* (at that time) to temporally bracket the events of the story, and at one point the word *seno* (postwar) is explicitly used.<sup>306</sup> Kyōkichi's constant use of the words *dekadan* (decadent), *taihai* (depravity/degeneration), and *daraku* (decadence/fall) suggest an attempt to reframe or recontextualize his wartime activities against contemporary discourses of wartime guilt and collaboration. At several points in the novel, for example, Kyōkichi reflects on the hypocrisy of his own existence, which is dependent on the financial and political backing of the colonial government. Even while denouncing the efforts of the Peoples' League to "buy his talents" (p. 242), Kyōkichi – like Ro, he believes – does not hesitate to manipulate the system in his favor. He rejects the organization's attempts to "make him into a victim" by embracing his own decadence, thus turning his so-called collaboration into a self-serving performance. Like a double agent in some ways, Kyōkichi thinks of himself as infiltrating the government only to destroy it from within.

But unlike Ro, who *is* a double agent working secretly for the sake of Korean independence, Kyōkichi's final loyalties are not to the nation but to himself. When he first learns about Ro's possible spy connections, his immediate impulse is to willfully close his eyes to any and all political intrigue. Although he senses that Ro may have infiltrated the delegation for the

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<sup>306</sup> *Sono koro* may be found in *Yoidorebune* on pages 231, 237, and 338; the word *seno* is used on page 278, and page 338 contains references to Japan's war defeat (*haisen*).

Greater East Asian Meeting for her own secret reasons, Kyōkichi refuses to allow himself to dwell on those reasons: “It was just like being in a cheap detective novel . . . He hated detective novels” (p. 242). Kyōkichi’s disdain for detective novels punctuates key scenes and revelations throughout *Yoidorebune*, ironically undercutting the sense of urgency usually given by a spy plot. When confronted with evidence of Ro’s involvement with the shady Professor Karashima, for example, Kyōkichi begins to speculate on the meaning behind the involvement but soon reminds himself, “I’m sick of this detective business. All I want to do is drink alcohol” (p. 254). When warned by Noritake that someone in the Greater East Asian Meeting group is a spy intent on smuggling “important papers” outlining Japan’s military weaknesses to China, Kyōkichi refuses point-blank to “go around like Sherlock Holmes” (p. 262) looking for the culprit. And when he finds himself in the thick of the intrigue due to his own affiliation with the Greater East Asian Writers Meeting, he reflects, “Just as he hated serious mystery novels, he was fed up with these inexplicably baffling events happening in real life. Time would probably solve everything, so until then he might as well cover up his irritation and pain with alcohol” (p. 340).

Why is Kyōkichi so adamant about rejecting detective fiction, and what can its intersection with decadence tell us about the ideological position of the novel itself? Here, it may prove useful to make a distinction between detective fiction and its related (but distant) cousin, the spy novel. The origins of the detective novel are commonly traced back to the fiction of Edgar Allan Poe, whose 1841 short story “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” laid the groundwork for what would become hallmark elements of the detective fiction genre: a detective who works with (but is not himself) the police force, a rationalized analysis of facts and clues leading to the denouement of the criminal, and a city landscape of crime, alienation, and anonymity. Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the burgeoning body of criticism on detective

fiction, here I would like to emphasize the ability of the private detective to obfuscate the operations of ideology and state power precisely because of the “private” appellation.<sup>307</sup> As Satoru Saito points out, the private detective “is an agent of the state, but, at the same time, he is made possible theoretically by the authority granted by the people to the state . . . [He] reiterates this power relationship between the state and its citizens (that is often felt as reversed) by suggesting that the state cannot provide the necessary disciplinary actions without the help of its citizens.”<sup>308</sup> In other words, the detective story indirectly aligns the reader with the detective hero (who works with, but is not part of, the state), whose self-assured narrative restores the social order and finally banishes the criminal to the unutterable realm of non-narrative – to the closed walls of the prison.

The spy novel, on the other hand, features a protagonist who is an explicit agent of the state and who must often work outside the law in order to restore order. While the detective story works within the carefully policed borders of the nation, the spy novel works *among* them, transgressing the lines between the national and international, the domestic and the foreign. Indeed, with their cover identities, fluency with languages, and fake passports, spies embody the very indeterminacy of these lines and trigger anxieties over them. Allan Hepburn writes:

Ideology produces spies, but spies, like most people, temper ideology with private motives. Intrigue occurs when psychological and ideological commitments overlap and

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<sup>307</sup> Some relevant volumes include the following (in alphabetical order): Sari Kawana, *Murder Most Modern: Detective Fiction and Japanese culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Margaret S. Key, *Documentary, Detection, and Reflexivity in Abe Kobo's Realist Project* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011); Patricia Merivale and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney (eds.), *Detecting Texts: The Metaphysical Detective Story from Poe to Postmodernism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Nels Pearson and Marc Singer (eds.), *Detective Fiction in a Postcolonial and Transnational World* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009); Gill Plain, *Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction: Gender, Sexuality and the Body* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2001); Caroline Reitz, *Detecting the Nation: Fictions of Detection and the Imperial Venture* (Columbia: Ohio State UP, 2004); and Charles J. Rzepka and Lee Horsley (eds.), *A Companion to Crime Fiction* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

<sup>308</sup> Satoru Saito, *Detective Fiction and the Rise of the Japanese Novel, 1880-1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 13.



mask each other. The spy embodies ambiguous allegiances, some declared, some concealed. The spy therefore stands as a cipher for conflicts waged among national, international, familial, human, humanitarian, ethical, and romantic identities.<sup>309</sup>

Hepburn further points out that unlike the detective novel, the spy novel works on codes – ciphers – and not clues. While clues are material and indexical, codes are immaterial and symbolical, gesturing towards a system rather than a sign. The “rogue” spy fights against corrupt systems not to bring it down but to repair it – to restore it to its ideal, ideological function. Ro Tenshin, an archetypical spy, plots against the colonial government in order to restore Korean national sovereignty, but at no point does she articulate this as an attack against “Japan.” Instead, she sees her mission as an attack against “fascism”; only once fascism has been destroyed, it is implied, will peace and proper relations between Korea and Japan (as equal nation-states) be achieved.<sup>310</sup>

With these thoughts in mind, we may begin to understand Kyōkichi’s position within *Yoidorebune*. Confronted with the corrupt reality of colonial politics, Kyōkichi discovers that “his conscience from the old days” disallows him from taking full advantage of the system. Instead, “that conscience was linked to a whole range of phantom emotions – desire for fame, patriotism, love for humanity, love for women – dragging him down in the end into a mire of decadence” (p. 254). In other words, Kyōkichi’s decadence is not so much a total rejection of ideology so much as an ameliorating force that can potentially restore “desire for fame, patriotism, love for humanity, love for women” to their correct functions. The significance of framing *Yoidorebune* as a retrospective narrative also becomes clear in this light. The colonial realities of the novel, coded as *Japan’s past*, may be decoded only through the postwar present.

