

KIM TAL-SU AND EARLY “ZAINICHI” LITERATURE

BY

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Abstract:

Japan's population of ethnic Koreans comprises the nation's largest ethnic minority and is unique among world minorities for both its origins and current circumstances. Although there exists a limited amount of scholarship which examines the history and politics of this group, the vibrant contributions of resident, or 'Zainichi,' Koreans to Japan's literary community provide an opportunity to see their lives as they themselves see them, and hear their stories as they tell them to each other and to the Japanese around them. The purpose of this study is to analyze the literary contributions of a founding member of the Zainichi literary community, Kim Tal-su, and by providing several short translations of his works, allow the reader to interact, as directly as possible, with early Zainichi literature. The study further places Kim among his contemporaries and postulates his influence on later generations of Zainichi writers. As I examine the development of Korean minority literature I will consider what characterizes the Zainichi experience and how Kim narrates these experiences compared to later generations of authors. Finally, an in depth analysis of the translated works considers the connection of Kim's own life with his literature, as well as the problems faced by resident Koreans in the areas of education and political organization.

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Preface

From among the numerous possible ways to approach the study of Japan's Korean minority, I have chosen to examine the literature of one of the first Koreans to write fiction in Japanese. The stories of Kim Tal-su (1919-1997) artistically capture the intersection of political and personal concerns among the expatriate community of Koreans living in Japan. The three short stories presented below are representative of Kim's early literary career in the immediate aftermath of the Pacific War. Each story contains autobiographical elements and explores psychological conflicts connected to resident Korean circumstances. The two stories that describe the closing of Korean ethnic schools, "Big Barrel Granny" and "A Chapter from the Other Night" highlight the active political role of Kim's writings.

Kim Tal-su wrote that his impetus to write fiction was a desire to inform the Japanese about Koreans. My goal in presenting translations of Kim's stories is also to broaden access to specific information about Zainichi culture. For this reason, I encourage the reader to first explore the texts before continuing on to my own analysis in the second half of the work.

In writing Korean words I have favored the McCune-Reischauer romanization system and the Revised Hepburn system for Japanese. In both languages names are presented in their original style with the family name preceding the personal name. Unless otherwise noted all translations within the text are my own.

I would like to thank the countless people who helped make this project a success including Elaine Gerbert, Maggie Childs, and Kyoim Yun. I am grateful for

the support of my family, and also for the constant kindness and advice of my fellow Japanese teaching assistants at the University of Kansas.

Memories of Grandmother
Kim Tal-su

I often think of home.

Then when I remember my grandmother, I can't help but feel pain in my heart.

My poor grandmother...

My family had eventually gone bankrupt, and after closing up our property, crossed over to Japan, but my grandmother, my elder brother who died, and I were left in the village at home. It was because my grandmother said that no matter what she wanted her bones buried in Korean soil. Every month we received twenty or twenty-five yen sent from Japan and we were getting by on that. Sooner or later we would eventually have to leave grandmother alone and follow our parents by crossing over to Japan.

Before long my grandmother and I lost my elder brother. Even among our siblings he had been small and his color was dark. Then we received a telegram from Japan which said that my father had died. It was as though all of my grandmother's hair turned white at once. I remember tears gathering every day in her wrinkled eyes. But unhappiness continued for my grandmother. After a while my father's remains came back home to be buried in Sonsan (先山). Although his remains had been entrusted to someone else, at about the same time my uncle, who like my own family had been in Tokyo earning money, came back briefly to his own hometown. Not long after my father's funeral was over he appeared.

Although it was unusual to see his figure wearing the slippers with our family crest stitched in, strangely it didn't agree with me. My uncle had come at the request

of my mother to take me with him. He said that for the moment I would go with him to his home, and then when he went back to Tokyo he would take me along. I, at ten years old, must have wanted to go to Japan where my mother was. I don't remember it clearly but the next day I went with my uncle so I must have agreed to it. My poor grandmother... It would have been impossible for her to say to my mother that she wasn't going to hand me over. She had lost her only son while he was still young (my father was 37 at the time), and then seen one of her own grandchildren die right before her eyes; on top of that now she had to endure the pain of loneliness by herself.

The next day I carried my bundle on my back and departed with my uncle. His hometown was in a place about twelve or thirteen miles from there. I turned to my grandmother who was seeing us off, turned to her again, and then got on the train. As the train began to move she collapsed where she had been standing and beat the ground as she burst out crying. I quickly drew my head in from the train window, I was trying not to let my uncle, seated in front of me, see the tears in my eyes.

That was the first train ride of my life. It wasn't until evening that we reached my uncle's house. There were children swarming about, the room had grass beds laid out and a Korean-style floor heater, the smell of urine filled the room and struck my nose. My fat aunt, with a child covered in boils sitting on her knee, first accepted my bow of greeting, then set to scolding my 'good-for-nothing' uncle. She said 'We still don't know when you are going to go to Japan, so what are you thinking bringing such a big boy here? Where do we have the rice to feed this kid? He looks like he has the appetite of a bull!' Although we had gone bankrupt, my family had dispersed, and

we were meeting with unhappy circumstances, that night was the first time I had ever fallen into someone else's care that way. For me, being born and raised in a rich home with the vestiges of old wealth, this was a severe blow to the ego. While spending the night awake in a corner of the urine-smelling room I decided firmly that tomorrow I would find some way to go back to my grandmother. Even if I had to hitchhike I would find some way to go...

Luckily the next morning my uncle's family went to meet someone at the station (or maybe it was to see someone off). The child covered in boils was put on my back and I was told to come along. For some reason I remember this being eight o'clock in the morning. Maybe I had been told that eight o'clock was when the train arrived, or maybe departed. I said that I was going to use the restroom at the station (it was the same station I had arrived at last night) and after smoothly sliding the child off of my back and passing him to my aunt I ran off. At the time my thought was: If I just follow along the tracks of the train I came in on, eventually I should emerge somewhere I know.

I walked. I didn't get hungry. All I wanted was to see my grandmother again. For me, having never gone anywhere far away in my whole life, the looks of people just passing by were a little frightening. I walked. If I stuck to the road it seemed I would lose sight of the train tracks, so all day long I fearfully walked alongside the tracks and was angrily yelled at by the construction workers.

Finally I realized that I had arrived somewhere I recognized; it was the entrance to Masan 馬山 city. My spirits lifted. I also knew that from Masan it was

only two miles to the village where my house was. I passed by the school my brother had graduated from, then I arrived at the entrance to my village exactly as the sun had begun to sink away behind the mountains in the west. Then, on the road beneath a row of poplar trees, shone down on by the sinking evening sun, a single old woman appeared, she was shading her eyes with her hand and looking my way. It looked like she was my grandmother. She *was* my grandmother! I ran so hard that I couldn't breathe. She ran too, stumbling and falling over midway.

“Harume! (Grandma!)”

“Tal-su!”

We hugged each other there on the road, and then cried.

That day, my grandmother said she knew somehow that I would come home. She had believed it without a doubt and, naturally had prepared dinner for two and then gone out to meet me. I still think about this. How could my grandmother so naturally believe that that I would come home, and then come out to meet me? I still can't explain this clearly even to myself. And then, what would my grandmother have done if I hadn't come home that day? Would she have gone out every day like that, standing in the road in the evening sun, shading her eyes with her hand and staring out in the direction I might be coming home from?

However, two years after that, my other elder brother came to get me and we did end up leaving grandmother alone and crossing to Japan. Then I became absorbed in my daily life and didn't even know that she had eventually died. My grandmother

had been taken in by another aunt and finished her life there. Perhaps after I left she did spend a few days waiting for me like that after all? That I don't know.

Big Barrel Granny
Kim Tal-su

Forward:

This is a *reportage* style story. Except for a few people for whom I thought it might cause trouble, the characters appearing here, starting with myself, are real people and these are their real names. Further, the incident described is factual. I have no intention of writing fiction other than where it is technically unavoidable. There is a phrase: “Truth is stranger than fiction,” but in order to see just how much ‘stranger’ I ask you to read on.

Part One

October 19th was a Wednesday, it was raining.

With my dead wife’s younger brother, Won Shik, I got off the train at Jūjo station where a Korean middle school was set up as an annex of the Tokyo New Korean School System’s high school. I didn’t have an umbrella, and since the rain was especially violent that morning, when I left my house at Yokosuka I had gone out of my way to stop by a general store in the neighborhood and buy a three hundred yen bamboo umbrella for Won Shik (who also didn’t have one) and myself. Won Shik was holding it and a folded rucksack in his other hand. In the bag I was carrying, aside from lecture notes and textbooks, there was a pile of folded rucksacks I had borrowed from my elder brother.

I was trying to start a bookstore in the former *Chōren*’s downtown Yokosuka office, which was empty now that it had been disbanded. The reason I had Won Shik

with me, and was carrying the rucksacks, was in order to transport books from publishers in Tokyo.

Aside from teaching every Wednesday as a Japanese lecturer at a Tokyo High School, I had been acting as the assistant manager of the disbanded *Chōren*'s Department of Education, and now, having no set occupation, I had to support myself entirely on the small amount of money I received as royalties of my work as a journalist in Japan. However, strangely enough, even though it had nothing to do with the dissolution of the *Chōren*, at about the same time the economic crisis that had begun with a general decline in purchasing power reached the publishing world and non-payment of royalties and writing fees by every publishing and magazine corporation became a fact of life that year. Even fairly large publishing and magazine companies, where a thousand yen should have been a small amount, were apparently unable to come up with it and the small writing fees and royalties that I was unable to collect from two or three of these places were a fact of life as well. The magazine company which had commissioned a new manuscript from me had eliminated it from the issue in which it was supposed to be published.-

I was in trouble. It wasn't just me that was in trouble; trouble was a fact of life that year; the people around me were in trouble, and especially my friends who had until now been connected to the *Chōren* were even deeper in trouble. One of those people was Kim Jongkun, who until then had been the committee chair of the *Chōren*'s Yokosuka branch. Of course the rations of food for his family to eat were one thing, but sometimes he was so short of money he couldn't even afford a pack of

cigarettes and as a result he suffered the embarrassment of having to run around trying to borrow five or ten yen just for train or bus fare.

That's when the idea of opening a bookstore came to me. This wasn't the first time I had thought of opening a bookstore. Actually I had been talking to Kim Jongkun since long before about partitioning part of the *Chōren* chapter office's earthen floor and turning it into a bookstore. He was renting the entire *Chōren* downtown chapter building, which was close to my house, even closer to my brother's house, and also near the Kyōhama express bus's Yokosuka Hori-no-uchi garage. The reason we had been unable to do it until then was because I, the advocate of the plan, was occupied with my direct work at the *Chōren*.

We settled things quickly. Of the five-mat wide, two-and-a-half-mat deep room, the bookstore was to occupy the width of only two mats, so I walled up the division with plywood and made four-level bookshelves on either side facing the door. The remodeling fee came to 6,700 yen. Kim Jongkun and I persuaded my brother, who was a little better off than either of us, to put up the money for this. As for actually running the store, Koyama Hisako, the accountant with whom I had formerly worked when acting as editor of the journal "Democratic Korea" in Yokosuka, and with whom I still keep in touch today, agreed to come starting with tomorrow's opening. I'm sure she didn't have a clue that it would go on for five days.

Then, since I had insisted on it, one side of the shelves was to be for used books. Even though I was pretty bad off at this point, it took a significant amount of determination for me to put up my own library for this. My books filled most of the

shelves. The other side was to be filled with new editions. I put together books from about ten publishers who were willing to trust me, along with magazines, which I intended to borrow as a direct trade. In the event that even this didn't fill the shelves I planned to use my friends who were literary critics and authors to borrow from publishers who didn't know me, but were willing to trust them. Things went according to plan.

Actually today the critic *Takanishi Hiroshi*¹, who lived in Yokohama, was to walk with me to his publisher in Kanda. At two o'clock in the afternoon we had a meeting at the branch office of the New Japan Literary Association in Suidobashi. The reason we had made the meeting at two o'clock was because I made Won Shik wait until a little after one (at this school lunch started at one) when I had finished my lectures for the first and second year third classes, so that we could head to Suidobashi.

When we came out of the station a second-year male student named An gave me a silent bow as he stood soaking in the rain. When I looked it wasn't just An, I could see the faces of one or two more first and second-year students in the area. When they recognized me they came over to greet us.

“What is it you guys? Isn't this the middle of class? What are you doing here?” As an instructor I spoke in a somewhat reproachful tone. They were students who were passionately trying to learn and would whisper “ssh” to one another if there

¹ The critic's name appears in *katakana*, likely indicating that this name has been changed to avoid trouble that could follow association with Kim Tal-su or the communist publication in which this story was printed. I have chosen to use italics to imitate the effect of the *katakana* in the original text.

was chatter during class, but they were all approaching twenty and were bound to have a naughty side as well. Even so, I hadn't yet finished my second semester teaching at this school and I was surprised at what devoted faces the students showed in class. As of yet I hadn't directly observed the students making mischief. The textbooks we used were the same those prescribed by the Japanese New High School System for each year, along with works of literature selected by me. When class ended I sometimes even found myself annoyed by their endless questions.

“Yes, it's class-time, but right now we are keeping watch.”

I couldn't read An's expression.

“Keeping watch? What are you keeping watch over?”

I turned around and looked about the area.

“Ah, Sensei, you haven't heard yet? We're being disbanded again, er, closed. They say they are going to close the school and they say armed police are going to be mobilized and the property is going to be repossessed and apparently a special edition of the paper has already come out.” A student stepped out from behind An and spoke quickly; I didn't know his name because I don't often take attendance, but I knew his face well.

“...”

I was quiet. Then I suddenly sensed that my expression had hardened; I was unconsciously staring at the students in shock. Drenched in the rain, the students stared at the ground.

Embarrassed, I abruptly passed the handle of the umbrella to Won Shik and set off walking toward the school at a furious pace.

I walked like that for a while, then I had a second thought and turned around to wait for Won Shik. Won Shik was using the umbrella to shield himself and following after me at a short jog. ‘Don’t panic, calm down. I have to calm down and cool off,’ I thought. I took the umbrella handle from Won Shik and walked on. The school was about a five minute walk from the station.

It had been about one month since the dissolution of the *Chōren*. We had thought that as a continuation of that the school might be closed. But we hadn’t thought that it would happen this quickly, that it would become reality like this. The Head of the Ministry of Justice, Uchida Junkichi, who forced the *Chōren* to disband, had stated that he would not close the schools. Maybe we had actually taken him at his word.

The station wasn’t the only place being guarded by the high school students. At key points along the road they were standing without even putting up their umbrellas. With blank expressions they silently bowed to me. With a blank expression on my own face I returned their greeting.

The Tokyo Korean middle school and high school buildings were renovated army gunpowder storehouses, and were surrounded by a high concrete fence. The gates were made of wood, but they were as tall as the fence and were equally sturdy. Today they were firmly shut. At some point they had already been covered with slogans like: “Absolutely Opposed to the Oppression of Ethnic Education” or

“Absolutely Opposed to the Closing of Korean Schools.” Although the slogans were simply set phrases, today, unlike the day of the *Chōren*’s dissolution, they looked like the angry faces of people who were going to keep the armed police from taking even one step inside no matter what happened. Won Shik and I went in through a small hatch in the huge door while looking to the side at the numerous vehicles sent by the newspapers that had already arrived. Won Shik only wonderingly looked at my expression. Speaking to the eager reporters gathered at the gate was the history lecturer Rim Wonchol, whose soft smile was no different than usual. Surrounding him were four or five Korean students, and I heard a voice say, “Don’t come in *Yomiuri*²!”