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<sup>309</sup>Allan Hepburn, *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. xiv.

<sup>310</sup> THZ, p. 297.

Rather than being a detective, then, Kyōkichi is more like a rogue spy – someone whose actions can only be judged after the fact, within the larger context of international politics.

Although *Yoidorebune* ends on a bleak note for its main protagonists – Ro is shot to death, and Kyōkichi is thrown into jail – the penultimate two sentences, addressed directly to the reader by the narrator, subtly invert the detective genre for one final time: “I wish to add only that Kyōkichi never sold out any of his friends . . . This is the strange love story of Sakamoto Kyōkichi and Ro Tenshin” (p. 378). Like a classic detective story, *Yoidorebune* ends with an arrest and a confession – of sorts. But the arrest, we learn, is unwarranted, and the confession is less a revelation of guilt than a declaration of innocence, proof of Kyōkichi’s unwavering moral rectitude in the face of unmitigated corruption.<sup>311</sup> Just before the arrest, Noritake had urged Kyōkichi to return to Tokyo, warning him, “You absolutely cannot become a soldier of colonization, or a puppet of the government” (p. 375). In a way, the arrest allows Kyōkichi to fulfill Noritake’s request, as the jail cell bars him (literally) from joining either the military or the colonial government. At the same time, the characters’ preoccupation with war on the one hand and colonial politics on the other replicates discourse on (Japanese) war responsibility, in which individual culpability is interrogated over the systems of power that allow Kyōkichi to be in Korea in the first place. Only *because* Kyōkichi was arrested during the war could the narrative’s insistence on his innocence be retroactively accepted as the truth by its readers; and only *because* it is a postwar text can “wartime responsibility” be accepted as the measure of innocence in the first place.

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<sup>311</sup>As mentioned in Chapter 3, during the immediate postwar period many leftists who had been incarcerated during the war were able to regain cultural and political prestige precisely because their incarceration was seen as proof of their anti-war “resistance.” Nagumo Satoru specifically connects this postwar climate to *Yoidorebune* in his book *Tanaka Hidemitsu hyōden* (previously cited), as he traces the events that led to Tanaka’s postwar return to the JCP followed by his swift rejection of it. Arguing that the novel reflects Tanaka’s “ideological conflict” (p. 196) with communism but is in the end no more than an apologia for it, he concludes that “Tanaka attempted to achieve in the fictional world of his novel what he had been unable to do in real life, and [thereby] attain some mental stability” (p. 198).

While the traditional detective novel usually ends with the uncovering of the criminal to the reader, the spy novel depends upon the spy's ability to keep his/her true identity a secret to everyone *but* the reader (who is alerted to this information through the narrative form and/or the extratextual referent of the genre itself).<sup>312</sup> The spy novel's inversion of the confessional form here intersects with Tanaka Hidemitsu's appropriation of the I-novel metanarrative. Indeed, as Satoru Saito has cogently argued, the predominance of the I-novel in the 1920s can be seen as a kind of "collusion" between the modern Japanese novel and the detective story.<sup>313</sup> The I-novel form presents itself as a true confession of the author, but it is not the content but the form that authenticates the narrative being told:

While the depiction of insignificant life affirms such a life as socially acceptable to the extent that it is published . . . the fictionality of the details – if this is the case – negates the operation of legitimation precisely because a *selection* to be made the subject matter of writing suggests a certain importance and value of that subject matter. It is only through appearing to "faithfully record" the author's autobiographical details – that is, understood by the readers to be as such – that the ideological operation of the I-novel takes full effect. (p. 272)

The "ideological operation" mentioned by Saito, however, can only work through and by the reader, the true detective of the tale. It is the reader's function to suture the break between Sakamoto Kyōkichi and Tanaka Hidemitsu, wartime history and postwar present, by positing the true denouement, at reach just beyond the scope of the page: Korea's liberation, Kyōkichi's release from prison, and his postwar restitution from Japanese colonizer to Japanese anti-imperialist.

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<sup>312</sup> One might consider, for example, how the name "James Bond" works both as an identifier of the spy's identity and as an identifier of the spy genre itself (i.e. "a James Bond novel"), and how Ian Fleming's novels often employ third person limited to give the reader an intimate look into the workings of James Bonds' mind.

<sup>313</sup> Saito, *Detective Fiction*, p. 273.

This conclusion, however, raises another issue that also exists just beyond the page: the postwar fate of Kyōkichi, who would presumably have been repatriated back to Japan following Korea's liberation. In reality, the author Tanaka Hidemitsu was drafted by the military multiple times from 1937 to 1940 and was living free in Japan when the war ended; he would therefore not have been considered a "repatriate." Lori Watt has compellingly described the stigmatization faced by repatriates in Japan, who "served as a convenient domestic 'other' and as a vessel for a variety of postwar anxieties, including the contamination of the nation's women by foreigners, possible communist indoctrination in Siberian detainees, and potential social disruption by mavericks in general."<sup>314</sup> The conundrum of the returnee was hinted at in "Dasshutsu" with the figure of Hamada, who is able to speak of his colonial experiences in Korea only to the ethnically Korean narrator. At the same time, *Yoidorebune*'s conclusion suggests that the "repatriate" appellation may have afforded an individual a certain visibility – and, through that visibility, a certain amount of agency – not available to those who did not fit neatly into the returnee category.<sup>315</sup> It is hard to imagine a version of *Yoidorebune* that does not end in Kyōkichi's imprisonment, not only because the imprisonment is key to corroborating his anti-imperialist stance but also because an ending where Kyōkichi returns to Japan before the war's end would have put him in the same problematic status as Tanaka Hidemitsu himself: someone who was neither an "ordinary citizen" nor a returnee, neither a direct victim of the wartime state nor of the postwar one.

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<sup>314</sup> Lori Watt, *Empire*, p. 18.

<sup>315</sup> One might consider, for example, the many organizations, newsletters, and communities that were created for and by repatriates after 1945, and the rise in repatriate memoirs/literature starting in the late 1950s. See Watt, *Empire* (particularly chapter 2) and Mariko Tamanoi, *Memory Maps: The State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), particularly chapter 3.

In its final pages, *Yoidorebune* powerfully demonstrates how confession and collaboration emerge in the same historical moment and work along the same lines. The novel attempts to recast Kyōkichi's wartime activities as a calculated performance, but in order to do so, it must first already assume the national lines embedded in the very term *collaboration*. The activities of both Ro Tenshin and Kyōkichi are held up as examples of subversion from within, but subversion of what? Oriented against whom? The fact that Tenshin's espionage and Kyōkichi's decadence cannot be understood apart from the nations they represent suggests that the discursive split between collaboration and war guilt both obscures and embodies the epistemic trauma of colonialism: the terms attempt to recuperate national agency in the face of empire's collapse, but in doing so it makes unutterable and unmemorable (both in the sense of *not worth remembering* and *unable to be narrativized as memory*) any experiences or subjectivities that fall outside of that paradigm.