The inside of the school was surprisingly quiet. As I opened the door to the staff room I somehow knew what the atmosphere was going to be like inside. It would probably be a simple sinking feeling. I knew because I had been in the *Chōren*’s central division when it was disbanded.

And that was exactly how it was. In the neighboring director’s office there were hurried voices, but the staff room was so silent that it was eerie.

When he saw my face, the music teacher Kim Gyonjae grinned at me quietly, showing his white teeth.

“So they’ve finally come.”

I put my hand on Kim Gyonjae’s shoulder and looked around. The music teacher seemed forlorn as he looked down at the ground, while the other teachers and

² The *Yomiuri Shimbun* is one of Japan’s largest and oldest newspapers

lecturers absent-mindedly tapped pencils on their desks or stood by the windows, silently staring out at the rain as it fell on the exercise grounds or the nearby grove of trees. Occasionally the stillness was broken by a student running frantically in or out. When the intelligentsia are faced with something like this they seem almost completely powerless. It seemed they were leaving the students to handle things.

I started to worry about the elementary school in Yokosuka and the branch schools in Kanagawa prefecture. At this time an incident was already taking place in Kanagawa that I would not find out about until the next day.

Suddenly the school bell rang out according to its normal schedule. When I looked at the clock it was the end of second period. Even though the bell was on schedule, today it felt more like an alarm clock, forcing us to wake up.

The policy of the director's office and the staff room was to continue classes as normal. At the middle school it looked as if classes were proceeding in several rooms, and two or three instructors were coming back with textbooks and boxes of chalk in their hands, cutting across the exercise grounds in the rain. Although there weren't very many of them, some of the male students came following after them and started playing football in the rain. It seemed to me that the students of this school were especially fond of exercise.

There was one thing I had been looking at since I sat down. It was the face of the old secretary who was sitting, absolutely motionless, in one of the staff seats by the opposite window. The old woman was lightly patting her face and cheeks, and her vacant eyes had been constantly fixed two or three feet in front of her. Then I realized

that she hadn't served any tea that day. The room she normally occupied at the side of the director's office had been taken over by reporters, but seeing the out-of-place old woman sitting in the staff room seemed a little strange, and her frozen expression affected me even more strongly. 'Ah, I see,' I thought. If this school is going to be closed, then today this old woman will be chased out of it. I had seen it before with the old pair of secretaries at the closing of the *Chōren*; even though they were Japanese it didn't make it any easier on them. When the bell rang for the start of third period word came from the principal and director's office: "This is disruptive to the students so if all teachers would please continue classes as normal!" Aside from three or four of the middle-school teachers who stood up, chalk boxes in hand, the majority of people remained seated. Their expressions said, "It's bound to be disruptive." I was also sitting.

The groups of two or three, five or six students who were milling around the staff room as though to ask about the situation left. There was nowhere to go from here. The students were out for blood. They knew all too well. No one needed to teach them about the rebirth of 'Japanese Fascism' in the four years since August 15.³ They knew instinctively that the skin they wore made them the children of an oppressed people. At this school, with the middle school and high school combined, there were over one thousand students, and according to the information spreading around, two thousand armed officers were going to attack. A collision. With over one thousand hot-blooded students behind the school it seemed inevitable. Then the

³ August 15, 1945 was the day the Emperor broadcast his surrender over the radio, commonly referenced in Kim's literature as "8.15," the day of Korean liberation.

gunshots. The songs of resistance. I held onto the chilling mental image as I sat there and waited.

But then the emergency dissipated. In a moment a ‘notice’ was brought to us from the Tokyo City Hall. It was a memorandum for reorganizing the school in order to ‘eliminate *Chōren* influences’ and stated that ‘teachers who were members of the *Chōren* cannot exceed one fourth of the total staff.’ The teachers, or rather *Zainichi*⁴ Koreans capable of teaching had almost all been members of the *Chōren*, so in reality it was a change of strategy but with essentially the same goal: to oppress ethnic education. However, there was a two week deadline attached to the order, so it seemed like, at least for today, the armed officers weren’t going to be mobilized to close the school.

The movements of *Zainichi* Koreans for ethnic education had been critiqued extremely negatively. It was understandable for something like this to happen to elementary schools in the country, yet, no matter how black their hands were, they still hesitated to move against a school of over one thousand middle school and high school students. Their change of strategy, for the moment at least, seemed to have averted the violent collision I had coldly imagined in my heart. If they did come they were sure to provoke the hot-blooded young students. Who could guarantee that even one of these slim and healthy youths wouldn’t get caught up in their provocation? I felt relieved for now.---

⁴ Koreans residing in Japan

I stayed until close to three to confirm that they weren't coming. It wasn't that I didn't feel anxiety pulling at my heart, but, as if to chase away this anxiety, I hurried out the school gate to meet *Nakanishi Hiroshi* in Suidobashi. In the end I hadn't even taught an hour of class.

As planned I met the critic *Nakanishi Hiroshi* in Suidobashi at the branch office of the New Japan Literary Association, and then, also according to plan, we walked around together to two or three publishing companies in Kanda borrowing books. Won Shik and I stuffed the books into the rucksacks on our backs and *Nakanishi Hiroshi* carried one bag in his hands for us. It was already dark when we safely boarded a homebound train on the Yokosuka line's platform, but at exactly this same time we should have been worried about our mothers in Yokosuka. As the train neared Yokohama, *Nakanishi Hiroshi* asked if I wouldn't care to get off there.

Although *I* needed the bookstore to make ends meet, *he* was looking like a peddler with wares on his back for my sake. Perhaps out of pity at the sight I said we should go by the bar 'Takahashi' for a while. Sending Won Shik on ahead, I got off the train at Yokohama, rucksack still on my back, along with *Nakanishi*. Of course, it wasn't that I didn't feel worried about the schools in Yokosuka, but at the heart of my concern I was assuming that the case in Kanagawa would be the same as in Tokyo; in other words, I thought that, like the school in Tokyo, they had received a 'notice of restructuring.'

Having whiled away my time at 'Takahashi,' I spent the night in *Nakanishi's* study and headed out early in the morning, going directly to the store in Kutsunouchi

for the day's grand opening. The bookshelves were only seventy percent set up. I set down the rucksack I had brought on my back and started organizing the books that Won Shik had hastily shoved onto the shelves the night before.

"Good morning." Koyama Hisako arrived and after her came Won Shik.

"Morning. Nice weather isn't it? Today is an ideal day for a grand opening." It was an extremely clear day. While saying this I had Won Shik give me a hand lining things up on the shelves. Then, suddenly, Won Shik said as though remembering something:

"Oh, that's right, you still don't know do you? Grandma Ootsu got kicked around by the police at the school last night and apparently she's hurt pretty badly."

Grandma Ootsu was my mother.

Part Two

"What? ..."

For a moment I stared at Won Shik's face in a daze.

Wearing Western clothes and a small apron, Koyama Hisako, who was busy sweeping around him, also stopped and looked at Won Shik.

"Yesterday you know, the police came to close the school, and then... after that big sis' from Haruhi town took her to the doctor she said..."

Still a child, Won Shik, who this year had finished the New System Middle School, quickly stammered and looked at the floor as if he himself had done something wrong. I hadn't heard a word of this until just then.

I understood. I had just opened the rucksack I had brought and was taking out the first book, but I threw it down and went flying outside.

I was conscious of a hot burning inside. A wild anger tore at the pit of my stomach. Looking down I fumed as I walked.

For now as I walked toward my house, where my mother was, I felt the pressure of the circumstances placed on my head. It was a complicated consciousness. When I sorted it out here is what I got: one thing was first, 'so now they've come.' It was the consciousness of the 'incident.' Although we may have hated it we were required to fight. The closing of the schools, the denial of ethnic education, for us right now this incident had profound repercussions. And it required a violent struggle. Moreover, call it the dissolution of the *Chōren*, call it the closing of the schools, although the content was complicated and slightly different, these incidents told the story of fascism's clear revival. And thus we had to put our lives on the line to fight against the rebirth of Japanese fascism. There was no need to ask the reason.

Since the dissolution of the *Chōren*, although I was but one Korean author living in a small city in Japan, I could not stay silent and watch things like this happen. I knew well that the people who had no choice but to live in Japan were all people deserving of love. These people, including myself, were still looked down on and persecuted. I had to fight for these people--- and for myself.

But I was confused. The second thing that came to my mind: I was confused as to how to handle the insult to my mother and myself when they had kicked my

elderly mother ‘around’ with their muddy boots (Won Shik’s innocent child-like use of the word ‘around’ made me feel even more anger).

“How could my mother go to such a dangerous place?” I thought. But I immediately erased this idea. This wasn’t the fault of the people who went there, but of the people who forced them to go. There were people who made even someone like my elderly mother go out there, and the crime lay with them.

I thought about taking my mother to the police. Then I would find the muddy boots that had kicked my mother and delivered this highest of insults. I closed my lips tightly. I thought ‘even if we end up stabbing each other this insult must be avenged!’ When I thought about what I had to do now, stabbing one or two of them seemed like a serious waste. But I could do it, I was definitely going to do it, I accepted this clearly, but for now I was in such a state of anger I couldn’t do anything at all. I pulled open the door to my house with a violent motion.

Knowing what had happened, I was somewhat surprised to see my mother awake and sitting up in the four and a half mat room connected to the kitchen. Then I was relieved. I had been overcome with anger, and that anger drove me over there. At some point I had started to imagine her critically wounded and sleeping in bed.

But then I saw an adhesive plaster on the side of her forehead, and a long cut mark on her right cheek.

“Oh, have you come home? You must eat. I thought you probably hadn’t had breakfast yet so I got some ready for you.”

She spoke matter-of-factly and then listlessly moved to get out the tray. Her voice was tired.

When I went to Tokyo I often stayed away for a night or two, so this was all completely fine. There was extra rice from the rations. My mother seemed happy that she didn't usually have to worry about cooking for me. When I didn't come home for four or five days she would leave me a single serving of cold rice and then go to my brother or sister's place to eat, going for many days without having to cook.

So why had she prepared warm rice for me that morning?

Unable to speak because of the feeling in my chest, I quietly sat down in front of the table. Then I looked at the bandaged face of my mother.

Overcome by a sudden impulse I ran from the table and held my mother, looking at her bandaged forehead and wounded cheek. On her cheek there was still the fresh blue mark of a bruise, blood had dried around the long cut, and a thin scab was forming.

"It's alright, it's alright. I'm fine," my mother spoke on the verge of tears.

"What happened right here? Were you hit with a nightstick? Is it true that you were kicked? Where were you kicked? Surely they didn't kick you here in the face did they?" for the first time since coming into the house I interrupted her and spoke violently.

"No, that's not it. In the dark they pushed me and knocked me over."

"By dark you mean it was at night?"

“Yes, once night fell they suddenly came – bam! It was awful. You know, grandma Lee from the *Doyajikoruchaku*⁵ *buraku* and I were standing right out front. It was almost like an action scene starring wrinkled old women.”

My mother wiped the tears from her eyes and laughed as she spoke. We Koreans are always mixing tears and laughter. But I could not laugh.

“And then how did you get kicked? Where did they kick you?”

I spoke in an even more violent tone. Somewhere in my mind I thought being pushed and knocked over is fine, but I just didn’t want her to be ‘kicked.’ I felt as if I were losing my grip on things. I simply couldn’t accept that this insult been done to my mother. If it was so then in addition to the struggle we were already required to bear, my own personal feelings would be mixed in and it would be hard for me to deal with.

“Whether I was kicked or not, I heard that Grandma Lee from *Doyajikoruchaku* was kicked down by them, but it was pitch black so after I was knocked over I had no idea what was going on. Anyway, whatever happened, I can’t stand up very well on this part of my hips. When I stand I get a shooting pain...”
Mother said this and pointed at the area of her left hip.

“Your brother was there too. Your brother and Mr. Yun and Mr. Kim, and the Mr. Kim from Seoul was there as well; we had talked to them and everyone was going home. It had gotten dark, so just when we all thought we would go home for

⁵ 豚の谷 ‘Valley of pigs’ appears with a phonetic guide indicating the reading, “*Doyajikoruchaku*” a neighborhood which appears in other stories by Kim Tal-su. It was given this name because the extremely poor occupants raise pigs for income.

the day and were heading out of the building, that's when they gathered into a pitch black mass and came at us – bam! In the dark the children were screaming and crying for their desks not to be taken away, and I, well, I've been living a long sixty years and I've never seen anything like what happened last night.”

Mr. Yun was Yun Sokbok. And Mr. Kim, the one from Seoul (京城= his home town) was Kim Jongkun. The elder one was Kim Chanhan. My brother was Kim Sonsu. These people were all leaders of the Korean movements in Yokosuka.

When these people would walk together on the streets the ‘public safety officers’ at the police station (the ‘special agents’⁶ of wartime had suddenly reappeared, strengthened and renamed as part of the brisk movements of democracy) would point at them from behind and say, “There go the noisy Koreans from Yokosuka.” When I heard that they had all gathered there last night it was easy for me to imagine what the fight had been like. Now I too had to go and meet up with those people immediately.

But before that I had to deal with the insult done to me, the insult they did to me when they kicked my mother with their dirty boots. In order to face our racial battle, first I had to be sure of my own personal rage, and then I could throw off the weight from my shoulders before having to fight.

“I see. – So the kick was, here? You were kicked here in the hip?”

“Your brother asked me that too, but in the pitch black I was knocked over, so I might have bumped up against one of the children's desks.”

⁶ Tokkō. See note number 34.

What my mother said was vague.

I was happy that it was vague.

I felt a sense of relief. I decided not to ask my mother these things. Then I was taken over by the need to run to the school in Ootaki town as quickly as possible.

“I see. Good. That’s good,” I said as I gulped down my breakfast.

My mother understood well about our people’s independence and about ethnic education. However, this was the first time she had taken it upon herself to protect them, and aggressively fight for these things.

When I thought about this I felt a heartwarming sensation welling up inside as I ate my rice. Then, unconsciously, tears came to my eyes.

“Now son, with the school boarded up like this, what exactly are we supposed to do? The *Chōren*’s gone, and now even the school; the old and withered like me can only wait for our dying day, but you – this is trouble for you,” my mother said looking at me with eyes filled with deep pity.

Whether she realized it or not, my mother had, with those words, simply summed up the fate of us Koreans from the past to the present.

“It’s alright. We’ll get by. Somehow.” In the word ‘somehow’ I put all of my determination for the battle which lay ahead. I gripped the chopsticks in my hand firmly.

“Are you going to go to the school now?”

“Yes I am.”

“*Aigo*, rations have just been issued, what shall we do?”

My mother was carried away by her usual worries.

If my mother had lived with my brother and her daughter-in-law she could have washed her hands with cold water and been spared the labor of cooking, but since my wife died she stayed at my place and labored on.

“It’s alright. We’ll get by somehow,” I repeated.

“There are people worse off than us. I’m still getting thirty or forty thousand yen sent from publishers in Tokyo, compared to Gong Chae and the others I’m actually a rich man.”

“You’re always saying that...”

As always my mother had no choice but to laugh.

“Just have a little more patience. Today the bookstore finally opened and if we can sell just one book it will be of use to us right away.”

I finished my breakfast and stood up quickly,

“The school? I want to go see it myself but this hip is hurting me...”

“No Mom, you’re fine right here today. Just stay here and sleep. Please come the next time.”

I went by the bookstore I had opened that morning, ‘Kutsu-no-uchi Books,’ and asked Koyama Hisako to handle the rest of the day’s business, then I immediately got on a bus and headed for the school.

After I got off the bus at Hirasaka I found a red flag attached to a telegraph pole. I stopped and read it.

“Red Flag News Flash

Armed Officers: 400

Raid on a Korean School.

Wielding night sticks the officers repossessed a school in Ootaki town, causing three women severe wounds with the night sticks, and even hitting screaming children; on the night of the 19th at eight o'clock they sealed the classrooms.”

I moved on.

The Yokosuka Korean school was behind city hall but when I passed in front of the police station there were several armed officers standing pompously at the gate, and some in plainclothes coming and going from city hall. Some were peeking at me, but when they saw me they quickly ducked back inside the city building. Watching them in the corner of my eye I walked on.

(End of chapter one.)

A Chapter from the Other Night
Kim Tal-su

It was past noon when we got the message, but people were crowding into the school continuously until night. It was a clear day --- especially because of the landing of the new naval forces, a foreign air was circulating in the town; at a glance the scene must have appeared odd, including the housewives clad in white whose appearance left something to be desired. The students and teachers, alongside their parents and guardians had holed themselves up in the school's classrooms and were set on protecting it. At the same time, apparently to support the local police, we heard that trucks of armed officers with their helmets at the ready were seen entering the police station. People looked at each other wordlessly and waited, quietly holding their breaths. What were they waiting for? Why did they have to wait so long!?

“If they opened fire everyone was ready to die right there on the spot. But we weren't going to go quietly!” said Park Chongil.

While he may have been exaggerating, it was probably the truth after all.

Dusk fell. Once the thin beams of western sunlight which shot through the classroom windows had completely disappeared, a prefectural official accompanied by four or five high level officers approached with official orders and a file containing the government ordinance in his hands. Tongsun's elder brother, An Tuksun, and Han Wondo, the former chapter head of the *Chōren* were chosen to negotiate, and after several aggressive exchanges:

“It’s already gotten late, why don’t we speak again tomorrow and come up with something both sides can accept? Then we will quietly abide by whatever results from that discussion.” Accepting this statement from us, they withdrew.

As we formed a negotiation committee for the next day it got dark. Because it seemed the school was safe for the night everyone decided to go home. As the housewives sighed “*Aigo...*” people filtered out of the classrooms they had crowded themselves into. Just then the trucks came with an earsplitting siren and like a pitch black mountain, waves of armed officers attacked.

Those who had left the classrooms were caught by their collars and thrown outside. The students still in the classrooms cried out all at once and clung to the desks with their mothers, but like dogs or cats they were thrown outside, desks and all. Twisted arms and broken kneecaps made the cries of the children and their mothers grow ever louder.

The school had been attacked in darkness and now both inside and out there raged a chaotic battle of pushing and pulling. In the end, everyone was running for their lives, shouting their individual oaths of protest or hate, or even cocking their heads to one side and dancing to mock the police, but their heads were then pounded by a black whirlpool of nightsticks, or they were punched in the stomach and kicked. There was no choice but to retreat.

While all this was happening, at some point officers from the back had nailed up a board with ten characters on it across the windows and the entrance to the school.

The children facing the backs of these officers screamed and tried to jump on top of them but fell on their backs and were pushed aside.

“---You saw it when they disbanded the *Chōren* right? It was the same board they put up then. There were too many officers. Just too many.”

Saying this was 22 year-old Chongil; his lips were trembling and his eyes filled with tears. Listening was 30 year-old An Tuksun who had fallen into a deep depression. It was a strange feeling, something like hopelessness. Chongil said that there were too many police, but... <for them *not* to be too many, what would that have been like? Is there ever a time when there aren't *too many* of them?>

Tongsun found out about this incident, which occurred simultaneously across the entire country, when he saw it in the paper. Although a special edition had been published, he didn't look at it until late the next night. He was in bed at the home of a Japanese friend who lived in Tokyo. Afterwards he couldn't sleep a wink and spent the whole night staring at the ceiling. The next morning he turned down the breakfast offered by his friend and headed home. But, after he got off at the bus terminal, he immediately got on a bus running back in the opposite direction with the housewives headed for *H-buraku*⁷ and had to hear from them about the ordeal in vivid detail.

He took the books in his rucksack and the ones he was carrying wrapped up in cloth to the store. Actually, he put them down on the earthen floor of Yi Soryong's house which was formerly the *Chōren*'s H division office, and today was finally set to open as a bookstore. Then he hurried back to his own house to eat breakfast. His

⁷ *Buraku* 部落 refers in this case to a Korean neighborhood or 'slum.'

mother wasn't home, but there was fresh rice that had been cooked the night before in a pot that appeared to be for him. After setting up a tray that was leaning against the wall, he starting eating the rice with pickled vegetables. That's when Park Chongil came to meet him, saying that it was already the second time he had come by there that day. As soon as something happened here in Y-city he was there in a flash. Not just to An Tongsun's place either.

“So exactly how many police were there? I'm going to head over there as soon as I'm done eating.”

Chongil was standing in the doorway. As always he had the frayed canvas bag from his elementary school days hanging off his shoulder (even now there was a Japanese translation of Mao Zedong inside). Tongsun had heard that he was unwilling to clean himself up, and now he turned his eyes away from Chongil's shabby appearance.

“Well, you know *your brother* will get angry if the numbers aren't correct, - so I don't know if I can say for certain, but there are some people saying four hundred and some saying five hundred, and we know for sure it was over 450.”

Chongil said he was about to go, but when he heard An Tongsun speak, his expression changed and revealing a row of white teeth he said,

“Well, I'm going to go check on someone else, so please come as soon as you can.”

“Right”

As Tongsun answered with a nod, Chongil turned around and limped away on one leg.

“Hey, what happened to your leg?” Tongsun called out.

“The evening’s festivities, hahaha.”

Park Chongil turned around and smiled in the morning sun.

“_“

The Y City Korean elementary school was located off one of the main streets for the naval headquarters. In front of a small park, if you go in through the side of the city hall building, you’ll run into S elementary school, but the Korean school is to the left, a low tin-roofed barracks set up in the open space on the shore. It had originally been a dormitory for conscripted sailors. After the war the Ministry of Finance sold it off to a chapter of the *Chōren*, they used the cafeteria in the back as an office, and remodeled the long section (which ran lengthwise from the right of the entrance) to use as a school.

In order to do his work in the *Chōren* central publishing office An Tongsun had to commute to Tokyo, and to build this school he himself had done quite a bit of running around. In the meantime the world changed rapidly. Y City had always been known as a naval port, and its economy had always relied on the navy, thus at first it looked especially odd to have a new navy in town, but now everyone was completely

accustomed to it. Tall sailors roaming around the town, souvenir shops, and young women called ‘panpan⁸’ in bright clothes were common sights.

Even now as Tongsun rode on the bus traveling through the center of the city he saw the restaurant Chidori. It had originally been a restaurant reserved for naval officers and had continued to prosper even throughout the war. After the war it closed its doors and was quiet for a short while but one day it suddenly reopened. Although the skin color and clothing of the customers had changed, it was not only still relying on the navy for prosperity, but there was lumber piled in a neighboring lot and carpenters had begun working on an expansion. The expansion was probably to be a *more modern sort* of cabaret. In the past expensive cars would start pulling in during the afternoon and cart-pullers called ‘rickshaws’ would be milling around. <Ah, it looks like Chidori is *prosperous as always*> Tongsun felt as though he were seeing a very concrete symbol. As *they* become more prosperous *we* are going to be chased off somewhere else. ... Somewhere, that was for sure.

Just by getting closer to the school he felt more and more keenly that yesterday’s incident had actually happened to him. As Tongsun approached he could see the plainclothes officers who were standing in the shadows of the S elementary school gates, and others running here and there, shifting positions along the city hall fence. They were most likely taking pictures and keeping watch over the people gathering there. Tongsun ignored them as he walked by, but he felt anger gradually building up inside. It was ugly. <What an overdone display they’re putting on!>

⁸ prostitutes

Upon setting foot on the school grounds there were no fewer than 120 students clustered here and there in an empty lot abutting the ocean which could hardly be called a 'schoolyard;' everyone was sitting on mats or charcoal bags with their textbooks spread open; the teacher was explaining something passionately, waving her free hand up and down while holding her textbook in the other. Although it was a fine clear day, this might have made the late October wind coming off the ocean feel even colder; in some places there were students sniffing. As An Tongsun passed by, four or five children turned around to look at him, but immediately returned their eyes to their teacher and went back to concentrating on the lesson. At the very least they were *trying* to concentrate on the lesson. Being raised in Japan, Tongsun had also been subject to various types of discrimination and abuse since elementary school, but <When they look back on this, how deeply will this memory cut into them?> ---.

On the right the school's classroom doors were shut, the ten character board was hung and everything was tightly closed. In front of the windows and doors armed officers in black uniforms stood with their guns holstered and their nightsticks held in both hands. At the same time that they kept watch over the closed school they were also keeping watch over the students having class out in the open, or rather, they actually looked more like tourists observing the class. On the other side of the students, in front of the police, comparatively old mothers and grandmothers periodically came and went from a group that was milling around and shouting insults at the guards.

Tongsun also saw his own mother there; she had three grandchildren among the students, the children of his brother An Tuksun. The old woman from the occupied *buraku* had a white bandage on her arm.

“The school that we bought! That we built! We’d rather set it on fire and die with you inside than give it to you! We’ll never give it to you!”

“Why have you always done this to us?! Why do you always bully us?! If my tongue were a thousand feet long, even ten thousand feet long, I’d still want more so I could curse you to hell!”

There was some Japanese mixed in, but because the officers didn’t understand Korean (or perhaps because they *did* understand), some simply stood there with broad smiles looking down at the women, others stared up at the sky and some stood without moving a muscle.

In the back some people were getting into small bouts of pushing and shoving with the police. It wasn’t that they were completely unaware of the pointlessness of saying and doing these things, but they couldn’t help blowing off some steam.

In the back, where the former *Chōren* branch had been located, things were in a miserable state. It was as many as forty days ago that the *Chōren* had been disbanded and afterwards its property repossessed. In case of such a shutdown they had arranged that the *Chōren* half of the property would be secured in the name of the women’s alliance and affiliates of the school; however, now the half in the name of affiliates of the school had been taken, so they reduced to half of the *Chōren* half of the building. To make matters worse, although they were meeting in the part of the

building they had left, the entrance was in the part of the building that had been taken over; since the entrance had been boarded up and guards were standing out front, the only way in was to go around back and climb in through a window.

Tongsun went around to the back. It was right on the seaside so he could see the famous flagship preserved from the Russo-Japanese war, and a small island at the black edges of the offing. There were faces he had known for many years, and those that he was seeing for the first time, all with uneasy expressions, along with many heads wrapped in white bandages. People had probably come to the back to avoid interrupting the students' class. Tongsun greeted everyone and headed for the window that had been left open.

"Oh, he's here! He's here!" said Park Chongil as he stretched in the back of the room. How did he get back here so quickly?

"Oh, you're here, good."

"What happened yesterday?" voices around the room asked.

Tongsun climbed through the window-frame using a mud-covered box set on its side as a step. "Ah, hahaha..."

At the same time he suddenly let out a loud laugh. He wasn't sure what was so funny, but he suddenly just couldn't help holding his stomach and laughing. Then as though spreading from him to everyone else, they all burst out in laughing. For a while it didn't stop, even spreading to the people standing outside, so much so that the police keeping watch looked confused and came around to peek. In the end you could see tears sparkling in people's eyes.

“Just now we were about to pick the negotiation committee,” said his old friend Han Wondo as he put some strips of paper on the table before them and took up a pen. He was speaking in a strangely polite tone, but in that politeness An Tongsun sensed his unease about what was to come.

According to Han Wondo’s explanation, for now they were going to send negotiation committees to the mayor and chief of police demanding that orders to disband the *Chōren* and close the schools be rescinded, and now they were choosing group members. Tongsun also acknowledged that at the very least they had to take action as soon as possible. As a member of the Y City Korean Education Committee, An Tongsun was added to the group going to the mayor.

Mayor’s side = An Tongsun, Chon Chansik, Chong Ungju, Yun Chongha (a woman), Yi Pyonggu, and with them the principal of the elementary school, Hon Tong-gun.

Police Station side = Kim Sang-gyu, An Tuksun, Park Song-gil, Ch’oe Hun, Ryu Chang-gyun.

It was a line up of the employed: a civil construction worker, an out-of-work day laborer, a pig farmer, a junk-seller, and a newly opened fruit-stand operator. In case the first wave of negotiators was arrested, the coordinator for both groups, Han Wondo, would stay behind; he and everyone else not part of the negotiation committees would go out to plead their case and try to firm up some support in the community.

Han Wondo stood up and read the names of the representatives, then he again asked for everyone's approval. After he went through the window frame and sought approval from the group crowding outside, a decision was reached.

An Tongsun and the others divided into their groups and then both left the school as people stood on either side to see them off.

They heard people calling to them here and there and shouting, "We're counting on you!" or "If anything happens hurry and tell us! If it's the mayor or anybody else we'll go in there and take their head!"

"You should all dress warmly before you go," said the vice president of the mother's association, who suddenly stuck her head in and spoke as if it were nothing. She was from *A-buraku* and Tongsun could only remember her nickname, 'Big Barrel Granny.'

There were other old women there who sighed and mumbled, "*Aigo*, really..."

An Tongsun waved to the people on either side and left smiling.

In front of city hall they separated from the group going to the police station. They could see the station across the small park. It was divided into two sections, one painted black during the war and a rear portion painted in elegant sky blue, in an area that had been evacuated.⁹

They walked straight towards it without even looking back. They had holes in the white shirts covering their broad backs. Some wore things which didn't even amount to a workman's clothes. Wearing this wide variety of apparel they all seemed

⁹ During the bombing of Tokyo.

confident. After seeing off his short-tempered elder brother An Tuksun (the people in his group looked much the same), An Tongsun and the others were sucked into the brown city hall building flying the city's flag at the top.

Not long ago they had entered city hall the same way to plead for assistance with educational expenses. The expenditure of educational fees on Zainichi Koreans had been approved by the Diet, and based on the passage of this law people in every region were conducting their own petitions for funds from their local governments. In the Kantō region Korean high schools and middle schools in a northern district of Tokyo took the lead, and then Ibaraki prefecture's Utsumo City and others had even determined the amount of support. Here in Y City they had just been promised the city's 'consideration' (although this word seemed to be little more than a rote reply). And now, whether it had something to do with the request for financial assistance or not, they had suddenly mobilized armed officers to disband the *Chōren* and close their schools.

Tongsun entered city hall, and when he put his foot on the steps leading to the mayor's office on the second floor he was suddenly overcome by a violent loneliness. For a moment he covered his face; then taking the cigarette butt he was holding in his hand he flicked it onto the immaculately swept steps and crushed it with his foot. He also felt a confusion that he couldn't describe. It was a confusion created by a fickle authority. But was that authority actually fickle, or wasn't it? –

As they had feared, they were told the mayor was out so they were to meet with his assistant. An Tongsun and the others were shown into the mayor's receiving

room; then as they stood there waiting, the mayor's assistant, with the head of the board of education and the curriculum coordinator, came out of the mayor's office, where they seemed to have been having a meeting in anticipation of the group's arrival.