Similarly, the act of confession does not unveil so much as produce and naturalize an authentic "interior" self separate from "external" performance.<sup>316</sup> Just as the narrating self crafts the narrated self in and through confession, the collaborationist act is not uncovered so much as belatedly created in the process of narrativizing the past *as past*. As previously mentioned, scholars such as Kawamura Minato have lambasted *Yoidorebune* as a colonialist apologia, one that dangerously erases the author's own complicity from the text. Similar critiques have also been leveled at Chang Hyōkchu's postwar literature and essays, and against Yi Kwangsu and his confessional essay "Na ūi kobaek." While I do not deny the validity of these critiques, I also find it telling that they also implicitly replicate the structures of collaboration, in which authenticity and non-authenticity, colonizer and colonized stand in stark binary opposition to each other. That

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<sup>316</sup> In his seminal book *Nihon kindai bungaku no kigen*, Karatani Kōjin describes the "discovery of interiority" as profoundly mediated through *genbun itchi* and the confessional mode. See *Nihon kindai bungaku no kigen* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1980), particularly chapters 2 and 3.

the above texts cannot be untangled from these binaries and are still studied separately, within their respective postwar literary designations (Japanese literature, zainichi literature, Korean literature) is suggestive of how deeply the “postwar” episteme still mediates our understanding of the past.

In recent years, a number of scholars have pointed out the parallels between *Yoidorebune* and Kim Saryang’s “Tenma,” previously discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. As evidence, they cite the unusual confluence of shared characters – real-life figures such as Karashima Takeshi and Tsuda Katashi feature prominently in both texts under thinly veiled pseudonyms<sup>317</sup> – and a shared preoccupation with the cultural politics at play in the writing of literature. Those who regard Tanaka Hidemitsu as the model for “Tanaka” in “Tenma” have gone so far as to read *Yoidorebune* as an apologia written in direct response to Kim Saryang, to whom it is said Tanaka felt a strong sense of rivalry.<sup>318</sup> Others, meanwhile, have argued instead that Kim Saryang meant to parody Tamura Taijirō or else Hayashi Fusao in his depiction of “Tanaka,” and still others have rejected the “model” reading mode entirely.<sup>319</sup>

The intense speculation surrounding the real-life models and events of *Yoidorebune* is understandable, given Tanaka’s own stated desire to create a novel of “fictional events that could

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<sup>317</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 2, Karashima Takeshi was a scholar of Chinese literature who taught at Keijō Imperial University. Tsuda Katashi (1906–1990) also taught at Keijō Imperial University and was the chief editor of *Ryokki*. As mentioned by Kawamura Minato in *Yoidorebune no seishun*, Karashima Takeshi is said to have been the model for Professor Karashima in *Yoidorebune* and Tsunoi in “Tenma.” Tsuda Katashi is said to have been the model for Tsuda Jirō in *Yoidorebune* and Ōmura in “Tenma.”

<sup>318</sup> See, for example, Kim Yunsik, *Han-Il munhak ūi kwallyōn yangsang* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1974) and Ch’u Sōkmin, “‘Tenma’ to *yoidorebune* no hikaku kōsatsu,” previously cited.

<sup>319</sup> Nam Bujin argues for the “Tamura Taijirō model” theory in *Kindai bungaku no “Chōsen” taiken* (previously cited), p. 65; Yokote Kazuhiko assumes that “Tanaka” is meant to be Hayashi Fusao in commentary for “*Zainichi*” *bungaku zenshū 11*, eds. Isogai Jirō and Kuroko Kazuo (Tokyo: Bensei shuppan, 2006). Kim Hyōngsōp argues for the necessity of moving away from model theories in the article “Tanaka Hidemitsu no Chōsen kankei shōsetsu kōsatsu” in *Irō ilmunhak* 36 (November 2007), pp. 203-223.

have been possible, but were in fact impossible; that could have been, but weren't." The character Ro Tenshin is a pertinent example of this point. Although the kanji characters used for Ro's name immediately bring to mind the real-life poet No Chōnmyōng (盧天命; Sino-Japanese pronunciation, Ro Tenmei) as do the details given about her literary career, there has been no documented evidence that No Chōnmyōng worked as a spy, or that she was ever in a romantic relationship with Tanaka Hidemitsu. Additionally, little evidence can be found regarding her interactions with Kim Munjip, the writer who many believe to be the real-life model for the character Genryū in "Tenma." As I have sought to demonstrate, however, both stories are concerned less with this doubling of female identity (the character's doubled identity outside the story as the real-life No) than with the treacheries this doubling creates for the stories' main protagonists (the character's doubled identity *within* the story).

In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Man of the Crowd," an unnamed narrator follows an unknown man through London on a whim. The man never leaves the anonymity of the busy streets, and the narrator is struck with the following revelation: "The old man . . . is the type and the genius of deep crime. He refuses to be alone. *He is the man of the crowd.*" Here one may recall the climactic final scene of "Tenma," where Bun Sogyoku lures Genryū out into the city streets of Keijō, only to disappear among the swelling crowd of festival goers. Her crime, postwar detractors might say, is that she *is* of the crowd – one of the many who urged their fellow peers in a march towards war and imperialism. In the postwar narrative of *Yoidorebune*, she transforms into Ro Tenshin, the secret agent whose collaborationist activities are spun into a disguise of another sort. Unlike her male peers, however, in both texts her "collaboration" is marked in uniquely gendered terms, as it is inseparable from her sexuality and her romantic relationships vis-à-vis the male protagonists. Because pro-Japanese collaboration was seen as a *national*

shame in both Koreas, a collective trauma that needed to be overcome, it was that privileged agent of the nation – the elite male intellectual – who emerged as both the subject and object of condemnation. That No Chŏnmyŏng appears in fictional form in both “Tenma” and *Yoidorebune* suggests less a concern with judging her complicity with the colonial government than the ease in which her sexualized body can be replicated (and thereafter erased) in narratives that are ultimately not about her at all.

Rather than arguing for or against judgments of collaboration, in this dissertation I have sought instead to answer the call of Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang, who asserts that the diverse range of so-called *kōmin* literature “force[s] us to recognize the futility of attempts to contain the complexly interactive nature of any literary tradition, cultural heritage, or personal life within a teleologically conceived narrative.”<sup>320</sup> The wartime and postwar Japanese-language texts I have discussed – both by those considered “Japanese proper” and those not – expose the complexly interactive, hybrid, and hyphenated identity of the contested *imperial* (not just colonial, or postcolonial) subject and prove the need for a broader, more inclusive view of empire and its lasting effects. At the same time, dismantling the binary between “collaboration” and “resistance” must also entail a reexamination of the voices who have been excised from historical memory and relegated to the margins of nationhood. In other words, rather than try to detect the “true” criminal in a crowd of collaborationist suspects, I would ask instead who is allowed or not allowed to stand apart from the crowd, and how we ourselves are positioned in it.