The short fat assistant Kimura sat down in a chair facing them, and following him Education Director Ishikawa and Curriculum Coordinator Takano took seats on either side of him, forming a line on their side of the table. An Tongsun and the others sat down on the opposite side of the large table which was covered in a blue cloth. And then for a while both sides were silent. From where Tongsun was sitting he could see the small park through the window over Coordinator Takano's left shoulder, then to the left of that the black portion of the police station and its entrance came into view. It looked like something had happened because small cars carrying MPs in white helmets were busily gathering in the station.

"Mr. Assistant! W-Wha-What exactly will you do for us!" apparently unable to stand the silence, Yi Pyonggu spoke first with a face that seemed about to burst into tears. He was impatient, but even so when he got excited he would develop a violent stutter.

"By 'do for you' I'm guessing you're referring to the school?"

"What do you mean you're 'guessing'?"

"What are we going to do? You all know this has already been..." said Kimura, who stood his short body up and leaned toward them in order to assert his authority as the mayor's assistant.

“What exactly are you saying?” Yun Chongha spoke in a calm and quiet voice. However he wasn’t used to negotiating like this so his voice trembled slightly.

“Please, wait a moment,” The party member Park Chongil and the chicken and pig farmer Chon Ch’ansik put up their hands and stopped the assistant.

“I think you probably understand this already, but just to be on the safe side I’d like to put it on the table: we didn’t come here so that you could tell us to go back to Japanese schools *the-way-things-were-before*.”

“Wha-What?! They could never! Y-you wouldn’t! D-D-Don’t you recognize our ‘independence?!’” Yi Pyonggu suddenly shouted standing halfway up.

“ . . . ”

Kimura was at a loss for words and turned to Ishikawa.

“Please calm down...” Ishikawa turned his long thin face to them, then seeming to notice something over his right shoulder he looked up at the oil portraits of the ten or so previous mayors hanging there.

“C-Cal-Calm down?! Y-Y-You’re the ones w-w-we want to c-c-calm down!! W-Whi-Which of us was it that suddenly sent in armed police and caused a huge s-s-scene!?”

<What happened?> Tongsun was focusing on the other side of the window. When he looked there were some people gathering, but there were also some people coming out swinging long rods that looked like car antennas.

“Well, that much is...”

Facing Kimura, Tongsun casually reprimanded Yi Pyonggu in Korean, then was about to continue in Japanese when Yi Pyonggu continued, “Hey, u-u-using that Korean, th-the-there’s some special agents returned from Korea who are sitting in here you know.”

An Tongsun was in the back and had been absorbed by the action outside the window so he hadn’t noticed when they had come in, or where from, but there were two plainclothes police officers who had brought in round chairs and were sitting in the opposite corner of the room.

<I see, so if they go running out of here it must mean something really big is happening.--- >

“Well then, excuse me,” Tongsun was a little shaken but said, “There is one thing which we would like to ask you directly. How do all of you feel that this has happened, or rather, that you have done this to our school?”

“We, as a city, plan to take full responsibility and deal with it.”

“As we said earlier, that is not what we want to hear. In other words, the problem lies in why you chose to rock the boat. We don’t want you to take your version of ‘responsibility’.”

“No, the responsibility is ours. And we will be taking it.” Kimura insisted. When they had petitioned for educational funding, Director Ishikawa had been present, and Tongsun had heard he was a man of understanding but today it seemed he had become hard-headed.

“Wow, now that’s loyalty,” said Chon Ch’ansik teasingly.

“No, - oh my, we have a problem here, don’t we,” Tongsun laughed aloud.

“In other words, as far as this matter goes, the truth is even if you protest against us, you know that it is useless. We had to come here today for form’s sake so we have but---”

“No, we’ll take their protests. We’ll take their protests and we’ll deal with them,” saying this Kimura suddenly stood up and went off into the mayor’s office.

Just then Ch’oe Hun, who had gone to the police station, came back to see how things were going.

“Good, then let’s have you ‘deal with it!’” said An Tongsun in a loud voice to Kimura’s departing figure. Then he turned to the two who had stood up with Kimura and were now fidgeting: Ishikawa who seemed fine and Takano who was standing there in a daze.

“Excuse me,” and giving them a single bow, they left.

To no one’s surprise, things at the police station had gone essentially the same way. Police Chief Kakuda, along with Public Safety Commissioner Ikami’s plainclothes officers had indeed met them, but no matter what they said he would simply shake his head back and forth saying, “We are acting on orders.”

“That one note bastard!”

An Tongsun and the others had stood up midway through the negotiation, and now they listened to this information from Ch’oe Hun as they returned to the office, but when they got back to the narrow room, which was divided into thirds, Han Wondo and Park Song-gil were violently debating something.

“That’s not it. That’s not how it is,” Han Wondo was saying. What wasn’t it?

“What?! What kind of leader would make a fool out of his own people!?” said Park Song-gil suddenly standing up. The people standing and sitting around them were watching in a daze.

Park Song-gil was a currently unemployed laborer (whenever he was lucky enough to land some work he always found himself out of work again right away), but he and Tongsun were on intimate terms so he knew him to be completely frank, and according to his brother, Tuksun, he was a man who ‘understands humor.’ When Tongsun looked for his elder brother, he was sitting in a rear corner of the room with his arms folded across his chest looking at the ground.

Park Chongil shook his thick head and, limping on his bad leg, came over to An Tongsun and the others to explain. Han Wondo had sent out the negotiation committees with instructions to demand that the closing of Koreans schools and the dissolution of the *Chōren* be nullified; however, actually, according to Yi Soryong who had come early that morning, Han had been delivered an overall policy directive decided by central headquarters late last night. Until now he had been covering it up. Then when the group from the police station came back and gave their report, since naturally some orders would have come in by now, at last he reluctantly produced them, showing it only to the members who were there. When Park Song-gil, who was not a member, found out about this he got angry.

Tongsun copied Chongil and shook his head. Han Wondo was a man who had been forced to eat prison gruel for many years during the war; he was over forty and

was a serious and exacting man whom people respected and trusted. But his exacting nature was also a flaw because he often presented an inflexible face.

Of course, there was no doubt that he meant well by this. (To *try* pushing the envelope by demanding they nullify the closings and dissolution of the *Chōren*, and if it was successful certainly nothing would be more ideal.) However, trying to resist the mayor and chief of police first from the start... common sense dictated against that course. No matter how they looked at it this was a step in the wrong direction. That everyone stood around watching the argument without trying to stop it was because he, their head officer, was wrong.

“Who the hell are you?! You say mighty brave things but then when it came down to it that night you ran off somewhere and disappeared! Do what you want! I’m going home!” Park Song-gil angrily threw the words at him and then walked towards the window and was about to go outside.

Standing to Tongsun’s side, Park Chongil went after him.

Without saying a word, Chongil grabbed one of Park Song-gil’s legs as he climbed through the window, falling over as he tried to keep Song-gil from leaving.

“What the hell?” Park Song-gil was surprised and almost fell forward as he pulled on his leg.

“Please wait! You can’t go! You can’t go!” yelled Chongil hanging below him.

1) When admitting the students to another school, they must be moved as a group

2) Using a separate schedule, in Korean, they must be taught their ethnic history and language. (In the worst case scenario, time for ethnic education must be secured outside of class. This is a condition of the agreement.)

3) The instructors for these subjects shall be Koreans.

These were their policies and demands. Leaving out the portion in parenthesis they printed them up and distributed them to every factory, every labor union, and every chapter office of every political party seeking their cooperation. The communist party and socialist party pledged their help, promising lavish support, but because the 'red purge' had them busy with their own affairs, they could do little more than send a representative to cheer them on; they couldn't hope for anything more effective than that.

Then An Tongsun took the demands (if nothing had happened they wouldn't need any demands!) and tried to continue negotiations with the city. It had already been several days.

Mayor Kutsukuchi had refused to see them from the beginning and now Kimura too wouldn't meet with them so they dealt exclusively with the education director Ishikawa Yojiro. Ishikawa said very little, and as a result their negotiations were extremely slow.

The department of education was separate from the main city hall building, in an annex that stood opposite their elementary school. Almost everyday they left their own building for a similar former navy facility. It was probably tiring for the other side to receive them everyday as well, but there was no room to think of things like

that, because it was much harder for Tongsun's group. Ishikawa met with them, along with the curriculum coordinator Takano, without even making too sour a face, but they would always sit behind the desk and say the same thing.

“Eh... today with Principal Gen at the center, we welcome the city's Korean education board representatives of the school's parents and guardians... eh... As to the current deposition regarding the Korean elementary school... eh...”

These were of necessity his first words, and at the same time the only words he was able to say.

That day, again, as they left there in vain, Park Song-gil said as though it were a set phrase “Geez, that guy, ‘eh...eh...’ no matter how far away our home may be we could go and come back a hundred times while he talks!”

That home, Korea, was reaping the benefits of voluntary North-South talks, but unification still looked a long way off. In other words, they still didn't know when they would be able to go home.

When they got back to the office, which was still surrounded by officers who looked bored but generally just stood there like sticks, they often took refuge from the stalled negotiations by doing impressions of Director Ishikawa and laughing.

“Eh... today with Principal Gen at the center, why don't we just go ahead and go home?” with this the ever silent and gentle Hyon Tong-gun¹⁰ earned the nickname ‘Principal Gen’ by finally doing an impression of Ishikawa.

¹⁰ ヒョンドングン 玄東根, this is “Principal Gen” himself. During negotiations Ishikawa is using the Japanese pronunciation of Hyon's last name.

This race, which so loves to laugh, even did this impression while in the middle of talking to Ishikawa himself.

“Eh... according to the statement just made by education director Ishikawa...” it was Park Song-gil. Everyone burst out laughing. Even Ishikawa himself smiled like a good-natured old man.

-However they were gradually becoming impatient. It seemed Park Chongil's activities had reached even the students who had been thrown out of their school. Everyday they cheerfully came to school chatting away. However, while at first spirits were high and they happily spread their mats, sat down and opened their textbooks, it was impossible for that to continue very long.

As they entered November the clear sky got higher, the wind blowing off the sea became stronger and children continued to come down with colds. Especially when it rained, since there was no place to avoid it, things turned into an uncontrollable mess. Ever since the incident, perhaps in response to the hard work of the parents, not a word of Japanese was spoken at the school. But when it rained they had no choice but to line up like sparrows under the eaves of the school with the police officers clad in rain coats. The officers made space for about two people between each of them, but it was a situation that had to stop. Because to deny the people's classes was to deny the people's independence. And in order to ensure their ethnic education one man had already been shot dead. It was the Shindo, Osaka school incident in April of the previous year; the deceased was sixteen-year-old middle school student Kim Te'il. Starting with high schools and middle schools in the

Tokyo area, other prefectures had already solved everything by agreeing to the compromised policies and demands. Then Yokohama, Kawasaki, Tsurumi and other cities followed suit and put an end to their own problems. Everyone was returning to their old schools, now called 'the prefectural so-and-so school' or 'the city so-and-so school,' as branches of the Japanese education system. Of course, Korean instructors were hired.

But even so, only here in Y City neither the mayor nor his assistant was willing to meet them; it was like beating the air.

While this continued, something happened to Tongsun that caught him by surprise. With the disbanding of the *Chōren* he had lost his job and, in the end, decided to use his own humble library in a scheme to start a small used-book store. Since it was entirely private property, Yi Soryong's house, which was the former *Chōren* branch office, had managed to avoid being closed. Tongsun borrowed his earthen floor and spent several days gathering materials, putting up walls, and hanging bookshelves.

With his rucksack on his back he walked around to his Japanese and Korean friends gathering donated books he was lacking. (This is why on the evening of the school closing he had had to spend the night with the friend who was putting him up and couldn't meet up with everyone). Then on the night after the incident he finally opened the store and left Yi Soryong's wife in charge until everything was resolved. However, exactly five days after the October 19th closing incident occurred, he returned from the school negotiations and got a notice. When he went to look the

books had been locked inside the store with the doors nailed shut and the same board hung across it that read “団体等規制令. . . ” (Group command...).

Just seeing the first six thick characters printed in brush strokes, he didn't want to read the rest. He felt another big laugh welling up inside, but since he was standing on a road with a lot of people passing by he tried to stifle it.

Of course, it wasn't that he hadn't thought this might happen. But during the previous *Chōren* disbandment the phones, tables, chairs, everything that was there had been requisitioned. And now since Yi Soryong was renting this house, he thought they might overlook boarding up its entrance. But it was wishful thinking. Now that he was hearing news from all over the country, he knew the Japanese were simply moving in waves to avoid the 'needless chaos' created by the resistance against them.

The students' mothers and grandmothers (who at the moment happened to be out shopping), were the center of their effort, and everyday many of them came out to the school. Of course it was out of their concern for their children, the students, and the school itself, but behind their persistence in coming out and gathering at the school the work of Park Chongil could not be overlooked. Not that anything had necessarily been accomplished by it, but it seemed that he had hardly slept since the incident. With his frayed bag on his back he was walking from *buraku* to *buraku*, going from person to person, persuading them on behalf of the children.

Having people gather like that was meant to put pressure on the other side, but whether he was aware of it or not, in the end it backfired and ended up putting pressure on themselves as well; in other words, on An Tongsun and the other

representatives from the negotiation committee. The parents relentlessly dogged them with the same questions, and even though they knew it would end up pointless, from their perspective, they had to come out yet again.

However, now even the education director ran away and started refusing to meet them. Since Tokyo and other places had already reached a resolution the negotiators continued to plead with them:

“We’re saying if you’ll just do like in Tokyo or Kawasaki we’ll agree. If Tokyo and Kawasaki have reached this kind of solution then why is it that only this Y City can’t?!” but when they tried this the director was at a loss for anything more than his usual “Eh...” and ran away.

An Tongsun and the others visited the school board members, PTA and other power holders seeking their cooperation. But they all claimed to understand and said, “It’s a really terrible thing,” but were unable to deliver any kind of real results. And as they did so, the days continued to go by.

They came to understand that the more time went by, the less advantageous their position. They were the ones leaving the students out in the open, and no matter how outstanding Park Chongil’s activities may have been, people’s tolerance for monotony had a limit. Now that it had already been almost a month since the incident occurred, the number of people who gathered there each day was starting to decline.

What especially irritated them was that the people who had given up were starting to show it on their faces. Not only did the mayor, his assistant, the director of education and the curriculum coordinator all still refuse to meet them; they wouldn’t

even show themselves. In R City, the government had been successful in transferring the Korean children into Japanese elementary schools. Like the old woman from the occupied *buraku* who angrily said she would set fire to the school and ‘burn with them to death,’ everyone was at their breaking point. The way things were going it was obvious that they were being destroyed from the bottom, and that they were falling apart.

But that’s when there was an unexpected turn of events.

Since things had been taken care of at the central level, Yi Soryong was assigned to support the yet-unresolved Y City, so he and An Tongsun left for the office around noon (naturally they had become fatigued, so they had stopped sending the entire committee and had also stopped leaving early in the morning). It was Friday. What was going on? There was lively laughter between people, and for some reason a much larger group of school-mothers had gathered that day than usual.

“Ah, we won! We won! Our side finally won!” Han Wondo smiled broadly, reaching to shake their hands as they climbed through the window frame.

“What exactly happened?” Yi Soryong asked from the side of Tongsun, who was standing in a daze.