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<sup>320</sup> Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang, “Beyond Cultural and National Identities: Current Re-Evaluation of the *Kominka* Literature from Taiwan’s Japanese Period” in *Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory* ed. Rey Chow (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 120.



## EPILOGUE

*To speak means being able to use a certain syntax and possessing the morphology of such and such a language, but it means above all assuming a culture and bearing the weight of a civilization.*

– Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (trans. Richard Philcox)

*For me, writing in Japanese is similar to the sensation of looking in a mirror in somebody else's house.*

– Kim Sökpöm, “Gengo to jiyū”

By the time Yi Yangji published “Watashi wa Chōsenjin” (I am Korean, 1977), the essay introduced at the very beginning of this dissertation, much had changed in the status of zainichi Koreans. With the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951 (which went into effect in 1952), Japan stripped citizenship rights from all of its former colonial subjects. Successful petition for naturalization required proof of high integration into society, including fluency in Japanese and a long history of residence in Japan – requirements still part of the naturalization process today. What caused this shift from the multiethnic discourse of Japan in the 1930s to its postwar insistence on racial homogeneity? Previous chapters have emphasized the role of SCAP in this process, but Chikako Kashiwazaki has offered another possible answer in the issue of national security, arguing that government officials were highly uneasy of the potential threat ethnic minorities posed for the nation:

Once nationality and full citizenship are granted, the Japanese state has less capacity to control former resident aliens, being no longer able to exercise the option of deportation . . . According to this reasoning, a politicized national minority group *with full citizenship* could pose an even greater problem of security and control than when its members remained foreigners. Here we see the legacy of the pattern developed during Japan's colonial era. From the point of view of the Japanese state, a high degree of

assimilation alone could solve the problem of security. Becoming culturally and spiritually Japanese was therefore considered a precondition for naturalization.<sup>321</sup>

Meanwhile, Oguma Eiji has identified the 1960s, a period of rapid economic growth, as the time when the “myth” of a homogeneous nation became thoroughly naturalized and embraced in Japan.<sup>322</sup> This was also the period when so-called *Nihonjinron* (theories of the Japanese) discourse took hold in the public imagination, fueled by best-sellers such as Nakane Chie’s *Tate shakai no ningen kankei* (Human Relations in a Vertical Society, 1967) and Doi Takeo’s *“Amae” no kōzō* (The Structure of “Amae,” 1971).<sup>323</sup> The 1960s were also notable for Japan-South Korea relations, as the two countries signed a normalization treaty in 1965 that finally established diplomatic relations between them. This meant that *zainichi* Koreans who identified as “South Korean” were allowed to obtain permanent residency status in Japan, giving them access to diplomatic protection, Japanese medical and welfare benefits, and freedom to travel overseas. Those who identified as “North Korean” or as simply “Korean” (*Chōsenjin*), however, were still barred from obtaining permanent residency status.<sup>324</sup> As a consequence, by 1970 the number of *zainichi* Koreans who claimed affiliation with South Korea had surpassed those affiliated with North Korea for the first time, and would only continue to rise with time.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Chikako Kashiwazaki, “The politics of legal status” in *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* (previously cited), p. 27. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>322</sup> See Oguma Eiji, *Tan’itsu minzoku shin’wa no kigen* (Tokyo: Shin’yōsha, 1995).

<sup>323</sup> As many scholars have noted, many early discussions on *Nihonjinron* can be said to be responding to or in line with Ruth Benedict’s famous study *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), which was written at the request of the U.S. Office of War Information. In this sense one can think more broadly about the triangular relationship between the West (particularly the U.S.), Japan, and Korea informing identity politics during this time as well as during the colonial period, as discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>324</sup> It was not until 1981 that legislation was passed in Japan that permanent resident status was extended to *all* former colonial subjects still living in Japan. A new residency status called “special permanent resident” (*tokubetsu eijūsha*) was introduced in 1991, giving wider rights and more unified protection to former colonial subjects.

<sup>325</sup> Mun Kyōngsu, “Zainichi Chōsenjin” in *Sekai minzoku mondai jiten* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1995), p. 457.

It was only after the 1965 normalization treaty had been signed that the word *Chōsen* (Korea) came to be associated strongly with North Korea. However, some resident Koreans have chosen to keep the *Chōsenjin* designation as a protest against the division of the peninsula (as there is no longer any country that is called “Chōsen”<sup>326</sup>), or as their way to emphasize their desire to choose ethnic affiliation over state-imposed identities. Others chose to naturalize as Japanese citizens; although there were less than 2,500 individuals each year who became naturalized in the 1950s, by the 1970s this number had jumped to roughly 4,700 per year.<sup>327</sup> In June 1979, Japan ratified the two International Covenants on Human Rights, and it acceded to the UN Refugee Convention in October 1981. In her book *Lamentation as History*, Melissa Wender incisively underscores how relations between Japan and the rest of the world contributed to these political and social changes:

Japan as a whole was aware of the goings-on elsewhere in the world, and particularly in the United States. As such, they knew not only about struggles for civil rights but the newly popularized concepts of individual and ethnic identity, an awareness that seemed to have made them receptive to both the politics and the fiction of Zainichi Koreans.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> *Chōsen* (in Korean, *Chosŏn*) was the name used for the Korea kingdom between 1392–1897. Korea was renamed the Korean Empire (in Korean, *Taehan cheguk*) in 1897, but upon Japanese annexation in 1910 the peninsula was renamed once again as Chosŏn. In 1948, the South adopted the name Republic of Korea (in Korean, *Taehan min'guk*) and the North, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (in Korean, *Chosŏn minjujuŭi inmin konghwaguk*).

<sup>327</sup> As quoted in the introduction to *Koreans in Japan*, p. 6.

<sup>328</sup> Melissa Wender, *Lamentation as History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 23.

It was not until 1991, however, that the government enacted decisive reforms on nationality requirements and the alien registration system, granting wider legal rights to citizens and non-citizens alike.<sup>329</sup>

A final note must be made of Japan's contemporary state. According to the 2010 Population Census conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, a total of 1,648,000 foreigners (that is, all residents whose legal nationality is not Japanese) were residing in Japan.<sup>330</sup> Among those, Korean residents formed the second largest minority group behind Chinese residents, with a population of 423,273. The language used for the census is revealing. The foreigner population (*gaikokujin jinkō*) is broken down according to nationality (*kokuseki*), whereas the Japanese population is indicated by the general term for population, *jinkō*. Naturalized citizens are not statistically marked but instead subsumed under the general population; in other words, *ethnic* is made into a particular category of *foreigner*, while *Japanese* is posited as universal. No statistical analysis exists for population by ethnicity, nor for the number of naturalized citizens; no category exists, in other words, for what is commonly referred to in the U.S. as the "hyphenated minority."