“Well, actually I just got back from checking on R but...” said Han Wondo looking at the principal Hyon Tong-gun and Chon Ch’ansik seated next to him. Around them Park Chongil, the ‘Big Barrel Granny’ and all the usual mothers were quietly watching Tongsun and the others.

Park Chongil had raided city hall. Last night he had gone around the *buraku* one by one making plans with the mothers. Arriving at the school early in the morning he persuaded the teachers and then borrowing the students, met up with the mothers who came by a different route. Then watching for the mayor to come to work, they took the opportunity and attacked.

In a huge group with Chongil at the lead seventy or eighty of the mothers poured into the mayor's receiving room. Meanwhile, at Chongil's order's the hundred students in the hall outside sang with booming voices a song of their people's strife.

With our enemies, we fought and died,

But don't mourn for our death...

And then in the intervals between they roared in Japanese: "GIVE - BACK - OUR - SCHOOL!!"

It was morning and city hall, which had just set about to the day's business, was thrown into mass confusion. The halls were flooded with workers, and Chongil in the receiving room repeatedly called out: "Mr. Mayor! Mr. Mayor!" The mothers also followed suit.

"Mr. Mayor!"

"*Shijyan Inomu!*¹¹ Come out here and die with us!" shouted the many voices.

The pent up emotions of over a month of monotony suddenly exploded.

¹¹ Korean: "Mayor, you bastard!"

Unable to stand the din, Assistant Kimura came running out. Then from somewhere else Education Director Ishikawa came running over; he stood dumbfounded by a window.

The mothers leapt on Kimura. Kabu Ryon, a widow from H *buraku* grabbed Kimura and held him up by his necktie.

“*Inomu*, give back the school! Give back our school!”

Kimura swung himself free and yelled, “Don’t you all have any manners! Manners! Try to have a little common decency, why don’t you!”

She flinched slightly. Drawing back she looked to Chongil standing to her side.

“Tell him who it was that turned us into people without manners,” Chongil quickly instructed her in Korean.

Then she leapt on him again.

“Who was it who made us people without manners?! You’re the ones who have been trying to make us into illiterate fools! Well, aren’t you?!”

She cried as she hung to Kimura’s sleeve. Once she started crying more than half of the mothers let out their voices and burst into sobs. These women held a lifelong grudge, and now they had been reminded of their long months and days of turmoil.

The ‘Big Barrel Granny’ whose huge body matched her nickname came over like an elephant and spread herself over Kimura.

“Give it back! Give back our school you dirty thief!”

“Mr. Mayor! Mr. Mayor!” Chongil stood there continuing to call for the mayor.

Kimura had almost made it away from the ‘Big Barrel Granny’ but he wasn’t quite strong enough. Now his foot was caught in her *chima*¹² and he fell to the floor.

“Ah, shall I kill him?! Let’s kill him! Kill him!” Now granny too had fallen to the ground and was pounding on her own chest with both fists. In the hall outside the children continued with ‘The Morning of Independence’ and ‘The Song of Liberation.’

Given no choice Mayor Kutsukuchi emerged from a room to the side. Then he made this statement:

“We surrender to your wishes. We will cooperate. We promise to cooperate so please...!”

“You *will* take responsibility?” said Park Chongil.

“We will. So please, quickly, get all these people out of here.”

Hearing this Chongil immediately gathered everyone and left city hall.

When a regiment of armed soldiers had been organized and arrived from the police station out front they were already headed out the back door. From there the students returned directly to their individual homes.

“Man, wow, I got there just in time but you should have seen the sight of the ‘Big Barrel Granny’ fallen on the ground!” said Kim Ch’onsu of T *buraku* with an amused look.

¹² A traditional Korean dress

Tongsun looked over at the massive ‘Big Barrel Granny.’ Tongsun and the others had perplexed expressions on their faces, so she was staring at them, blinking her small eyes, seemingly unsure whether she was going to be told she had done something good or something bad. The other mothers also seemed embarrassed and wrung their hands as they looked at the ground.

Tongsun turned his eyes from her to Chongil. He was crouching perfectly still in the corner of the room, but feeling Tongsun’s eyes he lifted his head and said:

“I accept your criticism. I’ll take any criticism. But I... I...” saying this he covered his face with his hands and burst into tears.

Tongsun felt an emotion in his chest which was somehow beyond sadness or loneliness. He was seized by the impulse to fall down crying there too.

“What’s with you? Is there something to cry over? This is a great victory! To get that kind of declaration from the mayor- now everything is going to be alright,” said Han Wondo just as the police officer, Arai, and another whom he didn’t recognize opened the window behind him and poked their heads in.

“Excuse me, please present two people to take responsibility at the command outpost. We just got word over the phone, so please go immediately,” said Arai. The other officer then slammed the window closed and went back as though running away from them.

For a moment, as though a spirit had been pulled through the window, everything was silent. Han Wondo who had been talking, was at a loss for words and simply stood there. Chongil stopped crying, and the mothers opened their mouths

wide and looked at each other. At long last they had arrived where they were going. It wasn't that they hadn't known this already, but when the moment actually hit they all felt an incredible shock.

Tongsun used the chalkboard in the room as a support and slowly lowered himself into a seat. At the same time the four or five mothers lined up opposite him simultaneously stood up.

Tongsun put his weight on the wall behind him. One thing had ended and then another had begun he thought. <What a roundabout journey!> For more than a month, Kutsukuchi, Kimura, Ishikawa, the others etc- it was all a waste.

“Wow, this turned into something pretty spectacular, eh?” Kim Ch'onsu was the first to speak.

“They said people to take responsibility. Who does that mean? Why couldn't they just give us a name? – I'm going to go check with the police and then come back,” said Han Wando, hurriedly trying to go outside.

“It okay! I'll go! I'll go so it'll be fine!” shouted Yi Soryong.

“For the other, please let me. – Can't I please go? Please, I beg of you to let me go. Let me go! Please!” Chongil stood up and said. Blood was rushing to his face.

“Don't worry about it, Chongil. It's all alright now. I'll go with Soryong, so you don't have to worry,” said Tongsun. He smiled broadly, then, suddenly, almost as though he had gone crazy:

“Wahahahaha! Wahaha!”

He burst out in a huge laugh. Holding his stomach he rolled around on the floor laughing.

Introduction

Photographs are praised for their capacity to capture a single moment. A photograph can tell an entire story and communicate to the person viewing it something far removed from his or her own experiences and time. Hence their frequent praise as being worth one thousand words. But if this is so, might we not consider the reverse? One thousand words adding up to a photograph, showing the reader a scene that transcends or contrasts the visual senses through the construction of a narrative? I believe this is why I felt so strongly when reading Kim Tal-su's (金達壽 1919-97) short stories that I was not reading short pieces of literature, but browsing a photo album; looking at snapshots that communicate the breadth of the Zainichi experience during a turbulent time for Koreans living in Japan.

The first volume of Kim Tal-su's collected works contains 21 short stories. Over the course of these approximately four hundred pages the diversity of Zainichi¹³ life comes to the fore. His stories include Koreans who speak little or no Japanese, like Kim himself when he first crossed over, as well as Koreans who have learned to speak Japanese well enough to pass as natives in Japanese society; again like Kim himself, but later in his career. There are Koreans who cross over at all ages, as well as Koreans who are born in Japan and have never experienced their 'homeland' or its language. Many are from broken families with the lowest income and education in the country; others work their way to economic success in the Japanese postwar economy.

¹³ Zainichi (在日) Is a Japanese word which translates literally to 'being in Japan.' It can be applied more broadly to 'Zainichi gaikokujin' (foreigners living in Japan) but Zainichi kankokujin/chōsenjin (Koreans) is the most common usage.

However, all of these characters exist in a liminal space which can be neither entirely Korean nor Japanese, and they face conflicts which, although often reminiscent of other minorities and migrant populations throughout the world, are unique because of the way in which Koreans came to live in Japan.

Koreans living in Japan, whom I will refer to interchangeably as “resident Koreans” and “Zainichi Koreans,” are a legacy of Japan’s colonial past. After Japan annexed Korea in 1910, Koreans were brought to Japan in droves, many involuntarily, to serve as laborers in agriculture, mining, and munitions factories. By the end of the Pacific War there were approximately two million Koreans living in Japan.

Afterwards more than half were repatriated through various programs, but many chose to stay for a number of reasons: restrictions were placed on the amount of property a returning citizen could take with them, many families put down roots in Japan or no longer had any connections in Korea, and conflict on the peninsula made the future of Korea unclear.¹⁴

Kim Tal-su’s generation was thrust into a complicated world. Although there was abundant joy at the end of Japanese imperialism, Koreans in Japan now had to choose whether to stay or return to a divided homeland. Those who remained in Japan would confront questions about their own ethnic identity; can they assimilate into Japanese culture and still remain Korean? Does assimilation constitute a betrayal of Korea or of the other Koreans living in Japan? What is to become of their children

¹⁴ A basic introduction to the history of Koreans in Japan can be found in most works dealing with them, but for precise information on the origins of the community standard sources are: Changsoo Lee and George Devos. *Koreans in Japan: Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981); Michael Weiner. *The Origins of the Korean Community in Japan, 1910-1923* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University press, 1989).

and how should they be raised? Are they North Korean or South Korean? How do they relate to the Japanese around them?

These questions and the conflicts they represent are fundamental to the premise of my study. In order to address this myriad of identity conflicts and cope with the new dimensions of postwar life, literature emerges as an intellectual forum in which to work through Zainichi issues. This literature is published in Japanese, and aside from its circulation among the limited number of highly-educated Koreans, authors like Kim Tal-su used short stories and novels as a way to join Japanese public discourse. Within Korean literature in Japanese, words such as “Korea” (朝鮮 chōsen) and signifiers of Korean heritage such as clothing or food take on more positive connotations than they had in Japanese society at the time, and to a lesser extent today.¹⁵ As part of the discourse of the highly nationalistic Korean expatriate community, Kim Tal-su’s literature becomes a zone where the conditions and problems of the Koreans in postwar Japan are subject to examination: impoverishment, violence (especially domestic violence), oppression and racism are all described from the perspective of the Koreans themselves, as are the more psychological ramifications of Koreans’ separation from their home and their colonial experience. Examining Kim’s works alongside his life reveals that his literature was often a thinly fictionalized version of his own experiences, a practice which will characterize later generations of Zainichi authors as well. Kim’s literature essentially has the dual function of exposing the physical and psychological suffering of Zainichi

¹⁵ Melissa Wender, *Lamentation as History: Narratives by Koreans in Japan, 1965 – 2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005) 74.

Koreans to the Japanese reading populace, but also of allowing resident Koreans who are themselves enduring painful experiences to contemplate such problems in an externalized form.

Kim stated openly that one of his goals in writing fiction was to inform the Japanese people about the circumstances of Zainichi Koreans. Today we are approaching the centennial of Japan's annexation of Korea, and it has never been clearer how far-reaching this action was. Korea itself has still not regained a unified stability, and many of the people displaced during Japan's colonial experiment still struggle to find a home of their own. The literature of Kim Tal-su gives readers a rare opportunity to see how displaced Koreans dealt with the postcolonial experience. His stories incorporate the raw experiences of real people caught in one of history's less prominent narratives: the war is indeed over, but Japan's colonial activity has not finished claiming victims.

Kim Tal-su's literature allows the modern Western reader to see the postcolonial legacy of a non-Western power; Japan is perhaps the only such case. By comparing the circumstances and conflicts of Zainichi Koreans to other postcolonial groups we can increase our understanding of Japan's colonial practices as well as those of the West. The way Koreans cope with life in Japan reveals both groups' social mores.

The presence of Koreans in Japan defies the myth of Japanese homogeneity, as does their participation in the greater realm of Japanese culture, in this case literature. It allows Koreans to stand up and claim part of the society for themselves.

Reading Zainichi literature removes the wall of commentary between ourselves and Koreans living in Japan; rather than just reading about Koreans we have the opportunity to hear the words of Koreans themselves. Kim's literature showcases the terms in which Zainichi Korean authors discussed their own people. The current study focuses on the immediate postwar period, a historic moment when newly liberated Koreans had to redefine themselves and their place in Japan. Although the present discussion requires us to train our eyes back fifty years, it is instructive to see how self-perception and concepts of identity have changed among Koreans since then. By looking at the literature of early Korean liberation we see the gradual growing sophistication of Zainichi discourse, and also the early emergence of themes that will recur consistently in later literature.

State of the Field

There is still relatively little English language scholarship dealing with resident Koreans, and the majority of it is written from a historical perspective. Michael Weiner's *The Origin of the Korean Community in Japan 1910-1923* (1989) and *Race and Migration in Imperial Japan* (1994)¹⁶ deal with the early history of resident Koreans and are specifically concerned with the policies and circumstances that moved Koreans from the peninsula to the Japanese islands en masse. Other studies include Richard Mitchell's *The Korean Minority in Japan* (1967)¹⁷ and

¹⁶ Michael Weiner, *Race and Migration in Imperial Japan* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁷ Richard Mitchel, *The Korean Minority in Japan* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1967).

Koreans in Japan: Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation, a volume edited by Changsoo Lee and George De Vos (1981).

Recent scholarship has focused more closely on legal issues, discrimination, and the identity conflicts faced by Zainichi Koreans. Sonia Ryang has authored and edited multiple books on these topics; her own research concentrates primarily on the situation of North Koreans. Ryang considers their political organization, the Chongryun, and the schools which it runs both in terms of a strategy for solidifying the community of Koreans in Japan but also as a way in which Koreans maintain physical and mental ties to their homeland.¹⁸ George Hicks and David Chapman have also authored recent books concentrating on legal problems and cultural conflict between Japanese and Koreans, and the relationship between ethnicity and identity as Koreans in Japan have dealt with it.¹⁹

The most extensive study of Zainichi literature is Melissa Wender's *Lamentation as History*, which considers significant Korean authors chronologically starting in 1965, the year when Japan normalized relations with South Korea. This is also the only book-length work on Zainichi literature and as such it figures prominently in my own analysis. Wender adopts the strategy of examining literary works side-by-side with grassroots Zainichi activism and political movements within the community. For example, her analysis of Ri Kaisei's "The Woman who Filled Clothes," the first story by a Zainichi author to win Japan's most prestigious literary

¹⁸ Sonia Ryang, *North Koreans in Japan: Language, Ideology and Identity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

¹⁹ David Chapman, *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008); George Hicks, *Japan's Hidden Apartheid: the Korean Minority and the Japanese* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1997).

prize, the Akutagawa award, is paired with a 1970s criminal case that catapulted Zainichi issues to the center of public attention. There are abundant linkages between the two, including the author's testimony at the trial in question, but most significantly the trial and the story both showcased Japan-born Koreans who were searching desperately for a sense of identity and who suffered from discrimination by the Japanese. Wender's technique of pairing literature with Zainichi political struggles reaffirms the connection of literary works with the real-life dilemmas of Koreans in Japan. It also demonstrates the value that writing holds for a people whose conflicts are partly rooted in the physical world, but are also largely existential.

The story mentioned above, Ri Kaisei's "The Woman who Fulled Clothes," has been translated and analyzed by Beverly Nelson.²⁰ It is one of very few published translations of Zainichi authors in English. Lisa Yoneyama and Carol Hayes have also produced articles about two contemporary Zainichi writers, Yū Miri and Yi Yang-ji respectively.²¹ After introducing Kim Tal-su's early life story and a few of his works in Chapter One, I will continue to contextualize Kim in Chapter Two by comparing the themes and literary devices in his early short stories to those described by these and other scholars. To completely situate Kim in the landscape of the Zainichi literary tradition I will also draw on Jonathan Glade's analysis of a story by

²⁰ Beverly Nelson, "The Woman who Fulled Clothes" in *Flowers and Fire: Twentieth-century Korean Stories*, ed. Peter Lee (Honolulu, HA: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986) 342-376; Beverly Nelson. "Korean Literature in Japan, a case study: Ri Kai Sei" in *Studies on Korea in transition*, ed. David R. McCann, John Middleton, and Edward Shultz (Honolulu, HA: Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawai'i Press, 1977) 126-59.

²¹ Lisa Yoneyama, "Reading against the Bourgeois and National Bodies: Transcultural Body-politics in Yū Miri's Textual Representations" (103-118) and Carol Hayes "Cultural Identity in the Work of Yi Yang-ji" (119-139) in *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin*, ed. Sonia Ryang (New York, NY: Routledge, 2000).

one of Kim's contemporaries, Kim Saryang, who slightly predates Kim Tal-su, and was the first Korean nominated for the Akutagawa award.²² Although far from a thorough examination of each author's work, this small sampling of resident Korean fiction will allow me to make a few broad statements about the nature of Zainichi literature, consider the links between generations of authors, and postulate Kim Tal-su's role as one of the founders of Zainichi literature and his influence on the later developments in this literary community.

While the Western academic community's interest in resident Koreans is a relatively recent development, there are already numerous Japanese works dealing with Zainichi literature, legal status, education and social problems. In the area of literature, noted literary critic Takeda Seiji has done a significant amount of writing on Zainichi authors, as has Isogai Jirō, the compiler of an anthology of Zainichi literature.²³ Ri Kaisei, mentioned above as the first Korean author to win the Akutagawa prize, has also been active in the academic discussion of Zainichi literature. As for writings about Kim Tal-su, in addition to the complete anthology of his fiction and critical essays, there are two book-length biographies and numerous shorter articles.²⁴

²² Jonathan Glade, "Assimilation Through Resistance: Language and Ethnicity in Kim Saryang's 'Hikari no naka ni,'" *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 29 (2007): 41-55.

²³ Takeda Seiji, *Zainichi to iu konkyo* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1995); Isogai Jirō, "Zainichi" *bungakuron* (Tokyo: Shikansha, 2004).

²⁴ Kim Tal-su (Kin Tatsuju), *Kin Tatsuju shōsetsu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980); Kim Tal-su (Kin Tatsuju), *Kin Tatsuju hyōronshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1976); Ch'oe Hyo-son, *Kaikyō ni tatsu hito: kimu tarusu no bungaku to shōgai* (Tokyo: Hihyōsha, 1998); Kin Ki-su, *Kimu Darusu runesansu: bungaku rekishi minzoku* (Tokyo: Kaihō shuppansha, 2002).

Methodology

The first chapter begins with a short biographical introduction to Kim Tal-su followed by an overview of his early career as an author, as well as his literary influences and the impetus he felt to write. Scholars of Zainichi literature have consistently observed that resident Koreans tend to translate life experiences into literature, achieving both verisimilitude and emotional impact. It is reasonable to say that the realism of this type of literature has the potential to resonate with other Koreans facing similar situations, or to shake Japanese readers into realizing the plight of this minority. Therefore this section will establish the connections between Kim Tal-su's literature and his life, focusing in particular on his short fiction in the early post-war period. A brief introduction to several of Kim's short stories reveals great variety in his illustrations of the Korean experience in Japan, reflecting the diversity of the postwar Zainichi population and the equally diverse conflicts they faced.

In Chapter Two I briefly expand the scope of my inquiry to consider Zainichi writers as a literary community. As described above, my goal is to locate Kim's role within this tradition. Here my discussion focuses on two short stories by Kim Tal-su ("*Takuju no kanpai*" and "Hanrangun") and the way they treat the issue of Korean identity. A comparison of these stories with noted works by other Zainichi authors brings to the fore the commonalities that unite the Zainichi literary tradition. In Chapter Two, I therefore argue for a more cohesive understanding of the relationship

between first and second-generation Korean authors than offered by current English-language scholarship.

My third chapter takes an in-depth look at the translations that accompany this thesis. The foci of this chapter are the parallel stories, “A Chapter from the Other Night” and “Big Barrel Granny,” which deal with the closing of Korean ethnic schools by the Japanese government in the late 1940s. I examine Kim’s portrayal of the ethnic education system and the events surrounding the closings: the violence associated with the Japanese police action, the desperation of Korean leaders in negotiations with Japanese authorities, and the importance of resistance and solidarity in the Korean community. These stories, as well as “Memories of Grandmother” allow the reader to witness the alchemy with which Kim turns his own real experiences into literature. By presenting these translations I hope to give the reader an opportunity to see vividly the way Koreans in Japan perceived the political events that shaped their lives.

Chapter 1

Kim Tal-su's Life and Works

I was born in a small village in the country, but it was still a place where you could see a train station. The people of my family were farmers, and are now bankrupted landlords of a few small properties. I was born in 1919, at the end of the eleventh month (by the old calendar) just as the independence movement that had begun on March First of that year was at last being suppressed under tremendous force. Around that time my *own* house was nearly destroyed as well.²⁵

The above comprises the opening of an autobiographical essay by Kim Tal-su which appeared in the June 1954 issue of *Sekai* (The World), a journal of social criticism published by Iwanami Shoten. The March First movement he mentions was the Korean domestic response to the oppressive colonial policies implemented after Japan annexed the peninsula in 1910. These policies were designed to systematically destroy Korean identity and make the population a subject class under the Japanese. Eventually these measures would go so far as to include the mandatory adoption of Japanese names, forcing Koreans to swear an oath to the Japanese Emperor, the Japanese takeover of the Korean education system and even the outlawing of the Korean language itself.²⁶ After nine years of colonial rule, nationalist sentiment came to a head. On the first of March in 1919, religious leaders accompanied by thousands of nonviolent protestors, publicly read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Seoul's Pagoda Park. The demonstrations continued across the entire peninsula for months with approximately two million total participants. The Japanese response was

²⁵ Kim Tal-su, "Hito chōsenjin: watashi no bungaku jikaku," *Sekai* (1954 June). Reprinted in Kim Tal-su, *Kimu Tarusu hyōron-shū* (vol. 1), 5-12.

²⁶ Lee and De Vos, *Koreans in Japan*, 18; Wender. *Lamentation as History*, 27.

a brutal show of force, making almost fifty thousand arrests, torturing the leaders of the independence rallies, and killing 7,509 Koreans.²⁷

In the opening to his essay in *Sekai* Kim immediately juxtaposes his own birth with this moment of extreme significance in the Korean resistance to Japanese oppression; one which was burned into the consciousness of those Koreans who lived through it. He then offers his own family's declining fortunes as a symbol for the fate of the country, emphasizing that as the independence movement was in its last throes, his family too was about to fall. The stage is set for a moment of transition that changes the lives of Kim and thousands of other Koreans: emigration to Japan. The specific problems of Kim's family, the failures of farms and bankruptcy, are representative of the two largest reasons Koreans chose to move to Japan before the implementation of involuntary migration policies during the Pacific War.

All of these connections between Kim as an individual and the circumstances that led to the move of Koreans to Japan en masse are not mentioned coincidentally. As with much minority literature, the protagonists in Kim's stories often seem to represent their people as a whole. In the case of Zainichi literature the experiences of those protagonists are frequently imported directly from the lives of the authors who create them. Beverly Nelson observes of these writers, "So much of their writing is autobiographical and so much of their autobiography is fictional that the genres are largely interchangeable."²⁸ The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between fiction and autobiography in Kim Tal-su's early short fiction. By providing

²⁷ Inokuchi Hiromitsu, "Korean Ethnic Schools: 1945-52," in Sonia Ryang, *Koreans in Japan*, 141.

²⁸ Nelson, "Korean Literature in Japan," 131.

an account of Kim's early life alongside descriptions of several of the short stories he wrote early in his career I point out a multitude of autobiographical elements. At the same time I discuss recurring themes in Kim's early work which help us to identify continuities with literature produced by later authors in the Zainichi community.

Kim Tal-su's early life was difficult. In addition to the economic woes mentioned above, Kim's father wasted what savings he had been left by his parents on gambling and debauchery. When Kim was six years old the family was divided; his father, mother, eldest brother, and infant sister moved to Japan to seek work, leaving Kim and another older brother with their grandmother in Korea. For two years the group in Japan sent money to support the family members still in Korea, until sudden tragedy struck on both sides of the sea. The older brother living with Kim and his grandmother died suddenly, and while the family was still in shock a telegraph came in place of the monthly support they received from Japan saying that their father too had died at 37. Kim was eight years old.

These were the circumstances that culminated in Kim's crossing to Japan. One short story included in this study, "Memories of Grandmother,"²⁹ recounts those events and describes the painful parting of Kim and his grandmother. The emotional impact of the story comes from its verisimilitude. Among first generation Zainichi authors the moment of crossing or the story that leads to crossing to Japan is treated with importance. In addition to being an emotionally wrenching experience, the memory of crossing is permanently associated with the current state of Koreans in

²⁹ Kim Tal-su, "Sobo no omoide" *Keirin* 2 (1944); reprinted in *Kin Tatsuju shōsetsu zenshū* vol. 1 (hereafter KZS1), 105-108.

Japan. The lives of all of these people are changed dramatically by this relatively short sail. While Kim's crossing was under especially traumatic circumstances, for most Koreans the move to Japan meant separating from family, leaving ancestral homes and trying to set up a new life in a foreign land as second-class citizens. Kim wrote this story in a single night in 1944 and remembers weeping as he did so.³⁰ The experience of parting with his grandmother was so difficult for Kim that he refers to it again and again in his other writings.

It was 1930 when the ten year-old Kim arrived in Japan, and immediately he needed to do his part in supporting the family. He was fitted with a large banana crate on his back to do junk-collecting; he also sold *nattō*, fermented soybeans, despite possessing no knowledge of the Japanese language beyond what he was taught to yell: "Three jars ten *sen*!" Although he had had no formal education in Korea, he was able to enter night school in Japan, and then the fourth grade class of a regular elementary school. He showed promise, rising to second or third in his class, but he writes that he was unable to rise to the top because of frequent beatings by his classmates who would angrily yell "*Chōsen-jin*!"³¹ as they punched him.

Soon Kim had to drop out of school altogether to support his mother. He held jobs at a battery factory, a printing press, a retail bath-fixture outlet, but in the end he spent most of his time as a junk-peddler. Ironically, it was searching through trash

³⁰KZS1 421-22.

³¹ Chōsen (朝鮮) is an old word for Korea, now primarily used to refer to North Korea (*Kita-Chōsen* 北朝鮮), and the suffix *jin* (人) means person. Chōsenjin (朝鮮人) is the term by which Kim always refers to himself and other Koreans, in Japan or out; however, when he describes being beaten at school the word does not appear as 朝鮮人 in Chinese characters, rather he writes チョウセン人, using phonetic characters to spell it out. The effect is something like italics in English, and implies that the very word for 'Korean' in Japanese is being used pejoratively.

each day that put Kim Tal-su on the path to literary success. When he began junk-peddling in his early days in Japan he developed a taste for the love stories of Kikuchi Kan (1888 -1948)³² and also sought out the boy's magazine “*Shōnen kurakubu*”³³ (Boy's Club). He read voraciously despite his meager language skills. As Kim returned to junk-peddling after his brief stint in Japanese schools and his attempts to support his mother through other means, he encountered volumes of literary criticism and leftist literature for the first time.³⁴ However, there were two volumes in particular that Kim found among the garbage that he describes as opening his eyes to literature: the first was a Japanese literature anthology containing the works of Shiga Naoya (1883-1971),³⁵ and the second a world literature anthology containing Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

Although Kim writes of entertaining vague notions as a child about becoming a novelist, the combination of his growing Japanese language ability and his exposure to ‘pure literature’³⁶ made his goal realizable and deepened his interest in writing. When he later looked back at this time he wrote, “The methods and goals of this

³² Kikuchi Kan was a well-known writer and successful publisher who was also a prominent figure in the Tokyo *bundan*. See: Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* vol. 1 (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984).

³³ 少年倶楽部, today written 少年クラブ (Shōnen Kurabu – Boy's Club) is a magazine aimed at young boys published by Kōdansha. It contains mostly adventure stories and comics.

³⁴ Specifically Kim mentions finding two or three volumes of *The Records of Literature Lectures* produced by Waseda University Press, and *A Critique of Facism* by Kawai Eijirō, a prewar socialist thinker and economist. (Kim Tal-su, “Hito chōsenjin: watashi no bungaku jikaku” 10)

³⁵ A highly acclaimed author of short stories and novels active in the Taisho and Showa periods, Shiga was part of a group of authors that used autobiographical elements in their fiction and himself helped advance this literary form. See Keene, *Dawn to the West*, vol. 1.

³⁶ 純文学 *Junbungaku*. As opposed to popular or didactic literature, *Junbungaku* is fiction which aims for simple artistic beauty, especially in the Meiji period.

literature became clear as well. In other words, I wanted to write about Koreans and their lives. I wanted to *inform* people, and make an appeal to them.”³⁷

In 1939 Kim entered the department of Art and Literature at Nihon University. There he studied literature and wrote his first short story, “Ichi” (位置 Position). This fifty-page story describes two young men who agree to rent a room together, a Japanese named Tana’ami and a Korean, born and raised in Japan, named Ōzawa. Ōzawa also has a Korean name, Chang Ŭngsŏ (チャンウンス 張応瑞), but it appears only once in the story. The narrator explains that he has been called Ōzawa ever since publishing a short story under that penname. In fact Kim Tal-su used the penname Ōzawa Tatsuō in many of his early publications. The relationship between the two roommates quickly becomes strained as Tana’ami reveals himself to be a wastrel, posing as a student but spending his time at cafés and constantly drinking. He grows more and more delinquent in paying his share of the rent and discharging his responsibilities, yet persists in maintaining an air of superiority over Ōzawa. A confrontation seems inevitable as the two grow distant from one another, but when it does occur, it is Tana’ami who acts as though he has been wronged. “Fine! If you want me to say it, I’ll say it! Have you thought even once about the fact that you’re Korean!? [...] My father keeps telling me ‘Living with a Korean, who knows what could happen! You need to get out of there now,’ but I felt sorry for you so I endured it. Compared to that, how can you make such a big deal over ten or twenty yen!”³⁸

³⁷ Ibid., emphasis in original.

³⁸ Originally in *Geijutsuka* (1940 August). Reprinted in KZS1 2-23.

During the years of the Pacific War, Kim worked as a reporter for several different newspapers. This was also the period when he wrote his first full-length novel, *Kōei no Machi* (後裔の街 The City of Descendants) (1946) as well as several short stories which were published after the war. He and a group of friends also made plans to publish a magazine in Japanese, *Minshu Chōsen* (民主朝鮮 Democratic Korea) with the goal of introducing Koreans and their circumstances to the Japanese reading populace. In all, thirty-two issues were published, including the serialization of *Kōei no Machi* and several of Kim's short stories. Later Kim became involved with other literary groups and left-leaning Zainichi political organizations.