The issue of ethnicities – plural, burgeoning, and diverse – is one that has been a central concern of this dissertation. In her seminal book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, cultural critic and literary scholar Rey Chow examines the problematic treatment of

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<sup>329</sup> See Kashiwazaki, p. 28. The twenty-first century has seen an intensification if anything of the battle over minority rights and just social representation. The tremendous wave of "newcomer" immigrants from Latin America and Southeast Asia, as well as South Korea, has brought with it the demand for more sustained, dedicated, and long-term policies on issues ranging from JSL (Japanese As a Second Language) instruction to national pension plans to school bullying, but it still remains to be seen if the national government's current response of relegating responsibility to municipalities will be an effective or adequate one.

<sup>330</sup> See "Heisei 22nen kokusei chōsa," *Tōkeikyoku Homepage*, 20 April 2012 <<http://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2010/index.htm>>. An English version is also available at <<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/kokusei/>>.

ethnicity in late-capitalist Western society as both universal and particular, both a porous field and a dividing line.<sup>331</sup> To illustrate these paradoxes, she draws primarily from U.S. examples of multicultural rhetoric: while in theory everybody is “ethnic,” in reality the word is more often associated with nonwhite groups, marking them off from the unmarked (read: white) zone of the universal. The shadowy tension between universalism and particularism becomes, in this case, both dangerous and alarming because it seeks to cloak an unequal hierarchy of power under the guise of equality: it seeks to put the ethnic minority “in her place” – bounded in by a cage of color, while her white neighbor is bounded out. While drawing upon the contributions made by such thinkers as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Chow seeks to rework their theories to include the crucial dimensions of race and ethnicity, which are inseparable from “the entire problematic of the reproduction of human life” (p. 7).

Chow goes on to develop a sophisticated theory that proposes to describe the formation of the modern ethnic subject. She dubs this process “coercive mimeticism,” or the process “in which those who are marginal to mainstream Western culture are expected . . . to resemble and replicate the very banal preconceptions that have been appended to them” (p. 107). Here, Chow does to Louis Althusser what she had previously done to Foucault: taking Althusser’s description of interpellation as a base, she seeks to overcome its “seemingly monolithic nature” (p. 109) and reintroduce, via Slavoj Žižek, the ethnic body hailed *as ethnic* by and through pervasive systems of power. She likens the “person of color” (a phrase telling in its coupling of visual sight to bodily site) to an animal caged in the zoo: marginalized by its very visibility and made to act out a stereotype, a preconception, a sign. The link of “language-cum-ethnicity” (p. 125) is made

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<sup>331</sup> Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). The title of the book will hereafter be shortened to *The Protestant Ethnic*.

particularly clear in the case of Asian-American literature, a body of works understood to be written primarily in English, by Asian Americans:

Because many of them no longer have the claim to ethnic authority through the possession of ethnic languages, Asian Americans are perhaps the paradigmatic case of a coercive mimeticism that physically keeps them in their place – that keeps them, in Balibar’s terms, in their *genealogy* and, I would add, in their *genre* of speaking/writing as nothing but *generic* Asian Americans. The visible, *genetic* signs of “ethnic difference” on their bodies – an accident of birth – become, in this light, the referential limits embedded in their otherwise proliferating discourse. (p. 125, emphasis in original)

Chow connects the speaking of linguistic sameness to the seeing of difference in cross-cultural representation, where it is Western (read: white) reader/watcher who has a privileged role in the “image – and imagining – of third-world cultural productions” (p. 100). Here, however, I wish to consider how we might productively apply the insights provided by Chow to a sociopolitical context where ethnic difference does not necessarily equate to racial difference, as with *zainichi* Koreans in Japan. If we can learn anything from Yi Yangji’s anecdote, it is perhaps that we should be thinking in terms of performances as well as images – performances that fuse the visual and verbal together, moving across space and through time.<sup>332</sup> One may argue that the Korean schoolgirls in Yi’s essay draw the attention of bystanders in the same way that Chow describes it, as caged animals whose marginality is made visible – made material – at the zoo. But then how are we to account for the fact that the visible signs of difference are marked not on the Koreans’ bodies but on their clothes and through their speech? What are we to make of Yi herself, an unmarked ethnic subject on the producing end of the gaze?

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<sup>332</sup> Yi’s preoccupation with disembodied language and its (em)bodied effects can be linked to the insights on performativity provided by Judith Butler in her seminal book *Bodies that Matter*. In that book, Butler examines how the “materiality” of the body is forcibly constructed through the repeated articulation, or performance, of gender norms. Performativity is understood to be not “the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names, but, rather, as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains.” Butler, *Bodies that Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 2.

What “Watashi wa Chōsenjin” reveals above all else is the dilemma faced by a second-generation zainichi Korean expected to resemble (to always have resembled) what is recognizably *not-ethnic*, i.e. Japanese. As Yi herself documents, however, the promise of national belonging and assimilation represented by legal naturalization is all too often undercut by various mechanisms of discrimination. Japan’s ever-problematic household registry law serves as one example of Chow’s coercive forces at work. One might consider this statement made by Yi in an earlier portion of her essay: “During the summer of my first year of high school, I looked up my household registry in order to apply to an American study abroad program called AFS. That was when I truly realized that I was Korean.”<sup>333</sup> In theory, inclusion in the household registry is meant to signal one’s equal status under the law as a Japanese national. In reality, the practice of listing the details surrounding creation of the registry, as well as the names of one’s parents and siblings, serves as an efficient and subtle way to keep ethnic difference inscribed onto a family.<sup>334</sup>

Yi goes on to explain that while she knew in her head that her parents came from Korea, nothing in her daily routine or family life made her question her sense of belonging to the Japanese nation. Growing up, Yi writes, “I had rejected all things ‘Korean,’ and I even came to unconsciously deny the fact that I was Korean” (p. 585). It was only when she saw the details of her family registry that the inescapable truth of her origins hit home, so to speak: “I was clearly Korean. The part of me that had endlessly told me to *hide, hide*, who kept insisting *it’s not true, it’s not true* – that part of me writhed in agony somewhere deep in my heart.”

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<sup>333</sup> Yi, “Watashi wa Chōsenjin,” p. 584.

<sup>334</sup> Cases have also been reported of discrimination aimed against children born out of wedlock. See Japan NGO Network for CEDAW’s “Japan Network for Abolishing ‘Koseki’ and Discrimination against Children Born out of Wedlock (JNKDC)” in *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women: The Summary Report of The NGOs in Japan* [sic], 11 May 2008, <[www.jaiwr.org/jnnc/20030701jnncsummaryreport\(en\).pdf](http://www.jaiwr.org/jnnc/20030701jnncsummaryreport(en).pdf)>.

In the introduction of this dissertation, I quoted a passage from the essay on Yi's encounter with a group of Korean schoolgirls on a local train. In the paragraph that immediately follows the description of the train incident, Yi turns her gaze onto herself: "But then what about me? The me who kept telling myself *hide, hide*, and *I can never admit that I'm Korean . . .*" (p. 588). In this self-exhortation to *hide, hide* we may hear, faintly, an echo of a social hailing, but one striking in its negative interpellation – a "Hey, you!" where "you" is placed in the universal category of "Japanese." For the *zainichi* Korean caught in the contradictory call of Japanese assimilation, the hailing becomes an impossible demand: "Hey, you! You must be and always have been not-you!" This injunction of "not-you" ensures that response to such a demand remains tortuously fissured by its own irrational structure: the call demands the full assimilation of the ethnic minority, but it is precisely by the act of responding – by the very necessity to respond – that the minority is made to feel her own difference. Thus Žižek's "excessive traumatic kernel"<sup>335</sup> may be rephrased as ethnicity itself, that intangible and paradoxical thing so indispensable to colonial marginalization in a so-called postcolonial world.

Korea, too, cannot be forgotten from this equation, as Chapter 4 made clear. Here, a brief return to Yi Yangji's most famous piece of fiction, *Yuhi* (Yuhi, 1988), may help sum up the intertwined issues of linguistic nationalism, ethnic belonging, and literary canonization that have been the focal points of this dissertation.<sup>336</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, *Yuhi* is narrated in Japanese by an unnamed Korean narrator who supposedly knows no Japanese. In one flashback, the narrator recalls how she and Yuhi fell into a discussion about the merits of the colonial-

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<sup>335</sup> Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic*, p. 109.

<sup>336</sup> It may be argued that *Yuhi* helped lead Yi Yangji to become one of the most well-known *zainichi* writers in Japan as well as in other parts of the world. The novella was published in Korean translation in South Korea in 1989 and in Chinese translation in Taiwan that same year. A partial English translation was published in 1991 under the title "Yu-hee" in the collection *New Japanese Voices: The Best Contemporary Fiction from Japan* ed. Helen Mitsios (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991). All *Yuhi* page numbers cited in this epilogue refer to the version found in the *Yi Yangji zenshū*, previously cited.



period writer Yi Sang (born Kim Haegyōng, 1910–1937). Yuhi confesses that although she finds Yi Sang “stunning” (p. 412), she is much more drawn to Yi Kwangsu:

“Students are biased against [Yi Kwangsu] because they say he was a puppet of the Japanese empire, but my feelings on the subject are more complicated.”

Yuhi’s voice dropped. She had probably never told her classmates that she admired Yi Kwangsu.

I said, “Yi Sang and Yi Kwangsu are completely different, aren’t they?”

“Yes, but I just can’t stop thinking about Yi Kwangsu,” Yuhi replied, her eyes boring into mine again. (p. 412)

As I detailed in Chapter 4, Yi Kwangsu’s “collaborationist” writings from the *kōminka* (imperialization) period led to his later denigration as a pro-Japanese collaborator.<sup>337</sup> In contrast, Yi Sang has been hailed for his “resistance” against colonialism, as perhaps most emblemized in his choosing a penname that satirically appropriated a Japanese coworker’s mistaken address to “Ri-san” (Mr. Yi).<sup>338</sup> The narrator makes no comment on the reputations of these authors at the time, but the significance of Yuhi’s reading preferences become increasingly clear as the story progresses. To the unnamed narrator, Yuhi’s inability to adapt to life in Seoul and her lack of progress in learning the Korean language are taken as proof that “in the end, zainichi Koreans are

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<sup>337</sup> The narrator’s comment in *Yuhi* that zainichi Koreans “are all Japanese” ironically echoes the *kōminka* essays of Yi Kwangsu, whose self-declared desire to “become Japanese” earned him a post-liberation reputation of being a collaborator. For example, in the essay “Gyōja” (Devotee) published in *Bungakukai* in March 1943, Yi Kwangsu outlines the various ways the Korean people are “striving to become Japanese (*Nihonjin*) to their very core” (p. 84) and his own spiritual training in becoming a “a true Japanese person” (*honmono no Nihonjin*, p. 85). What is fascinating about this particular essay, however, is its form: written as a letter to “Kobayashi-sensei” (Kobayashi Hideo, a leading member of *Bungakukai* and an acquaintance of Yi Kwangsu’s), the text opens up complex ambiguities of audience and ethnic performativity that the simple label of “pro-Japanese collaborator” cannot adequately address.

<sup>338</sup> As the story goes, one day Kim Haegyōng was accidentally called “Ri-san” by his Japanese supervisor, Yi being one of the most common surnames in Korea. The young Kim decided to transform that mistake into his penname, choosing Chinese characters (李箱) that played upon the pronunciation “Ri-san” (or Yi-san) as well as the Korean word for “strange” (*isang*). For an English-language introduction to Yi Sang and the story behind his name, see “Yi Sang (1910–1937)” in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Korean Poetry* ed. David R. MacCann (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 64–65.

all Japanese.”<sup>339</sup> Instead of “making this language and this country her own, she did the exact opposite: she turned back to the Japanese language. She revealed her true self through the Japanese she wrote” (p. 427). In the end, what separates the narrator from Yuhi is not the physical distance between Japan and Korea but the linguistic gap opened up by the Japanese language itself.

In the novella, the dividing lines between the colonial and the postcolonial, collaboration and resistance, and even Korea and Japan fall apart the moment they are brought into contact with the character of Yuhi, who is embodied by the Japanese writing she leaves behind in Korea. To return briefly to the conversation introduced on the previous page, it is suggestive that neither the narrator nor Yuhi directly comments on the fact that *both* Yi Sang and Yi Kwangsu wrote in Japanese as well as in Korean. Although Yi Sang is often held up as an innovator of Korean modernist literature, he in fact began his career writing poetry in Japanese and often “translated” his own poems from Japanese to Korean throughout his lifetime.

It may be argued that it is the suppression of Japanese that allows Yi Sang and Yi Kwangsu to be represented as polar opposites in the collaboration/resistance binary in the passage from *Yuhi* quoted above; however, this suppression also acts as an aporia, something at once inaccessible and yet also structurally necessary. Introducing the Japanese language back into this binary would only collapse it and expose it as a false dichotomy. The language of the novella – which is narrated in Japanese by a Korean narrator who supposedly knows no Japanese – ironically underscores this point: it is the Japanese language that makes up the narration, but this fact can never be gestured to by the narrator herself; instead, the Japanese language is meant to act as a transparent translation through which the reader can access the Korean narrator’s

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<sup>339</sup> Page 426. The phrase the unnamed narrator uses for “zainichi Korean” is *chaeil dongp’o* (在日同胞), which can be more literally translated as “compatriot/brethren residing in Japan.” Unlike the Japanese, the Korean term is oriented around an assumed ethnonational relationship between the Korean speaker and his/her “compatriot” abroad.