As mentioned above, the autobiographical essay that Kim wrote for *Sekai* describes some of his literary influences. He specifically cites the works of Shiga Naoya: “‘On Writing Fiction’ at the end of the Shiga Naoya anthology in particular was so interesting that I read it over and over again. This is where I learned that Japanese authors often take the events that happen to the person called ‘I,’ 「私」 that is, themselves and the people around them, and turn them into stories.”³⁹ In his peculiar phrasing, “the person called ‘I,’” Kim is referencing a particular movement in Japanese literature which Shiga Naoya helped to make popular.

The “I” novel, in Japanese called *shishōsetsu* or *watakushi shōsetsu*, was a popular literary form of the Taishō period (1912-26) in which authors used their own experiences as material for their literary creations. In introducing two works by Uno

³⁹ Kim Tal-su, “Hito chōsenjin: watashi no bungaku jikaku” 10.

Kōji, an author who wrote several satirical “I” novels, Elaine Gerbert writes: “This loosely organized narrative, a thinly veiled fiction under which a writer revealed his thoughts and feelings (often of an intimate, confessional nature), was a kind of writing that elicited interest in, concern over, and support for the writer himself from his readers, who identified the narrator with the writer, and bound the writer and his audience in a close relationship.”⁴⁰ She also identifies the two primary types of “I” novels, one being “the confessional” and the other the “contemplative” or “inner thought” style of “I” novel. Of the later category, Shiga Naoya’s short story, “At Kinosaki,” (*Kinosaki nite*) is widely considered to be a pinnacle achievement.⁴¹ “I” novels of the contemplative style are psychological and follow the author’s thoughts in the form of a narrative; in the case of Shiga’s “At Kinosaki” the narrator is identifiable with the author himself, and the story consists of his ruminations on death. As he observes a dead bee, a drowning rat and a water lizard which he himself kills, the narrator reflects on his own near-death experience of being hit by a train and the inevitability of his eventual passing. In this story there is no dialogue nor are there any significant characters besides the first person narrator; the “I” novel becomes a space dedicated to the consideration of the fundamental human problem of mortality.

In *Sekai* Kim describes writing his first short story, “Ichi,” in imitation of the “I” novel style. The character Tana’ami, and his superiority complex, were modeled on a Japanese with a similar sounding name, and the places mentioned in the story, Ōi

⁴⁰ Elaine Gerbert, “Introduction” in Uno Kōji. *Love of Mountains* (Honolulu, HA: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997) 7.

⁴¹ Gerbert, *Love of Mountains*, 20; Donald Keene ed. *Modern Japanese Literature: an Anthology* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1994) 261.

city and Yokogane, are the parts of Tokyo where Kim grew up. Kim himself however was not born in Japan, as the character Ōzawa was, and did not share a room with the Japanese fellow on whom he modeled Tana'ami. The events of the story never happened to Kim Tal-su, but he chose the style of the "I" novel anyway. Although the story itself is fictional, the circumstances and attitudes it depicts are not. The Korean character's treatment in the story is representative of events that do happen every day to Koreans in Japan. Kim's creation of a Japan-born Korean as a protagonist displays a concern with the fate of second-generation Koreans which will recur throughout his work, and also eliminates the possibility of language or cultural obstacles as the origins of Tana'ami's prejudice. Ōzawa is Korean only in parentage, yet continues to be treated as a second-class citizen despite his complete assimilation into Japanese society.

The "I" novel elements of this story appear most clearly in several moments of tension where the narrator becomes acutely cognizant of his Korean heritage. The first of these comes early in the story as the two men start making arrangements to room together; while out drinking Tana'ami tells the narrator: "Don't you go getting self-conscious on me." It is only later that Ōzawa understands this as Tana'ami's way of saying "Don't worry about being Korean," something which Ōzawa had theretofore not perceived as relevant to their relationship. After moving in, Ōzawa speaks to another Japanese friend, Izumi, who helped him find the room. When Izumi asks about the person sharing the room, Ōzawa identifies his roommate simply as 'Tana'ami,' but in the instant Ōzawa utters the name he feels himself pulled in

several directions at once. Part of him feels obligated to tell Izumi specifically that Tana'ami is Japanese, but another thought intrudes upon this one, Ōzawa personally does not feel that it matters whether he rooms with a Japanese or another Korean. Ōzawa starts pursuing these contemplations in the midst of his conversation with Izumi and an awkward silence falls on the two before Ōzawa realizes that he had become lost in thought.

The reader of 'Ichi' has access to Ōzawa's thoughts, which hold the narrative together. Ōzawa is puzzled by Tana'ami's constant air of superiority and presumptuous behavior, and is ultimately shocked by the revelation that Tana'ami feels entitled to treat him as he pleases, and that he is even doing Ōzawa a favor by his mere presence. The story demonstrates the contempt and prejudice that many Japanese held toward Koreans, and the psychological stresses of the people who are subjected to this treatment. In passages resembling the psychological style of the "I" novel, Kim's character is forced to confront the question of his own identity through his interaction with Tana'ami and suffers a traumatic moment of realization.

That Kim would choose such a story form is interesting. His desire to inform the Japanese about Korean circumstances could perhaps be accomplished through essays and scholarly publications, but as Gerbert points out, the "I" novel has the potential to draw the reader into the life of the writer himself. More than simply explaining the circumstances of Koreans in Japan, a successful execution of this type of narration could help Japanese people learn to sympathize with Koreans, which was likely a foreign idea to most Japanese at the time. Of course there are very significant

differences between the type of events Kim records from his life, and those events found in the “I” novels written by members of the Tokyo *bundan*, a coterie of writers, publishers, critics and editors who were dedicated to the production, appreciation and dissemination of literature. The *shishōsetsu* written among this small world of literati became the canonical works of this form. The scope of Kim’s works is generally larger than the original “I” novels, moving beyond purely personal affairs to encompass the intersection of political and personal concerns. As Kim’s purpose in writing was to inform readers about Zainichi conditions, it is unsurprising that social critique is prominent in his fiction. However, by appropriating the “I” novel’s introspective style, Kim’s stories also explore the psychological consequences of resident Koreans’ political problems.

The members of the *bundan* were literary celebrities. They existed in a bubble at a privileged level of society. The elements Kim imported from his own life to use as literary material often came from his youth and experiences he had doing manual labor upon arriving in Japan. Among the twenty-one short stories Kim produced in the first ten years of his career (1940-50) four featured protagonists specifically engaged in junk-peddling to make a living, and many more had characters doing other forms of physical labor such as logging, carpentry and factory work. Junk-peddling and other labor have varied functions in Kim’s storytelling: at times they complement a larger picture of poor living conditions for Zainichi Koreans, especially older first-generation Koreans who had been treated as a labor resource since coming to Japan. In a story titled “Gomi” (塵芥 Garbage) (1942) Kim contrasts an aged, first-

generation laborer with a younger Zainichi who, through skillful maneuvering, manages to reach a leadership position in one small port.⁴² The laborer is vying for the scrap metal he can find in the port, but recently the fishermen in the area have taken to junk-peddling themselves because of the high price for scrap metal during the war. The elderly man appeals for the intercession of the port official, who forces the fishermen to return exclusively to fishing. Stories such as this one which focus mainly on the lives and treatment of older Korean immigrants comprise one subset of Kim's short fiction.

A counterexample is found in the story "Zassou no gotoku" (雑草の如く Like Weeds), in which a well-educated second-generation Korean searches for work to support his family.⁴³ He moves between several menial jobs, unable to find any stable work, until he decides to apply for a position with the Kawasaki company upon the urging of a friend. There is a long buildup to the job interview as the Korean man prepares his credentials and gathers his courage, but he is immediately disappointed when the first question asked by his interviewers is: "How much was the train fair to get here?" The Kawasaki representatives have it in mind to reimburse him for a wasted trip; they had no intention of giving him a chance from the moment they see he is Korean. In this story Kim illustrates what is considered acceptable employment for a Zainichi Korean; they are relegated to the ranks of supplemental laborers regardless of their education or ability. Yet whether it is among second-generation or

⁴² Originally published Kim Tal-su, "Gomi" *Bungeishutō* (1942 March); reprinted in KZS1 62-82.

⁴³ Originally published Kim Tal-su as Ōzawa Tatsuō (pennname). "Zassou no gotoku" *Shingeijutsu* (1942 July); reprinted in KZS1 83-105.

first-generation laborers, who usually have little Japanese-speaking ability, Kim portrays the people doing menial labor in a light in which few Japanese of the time had likely ever seen them: thoughtful people with complex relationships and concerns not unlike their own.

Kim also translated his experience as a wartime newspaper reporter and later his work as a publisher for *Minshu Chōsen* into material for his literary work. In contrast to stories focused on laborers, these are stories about younger Koreans who have struggled to reach a level of modest success. In Kim's stories these characters are most often bilingual and are able to move smoothly between Korean and Japanese-speaking groups and situations. As the language barrier is overcome, some Koreans take on new roles in society which call for new types of interaction with the Japanese around them.

In "Kashoku" (華燭 Nuptials) (1948) five Koreans are running a publishing company not unlike the one Kim Tal-su helped found after the war: producing a journal in the Japanese language to inform people about Koreans and the culture which came to Japan from Korea.⁴⁴ In order to staff the small publishing house, the entrepreneurs hire Japanese workers, which puts them in the unusual position of being superiors to a group of Japanese people. However, relationships among the Koreans and Japanese are peaceful and friendly. Through a chance discussion the Korean owners of the company discover that one of the Japanese workers, a man of 34, has been trying to get married for sometime, but cannot afford the ceremony. In a

⁴⁴ Originally published Kim Tal-su, "Aru kōjo no monogatari," *Tōyō bunka* 1 (1948).

moment of generosity, one of the Korean owners offers to provide the man enough money for a small wedding. Their company has fallen on hard times, and money is tight, but the Koreans in this story take advantage of a rare reversal in the status quo to bestow charity on the Japanese.

In addition to changing relationships between Koreans and Japanese there are shifts in Koreans' relationships among one another in Kim's fiction. In "*Takuju no kanpai*" (濁酒の乾杯 A *Takuju* Toast) (1948) An Tongsun アンドンスン 安東淳 is another character based upon Kim's life experiences, this time as a newspaper reporter during the last days of the Pacific War.⁴⁵ His work as a reporter has made him especially conscious of the movements of Japan's military police (憲兵 *kenpei*) and of the *Tokkō* 特高⁴⁶ in particular, a special division of the police charged with controlling 'thought crime' (思想犯罪 *shisō hanzai*).⁴⁷ The Korean slum of the town is alarmed when one such officer appears to intimidate the women of the community as they do laundry between air raids; when one of the women starts cursing the officer in Korean, which Kim portrays as the usual dynamic of Koreans' interaction with such officers, he responds to her in Korean and hauls her away for arrest. Eventually it is established that he is a Korean collaborator using the name Kōyama こうやま 黄山. An

⁴⁵ Originally published Kim Tal-su, "*Takuju no kanpai*" *Shichō* (1948 September) reprinted in KZS1 215-232.

⁴⁶ 特別高等警察 *Tokubetsu-koutou-keisatsu* (lit. special high level police)

⁴⁷ That An Tongsun and perhaps Kim before him feared arrest at this time is unsurprising given the overall political climate. In 1942 a mass arrest of over sixty reporters by these "special high level police" came to be known as the "Yokohama incident." See: Janice Matsumura, *More than a Momentary Nightmare: the Yokohama Incident and Wartime Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1998).

Tongsun is shocked when he hears that Kōyama wants to meet him and the reporter is sure he will be arrested. But rather than arresting An, Kōyama is more interested in building associations with Koreans such as An and himself, those who have risen above the laboring class. When Kōyama invites An and Ebara of the fire department, who is also Korean, to drink with them, An tricks him into coming to the slum that Kōyama had earlier scorned. Kōyama makes a clear distinction between the three of his party and the Koreans of the slum by asking An, “What do you think of the lives of the people in this slum?” and then enrages him by saying, “No one could ever want to live this way.”⁴⁸ In this story Kim’s familiarity with life at different levels of the Zainichi community is deployed to critique those successful individuals who looked down on the majority of Koreans in Japan, a community which, as a result of Japan’s colonial policies, was still largely made up of impoverished and illiterate laborers who were concentrated in slums.

This chapter offers only the most rudimentary introduction to a man who had a long life and an equally long career as a writer. Even this brief introduction, however, constitutes the most thorough treatment of this author in English to date. The Western academy’s interest in Zainichi literature is a relatively new development, and heretofore has focused on the writings of second-generation Koreans, to the nearly complete exclusion of first-generation writers. In Japanese the case is quite different; in addition to Kim’s collected fiction and essays, two full-length

⁴⁸ KZS1 230-1.

biographies have been published as well as numerous articles. To make this project a viable Master's thesis it has been necessary to limit the scope of my inquiry to Kim's early life. Kim's collected fiction amounts to seven large volumes, but examining his early life shows the author's motivations and methods when he chose to create fiction about Zainichi Koreans. In this analysis I have gained information valuable to understanding one of the first Koreans in Japan who would use literature as a means to question what it is to be 'Zainichi.'

The break up of Kim's family, the untimely deaths that followed and led to Kim's crossing to Japan as a child, as well the difficulties he endured in trying to support his family all recur in Kim's fiction. Kim's earliest literary influences, Shiga Naoya in particular, were Japanese writers who drew from their own lives to create literary works. Yet, even as he imitated the style of the "I" novel, Kim's life was of a different world than that of the writers of the Tokyo *bundan*. Just as Kim himself arrived in Japan illiterate and unable to speak Japanese but eventually managed to become part of a limited group of Korean literati, the characters of his stories also range from junk-peddlers to publishers. At each level of society these Korean characters deal with conflict, racism and questions of identity. I focus here on Kim's short fiction because the myriad characters and diverse circumstances reflect his desire to inform the Japanese-speaking populace about Koreans; he shows that there are Koreans with ranging degrees of assimilation into Japanese society, a process he experienced personally. This chapter has focused on linkages between Kim's fiction and his life, a topic I will return to in chapter three; in the next chapter I will shift my

focus from the autobiographical elements in Kim's work to the themes and devices he uses to communicate the Zainichi experience. In chapter two I shall continue examining Kim's short fiction as I seek his connection to the emergent tradition of Zainichi literature.

Chapter Two

Kim Tal-su within the Zainichi Literary Community

Current English-language scholarship on Zainichi literature proposes a strong divide between the writings of first-generation Korean immigrants and those born in Japan to Korean parents. Melissa Wender's book-length study of resident Korean literature excludes all discussion of Korean-born authors. It begins in 1965, the year Japan normalized relations with South Korea, and shortly before Ri Kaisei 李 恢成 (born 1935), a second-generation author, was awarded Japan's most prestigious literary recognition: the Akutagawa award. Beverly Nelson translated and analyzed Ri's prize-winning story and makes the following comment on the two groups:

Even though the evolution of Korean literature in Japan is easily enough traced, there is a definite, observable break between the writers who were born and reared in Korea and the younger ones who were born and reared in Japan. For the younger generation themes of discrimination and injustice cannot but continue to be dominant. However, separated from their natural cultural heritage and neither wanting nor able to assimilate completely into Japanese culture, they are primarily interesting in understanding what exactly it is that gives them their identity. It is with these writers that Korean literature in Japan, which had been an exile literature, becomes truly a minority literature.⁴⁹

Bearing in mind that there are indeed some significant differences in the concerns and perceptions of first and second-generation Koreans in Japan, in this chapter I wish to challenge the assumptions inherent in Nelson's statement and the larger tendency to disregard figures such as Kim Tal-su in discussions of other Zainichi authors. In fact, first-generation authors also frequently wrote about the identity issues of Koreans in Japan, and did so using devices and styles that would be emulated by those of the second-generation and beyond.