thoughts. However, the fiction of transparency is constantly undercut by the Korean words, alphabet, and phrases that litter the text. These material signs of difference work to constantly remind the reader of the artificiality of the novel's linguistic structure and call attention to how national borders "are pushed to their limits and dismantled" when faced with the radical instability of language.<sup>340</sup>

"But then what about me?" – the question that haunted Yi in her essay "Watashi wa Chōsenjin" would eventually become the catalyst for a renewed interest in the history, culture, and language of a country she had once tried to discard. By the time of the essay's publication, Yi had stopped using her Japanese name in favor of her Korean one "as an act of challenge directed to all of Japan, and one directed simultaneously to myself."<sup>341</sup> In the same paragraph, however, she quickly qualifies her statement: "But it's true that the repercussions for doing so are huge, and generally come back in a negative form . . . I sometimes get depressed, wondering why we have to be so hung up about 'Koreanness' in the first place" (p. 591). The reader learns that Yi's embracement of her Korean heritage did not exorcise her demons at all; instead, it stirred them into an even more agitated cacophony of discordant voices. The passage quietly highlights what this dissertation and Chow's book have tried so strenuously and at length to prove: the impossibility of avoiding the question of ethnicity – or, to put it more accurately, the impossibility of avoiding *being asked* the question of ethnicity, on today's history-laden and unequal performing field of the global stage.

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<sup>340</sup> Ueda Atsuko, "'Moji' to iu 'kotoba': Yi Yangji *Yuhi* o megutte" in *Nihon kindai bungaku* 62 (2000), p. 129.

<sup>341</sup> Yi, "Watashi wa Chōsenjin," p. 591.

Yi ends her essay on a defiant note: “I will never flit my life away. I want to take in life greedily until I can see what’s ahead – as one Korean woman residing in Japan.”<sup>342</sup> In the original, the Japanese text begins with a long string of hiragana script and ends with a set of kanji compounds that form a dense visual block: *zainichi Chōsenjin* (“Korean person residing in Japan”) and *ichijosei* (“one woman”). It is as if the last paragraph is reenacting in micro form Yi’s progression from self-ambivalence to self-determination, an impression bolstered by the decision to block off her declaration of identity as a single sentence fragment in the original Japanese, made separate from the desire “to take in life greedily.” The overall effect is to suggest that her identity as “one Korean woman residing in Japan” stands distinctly apart from the changeable realm of emotions; it is monolithic and total, and inarguably there.

And yet how is one to interpret the phrase “until I can see what’s ahead”? The phrase can be more literally translated as “until something can be seen,” but the question of *what* can be seen has no clear answer. By setting a limit on time, Yi seems to imply a limit on identity itself, leaving the future amorphous and empty. The final dash that ends the essay further opens up room for interpretation, offering the reader a dangling pause filled with a surplus of unstated meaning. While the essay ends on that ambiguous note, Yi’s emphasis on time – the desire and need to seize hold of an identity while one still can – is echoed in later writings, including *Yuhi* and an 1984 novella aptly named *Koku* (Time). When *Yuhi* was reprinted in *Bungei shunjū* in March 1989 upon being chosen for the Akutagawa Prize, Yi included a short note entitled “Jushō no kotoba” (Some Words on Winning the Prize) that again stressed the urgency of agency in speaking the Japanese language. Drawing upon the metaphor of a “walking stick of words,”

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<sup>342</sup> Page 591. I include the Japanese text here to demonstrate its visual effect: 「ひらひらとは決して生きまい。何かが見えてくるまで食欲に生きてやろうと思うのだ。在日朝鮮人の一女性として—。」 Romanized: *Hirahira to wa kesshite ikimai. Nanika ga miete kuru made don'yoku ni ikite yarō to omou no da. Zainichi Chōsenjin no ichijosei to shite.*

which in *Yuhi* is used to describe how the sound *a* begins both the Korean and Japanese standard vowel order, Yi declares the following:

I know it has to be now.  
This walking stick of words keeps me alive. Pulled by the tides of blood, I pray that I  
can cling on to its sturdiness.<sup>343</sup>

In hindsight, the urgency underlining Yi's essays and fiction would seem almost prophetic; in 1992, she passed away at the young age of thirty-seven, leaving behind a rich body of work that serves as ample testimony to her desire to "never flit my life away." Her sudden death prompted a number of public tributes and written reminiscences from prominent writers such as Kawamura Minato, Nakagami Kenji (1946–1992), and Levy Hideo (1950– ). In July 1992, two months after Yi's death, Kim Sōkpōm published a short piece in *Gunzō* (Group Images) entitled "Chōji – Yi Yangji e" (A Eulogy for Yi Yangji).<sup>344</sup> Dated May 24<sup>th</sup>, two days after her death, the eulogy mourns Yi's untimely passing in a mixture of Korean and Japanese. Kim recalls how the two had known each other in person, and how Yi had looked up to Kim as her *sōnsaengnim* (teacher). Citing how Yi had proudly told him once how she "loved the sound" of the name, Kim makes sure to write out Yi Yangji's name in Korean, not in kanji or katakana, every time he addresses her: "I will call you by the name you yourself loved, Yi Yangji (이양지)."<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> Yi Yangji, "Jushō no kotoba" as reprinted in *Yi Yangji zenshū*, p. 614.

<sup>344</sup> In Japanese: 「弔辞—李良枝へ」. Page numbers refer to its reprinted version in *Tenkō to shin'ichiha* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993).

<sup>345</sup> Page 275. It should be noted that the text was written in a mix of Japanese and Korean; this particular sentence is in Japanese, with only Yi Yangji's name written in hangŭl.

Like the narrator's memories of Yuhi in the novella *Yuhi*, Korean *hangŭl* interrupts the Japanese text of the eulogy like a small tangible knot made up of the verbal and visual together. Although the title of “Chōji – Yi Yangji e” reproduces Yi Yangji's name in kanji (李良枝), the body of the text writes out her name in hangŭl, at times (although not always) accompanied by a katakana gloss, as follows: <sup>イ</sup> | <sup>ヤン</sup> | <sup>ジ</sup> | <sup>シ</sup> |. That the katakana pronunciation of *I Yanji* attached to the hangŭl name in “Chōji – Yi Yangji e” approximates, but does not exactly match, the pronunciation of the Korean is perhaps another reminder that Yi's own sense of identity was irreducible to either Japan or Korea, and was instead defined through the juxtaposition of these terms embodied by the term “Korean in Japan.”

Kim Sōkpōm has famously characterized the Japanese language as a “curse” (*jubaku*) that is “a result [of colonialism], but a result that still remains open and ongoing.”<sup>346</sup> One can link his observation back to the writings introduced in Chapter 3, which revealed how the Japanese language is simultaneously a product of colonialism and a living reminder that the effects of colonialism are still perpetuated even into the present day. To reiterate, it is the history of the Japanese colonization of Korea that produced Kim Sōkpōm, a Korean speaker of Japanese; that he cannot speak against Japan anywhere but in Japan (due to his visa status), in anything other than Japanese (due to his colonial-period education), serves as proof of the impossibility of demarcating a clear “post”-colonial space.

In that same essay, Kim compares his own feelings when writing in Japanese to “looking in a mirror in somebody else's house” (p. 78). He goes on to argue that his Japanese necessarily differs from that of “native” speakers because he cannot help but always be consciously aware

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<sup>346</sup> Kim Sōkpōm, “Gengo to jiyū – Nihongo de kaku to iu koto” in *Kotoba no jubaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1972), p. 84.

that it is *Japanese* that he is speaking. What is striking is that Yi Yangji has also used the metaphor of mirrors to describe the process of discovering oneself through language. In *Koku*, for example, she begins with an image of the narrator “I” looking at herself in the mirror in her cramped, borrowed room in Seoul: “The I who puts on makeup gazes at the I who was being made up.”<sup>347</sup> These quotes speak to the ways in which language constitutes subjectivity, in a self-conscious (in all senses of the term) process that bears with it the full weight of a civilization, with all of its powers but also all of its injustices.

In “Jushō no kotoba” Yi Yangji wrote that she lived in “the echoes of two languages.”<sup>348</sup> Moving constantly between languages and their nations, Yi vividly brought to life the contradiction at the heart of the compound word *zainichi Chōsenjin*. Encountered in a government census, the phrase speaks again of the ways in which *ethnic minority* and *naturalized Japanese* are consciously distinguished from each other in political and social discourse. Encountered in an essay or story written in Japanese by a naturalized citizen of Japan, however, the phrase takes on other, more nuanced tones. In declaring herself a Korean resident *in Japanese*, Yi marks herself as neither wholly like the Korean schoolgirls in “Watashi wa Chōsenjin” nor wholly like the Japanese announcer on the train, and yet related to both. Slipping between the “either/or” division of the census, the language of her fiction is two-faced, oriented outwards to Japan and Korea while simultaneously directed inwards to oneself. It also speaks of the face of the native ethnic, the one who wears her double identity uneasily and sometimes with despair – but whose carefully conscious performance has the ability to interrupt the hegemonic script that keeps the actor in her place.

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<sup>347</sup> Yi Yangji, *Koku* in *Yi Yangji zenshū*, p. 139.

<sup>348</sup> Yi Yangji, “Jushō no kotoba,” p. 614.

As this dissertation has sought to demonstrate, the (post)colonial body speaks a complicated, often contradictory language that cannot be contained in a single voice or single country, with different goals and desires and protests and homes. The literature of these individuals, in its turn, does the same. Although some writers (including Kim Sōkpōm) have advocated the term “Japanese-language literature” (*Nihongo bungaku*) to describe the so-called minority literature of zainichi Koreans, such a division falls into the danger of replicating the same discursive trap of kokugo versus Nihongo, leaving the monolithic authority of “Japanese” literature (*Nihon bungaku*, or *kokubungaku*) untouched and unharmed.<sup>349</sup> While it is true that zainichi Koreans have been systematically denied the same rights and opportunities granted to those deemed Japanese proper, I would argue that it is not the appropriateness of labels that should be interrogated but the labels themselves. In other words, arguing for or against zainichi Koreans such as Yi Yangji as part of “Japanese” literature still put the burden of representation on the minority writers themselves, whereas those deemed Japanese proper are assumed to already belong to a stable literary canon implicitly centered on the nation. It is therefore not enough to simply bring attention to marginalized voices. Examining the continuities of colonialism not only helps us reevaluate the position of Koreans *in* Japan; it also foregrounds the mutually constitutive relationship between Koreans *and* Japan – whatever and wherever “Japan” may be, and however it is defined.

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<sup>349</sup> Previous chapters have shown how the artificial division between Nihongo and kokugo has a prewar origin, where the former can be said to represent a synchronic understanding of language as a neutral communication tool, and the latter corresponds to a diachronic view in which language becomes the repository of a country’s unique, essentialized history and culture. Yasuda Toshiaki discusses this issue at length in *Kokugo no kindaishi* (previously cited); particularly relevant to this epilogue is Yasuda’s contention that the recent popularity of Nihongo over kokugo (for example, in changing the subject name from kokugo to Nihongo in the school curriculum) can be linked to national policies promoting “international exchange” (*kokusai kōryū*) starting in the 1960s. See *Kokugo no kindaishi*, pp. 232-3.



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## APPENDIX: NAMES

What follows below is a list of the major Korean/zainichi authors and literary critics discussed in this dissertation, written in English alphabetical order. Each entry begins with the McCune-Reischauer romanized name used in the dissertation, followed by the Chinese characters of the name, then alternative romanizations/readings also mentioned in the dissertation, if applicable.

Chang Hyökchu (張赫宙, 1905–1998)

Sino-Japanese reading: Chō Kakuchū

Other names: Noguchi Minoru (野口稔, *sōshi kaimei* name, naturalized name); Noguchi Kakuchū (after 1953)

Ch'oe Chaesō (崔載瑞, 1908–1964)

Sino-Japanese reading: Sai Saizui

Other names: Ishida Kōzō (石田耕造, *sōshi kaimei* name)

Hwang Sunwōn (黃順元, 1915–2000)

Sino-Japanese reading: Kō Jungen

Kim Saryang (金史良, 1914–1950)

Sino-Japanese reading: Kin Shiryō

Kim Sōkpōm (金石範, 1925–)

Sino-Japanese reading: Kin Sekihan

Kim Talsu (金達壽, 1919–1997)

Sino-Japanese reading: Kin Tatsuju

Other names: Kanemitsu Jun / Kim Kwangsun (金光淳, penname), Kim Dalsu (alternative romanization)<sup>350</sup>

Ma Haesong (馬海松, 1905–1966)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ma Kaishō

No Chōnmyōng (盧天命, 1913–1957)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ro Tenmei

Yi Chōngnae (李貞來, ?–?)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ri Teirai

Other names: Kitazawa Teirai (北沢貞來, *sōshi kaimei* name)

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<sup>350</sup> It should be noted that Kim Talsu wrote under a larger number of pennames throughout his career, as did other writers such as Chang Hyökchu (itself a penname); however, listed here are only those pennames immediately relevant to the dissertation.

Yi Kwangsu (李光洙, 1892–1950?)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ri Kōshu

Other names: Kayama Mitsurō (香山光郎, *sōshi kaimei* name), Lee Kwang-su (alternative romanization)

Yi Sang (李箱, 1910–1937)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ri Sō

Yi Sōkhun (李石薰, 1907–?)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ri Sekikun

Other names: Maki Hiroshi (牧洋, *sōshi kaimei* name)

Yi Yangji (李良枝, 1955–1992)

Sino-Japanese reading: Ri Yoshie

Other names: Tanaka Yoshie (naturalized name), Lee Yangji (alternative romanization)