⁴⁹ Nelson, "Korean Literature in Japan," 130.

Nelson suggests that explorations of identity can be used as a benchmark to measure change in the concerns of Zainichi authors as a community. In order to reevaluate the perception that works by first-generation authors are thematically removed from those of the second generation, in this chapter I take a chronological look at some of the ways both generations of authors have questioned whether they are Korean, Japanese or a new type of person called ‘Zainichi.’ I continue to focus on Kim Tal-su’s short stories, and by illustrating parallels with other Zainichi authors, I situate Kim among his peers and argue for a more integrated understanding of the relationship between first and second-generation Zainichi authors. I begin this chapter by examining how Korean and Japanese names are used to represent ethnic conflict in works written by the first Korean authors to be recognized by the Japanese literary establishment. At the same time other parallels and connections emerge among both generations of authors, such as the manipulation of the Japanese language in their writing and the internalization of negative Japanese attitudes towards Koreans.

While Ri Kaisei may have been the first Zainichi author to win the Akutagawa award, both Kim Tal-su and another first generation author before him, Kim Saryang 金史良 (1914-50), were nominated for the award in 1958 and 1938, respectively. Among the elements that works by these authors share is the use of multiple names as a literary device to express a character’s confused (sometimes dual) sense of ethnic identity.

The short story “Hikari no naka ni”(光の中に In the Light), for which Kim Saryang was nominated to receive the Akutagawa award, centers on the relationship

of a Korean university student with a young boy of mixed parentage named Yamada Haruo.⁵⁰ Due to the complexities of the Japanese writing system, the university student's name can be read either as 'Nan,' a close approximation of the Korean 'Nam,' or 'Minami' a native Japanese-sounding word, and in either case is written: 南. In other words, because of the character's high level of education and his ability to speak fluent Japanese and the double reading of his name, he can be identified as either Japanese or Korean. Minami⁵¹ teaches at the S community center and it is his coworkers who started using the Japanese version of his name; more important though are his psychological associations with each version of the name.

In his analysis of "In the Light," Jonathan Glade identifies the juxtaposition of subjective validations for both versions of the student's name. In explaining his use of the Japanese version of his name, the narrator says, "Before I realized it, everyone was referring to me as Mr. 'Minami' at the center. As you know, my last name should be read 'Nan'..."⁵² The word 'should' (読むべきだ) in this case implies that Minami accepts the Korean reading as correct, giving it primacy. Yet when describing his coworker's habit of calling him 'Minami' the narrator uses phrases such as 'they did me the favor of calling me Minami' or 'they were so kind as to call me that. (それと呼ん

⁵⁰ Originally published as Kim Saryang (Kin Shiryō), "Hikari no naka ni" *Bungei shuto* (1939 October). Reprinted in Kim Saryang (Kin Shiryō), *Hikari no naka ni: Kin Shiryō sakuhinshū* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1999).

⁵¹ I will follow the convention set by Jonathan Glade by privileging the Japanese reading for this character's name. However, it should be noted that the original Japanese text does not privilege either reading. As the reader interacts with sentences such as "南 said," and "南 was afraid," he or she will likely decide which reading is natural and hear it as they read, or make no verbal association with the character at all; simply comprehending it and then moving on.

⁵² Glade, "Assimilation Through Resistance" 46.

でくれた) There is a contradiction in the narrator's desire to maintain his Korean-ness while performing his social roles as teacher and student identifying himself as Japanese. Glade describes both Minami and Haruo as constructing 'hiding places' for their ethnic identity, which then allow them to assimilate into Japanese society. "Yet this hiding place is extremely fragile. If Minami's colleagues suddenly decided to use the Korean reading of "Nan," the slippage [between identities] would become great, exposing Minami's hiding place, constructing him as ethnically different, and preventing him from assimilating."⁵³

Yamada Haruo is a young child who attends the community center. His mother is Korean, and it is later revealed that his abusive father is most likely half-Korean, but Haruo desperately insists that he himself is Japanese and he reacts violently to anything Korean. When his mother is brought to the center's infirmary and identified by another character as Korean, Haruo clings to Minami saying, "It's not true! I'm not a Korean! I'm not a Korean! Right Sensei?" In the end, Minami and Haruo form a relationship that helps both to learn to accept their identities. Near the end Haruo looks up at Minami and says:

"I think I know your name, Sensei."
"Really?" Embarrassed, I gave him a laugh. "Say it for me."
"It's Nan, isn't it?"⁵⁴

Kim Tal-su pays homage to Kim Saryang and his skillful manipulation of Korean names in "A *Takuju* Toast," one of the stories discussed in Chapter One. Here Kim uses the names of characters as a device to identify loyalties and critique the

⁵³ Ibid., 47.

⁵⁴ Kim Saryang, *Hikari no naka ni: Kin Shiryō sakuhinshū* 30.

name-change policy Japan implemented for all Koreans in 1939. The policy was called *sōshikai* 創氏改名 and it stipulated that Koreans had to adopt Japanese names. Koreans often complied with this rule in way that allowed them to maintain some connection to their original name or another signifier of their heritage. For example, the special agent Kōyama accomplishes this through the addition of a character to his family name. When he arrives at An Tongsun’s office, Tongsun attempts to address him by his Korean name: “Mr. Kōyama (黄山), that is, Mr. Hwang(黄), right? Mr. Ebara (江原) of the fire department is named Ch’oe (崔) but he comes from Kangwon Province 江原道⁵⁵ so he made his name Ebara.”⁵⁶ An Tongsun chooses neither to add a character to his last name nor to change it to the name of a place as Ebara does; rather, like Minami of “In the Light,” he takes advantage of his name’s possible Japanese reading. Tongsun says that although the characters of a Korean name should be written together, or with a space following the single-character family name, he separates the first two characters from the third, thereby coincidentally creating a Japanese name, Andō Jun (安東 淳). He attributes this unique solution to an incident involving a Korean author he once met named Kim Saryang (金士亮). In this story the name Kim Saryang appears using different Chinese characters, but the same phonetic spelling as Kim Tal-su’s contemporary, Kim Saryang (金史良), the author of “In the Light.” When accused of

⁵⁵ At the time of colonial rule this large province on the east coast of the peninsula stretched between what are now North and South Korea.

⁵⁶ KZS1 226.

having failed to change his name, Kim Saryang insists: “My name is Kaneshi Ryō(金士 亮).” While An Tongsun appreciates the convenience of his name, unlike Minami of “In the Light,” he does not use the Japanese pronunciation as a way to ‘hide’ his ethnic heritage. Rather he uses it unwillingly after being chastised by the editor of his paper, and often thinks to himself: “I’m not Andō Jun, I’m An Tongsun!”

Conversely, Kōyama is a Korean who assimilates enthusiastically. Even after his Korean identity and name are revealed, he continues to speak Japanese with the other Korean characters and to address them by their Japanese names. The text of the narrative also continues to use his two-character Japanese name, Kōyama, rather than reverting to Hwang. Perhaps, most significantly, as he identifies himself over the phone to another Korean (Ebara) he uses his Japanese name: “This is Kōyama.” During this phone conversation An Tongsun notices that in fact Kōyama’s Japanese is not as fluent as he had expected and still has a Korean accent. This implies that Tongsun’s Japanese is better and helps set up the contrast between Tongsun and Kōyama by eliminating the possibility that Kōyama is simply further along in a natural process of assimilation. Kōyama’s use of Japanese and Japanese names is not the inevitable result of more exposure to Japanese society and language; if this were so we could expect similar attitudes and habits in Tongsun. Japanese may be a necessity for economic opportunity and participation in society outside of Korean neighborhoods, but a new Japanese identity need not replace one’s Korean heritage. Kōyama’s Japanese name is emblematic of the new person he is becoming. Ebara and

An Tongsun, however, attempt to maintain something of their heritage in the creation of their Japanese names.

In another story, set after the war, Kim presents two characters who are trying to assert their ethnic identity as Koreans by using their Korean names but are having trouble shaking off the colonial dynamic in their interactions with Japanese people.

The story is titled “Hanrangun” (叛乱軍 Rebel Army) (1949) and will end with the repatriation of both Ch’oe Hun チュフン 秋薰 and Pak Inkyu パクインキョ 朴仁奎 to North Korea.⁵⁷

Inkyu was like this too, but Ch’oe Hun was so sensitive to [hearing his Japanese name] that he had what could perhaps be called a biological hatred for it. Or perhaps he was afraid of it. If he met a Japanese on the street whom he’d been close to back then, and they knew and called him by his true name, he would realize it and instantly show a friendly warmth; such moments were rare and moving; however if someone did the opposite, calling him Akiyama-kun 秋山君 or Akiyama-san 秋山さん (even if the *kun* of prior to 8.15 had become *san*⁵⁸), his eloquent speech would become incoherent, sweat would appear on his forehead, and within a minute he couldn’t keep his displeasure from showing clearly in his expression. Without knowing the reason, the other person would wonder why he was suddenly spoiling the good mood of running into an old friend, and depart with a certain ambiguous feeling.⁵⁹

Among the people Ch’oe Hun asks to use his Korean name is Chisaki Akiko, a Japanese woman he worked with during the war. The two had a relationship but were separated before the end of the war and then meet again by chance, while waiting in line to see a movie. Afterwards as they talk at a nearby café, Chisaki addresses Ch’oe Hun in *keigo* 敬語, polite speech that implies that his social position

⁵⁷ Originally published Kim Tal-su, “Hanrangun,” *Chōryū* (1949 August/September).

⁵⁸ Chu Fun is differentiating two honorific suffixes, both essentially meaning “Mr. Akiyama,” but the former, *kun*, implies the speaker is in a superior position, while *san* is closer to equal. – “8.15” is August 15 of 1945, the day on which the Emperor broadcast his surrender across the entire country by radio. Koreans in Japan came to refer to this as the date of Korean Liberation. 八・一五 (*hachi ten ichi go*).

⁵⁹ KZS1 280.

is higher than her own. However she persistently uses his Japanese name: Akiyama, and refuses to defer to his wish for her to use his ethnic name. He pleads with her:

“Please stop calling me that weird name ‘Akiyama,’ won’t you call me *Chu* ^{チュ}秋 or *Hun*

^{フン}薰? Even *Shu* ^{しゅ}秋 would be alright; but from now on don’t you think it wouldn’t hurt

you to learn at least this much Korean?”⁶⁰ Chisaki does appreciate why Ch’oe Hun

wants her to address him by his Korean name: “Oh my, what a strange name, why

would you say such a thing all of a sudden?” When he insists that it is natural for her

to call him by his true name, and that Akiyama is the strange version, she continues to

devalue Korean names with words such as “strange” (変), and

“disgusting/unpleasant” (嫌). “*Ch’oe*, ‘*Chu*?’ It sounds like ‘*Chay*’, don’t you think

it’s strange? *Hun*,ahaha, well, I hate it. It’s weird. Mr. Akiyama, yeah, I still like that

better. Just let me keep calling you Mr. Akiyama. Okay? Right Mr. Akiyama?” For

the moment Ch’oe Fun simply grunts his frustrated assent.

Whether Chisaki intends it or not, her refusal to address Ch’oe Fun by his Korean name denies his ethnic identity, and in his mind, the independence of the Korean people as a whole. Their relationship symbolizes the uneasy situation of Koreans as former colonial subjects living in the newly defeated Japan. By insisting on using his Japanese name, Chisaki reenacts a colonial mode of interaction; if not to assert power as the colonizer, then simply to erase Ch’oe Fun the Korean, and replace

⁶⁰ KZS1 283. The “you” in the original text is *anata-tachi* (あなたたち), a plural form of the pronoun, thus implying not just Chisaki but the Japanese in general should learn enough Korean to call them by their ethnic names.

him with Akiyama the Japanese. At her suggestion Ch'oe Fun agrees to take her to the hot springs town of Hakone, but when the time comes to meet her he has a moment of enlightenment and abandons the plan. As though waking up from a dream, Ch'oe Fun realizes he can never accept the terms of interaction with this woman, which means denying his true identity.

When it comes to the second generation, Ri Kaisei (李恢成)⁶¹ (born 1935 in modern day Sakhalin) made history by winning the Akutagawa prize for “The Woman who Filled Clothes” (砧^{きぬた}を打つ女 *Kinuta wo utsu onna*) (1972). This story, along with many of Ri's other works, is autobiographical and strongly resembles the stream of consciousness style of Shiga Naoya's “At Kinosaki.” Ri's work is a meditation on the death of the narrator's mother as retold through flashbacks. Melissa Wender identifies this story as an “I” novel, but one with the interaction of imbricated narrative voices such as the adult narrator, himself as a child, and his grandmother as she speaks through the child's memory.⁶² The confluence of these voices and other literary techniques serve to turn the story itself into a form of the shamanistic lament sung by the grandmother at the loss of her daughter: *sinse t'aryōng*⁶³.

Like Kim Saryang and Kim Tal-su, Ri Kaisei also uses the narrator's name, “Jojo,” as a site of ethnic conflict. “Jojo” is a nickname, but it is the only name used

⁶¹ The Korean reading for the author's name is Lee Hoesung, 李恢成. Existing scholarship has followed the author's stated personal preference to use the Japanese reading for his name.

⁶² Wender, *Lamentation as History*, 34.

⁶³ Nelson describes this practice as the spontaneous outpouring of grief in the form of an unstructured song or chant. In the story the grandmother most often repeats the name of her daughter but sometimes includes a story or praise of her daughter's virtues. Nelson argues that the story itself, with *sinse t'aryōng* at its heart, becomes a form of lament for the mother. In this way the distinctly Japanese “I” novel's structure is combined with a nativistic Korean cultural practice (pg. 138-41)

by the narrator, whom the reader presumes to be Ri Kaisei himself. Jojo's mother dies shortly before the end of the war. Because of the name change policy mentioned above there is an expectation that her child will have a Japanese name. Jojo is a Korean word, but ambiguous in its origins. The narrator can piece together that it means something like 'scamp' or 'smart-aleck,' but never learns its exact meaning. He presents four possible spellings in the Korean alphabet. Ri also makes no mention of Jojo's family name. Wender asserts that this is a purposeful omission on Ri's part. Jojo associates himself with his mother. Inheriting his father's name carries with it the implication that the child will grow up to perpetuate the greater patriarchy as an adult, taking his father's place in the family and society. In society his father is a second-class citizen; in the family his father is a violent brute. The narrator traces the name "Jojo" back to the capital of the Silla in Korea, the last time the peninsula was united under one kingdom. Wender identifies this as a subtle suggestion that Japanese interference is to blame for the country's current lack of unity.⁶⁴

Whether or not purposefully used as a representation of ethnic identity or conflict, the presence of names and other Korean words has another effect: it alters the textual landscape. A Korean character's name usually first appears in kanji (Hanja in Korean) with a phonetic approximation of the original Korean pronunciation:

アントンスン
安東淳 (An Tongsun). The phonetic guide is given at the side of the vertically aligned text, seeming to float in the margins between lines. The same type of guide appears when there are alternate kanji or unusual readings being used in the text. In

⁶⁴ Wender, *Lamentation as History*, 40.

Ri Kaisei's work Melissa Wender identifies the Korean name of the narrator's mother, which is the first word of the first sentence of "Kinuta wo utsu onna," along with the author's obviously foreign name, as immediately calling the reader's attention to non-Japanese elements of the story.⁶⁵ The word *Kinuta* (fuller board) is a Japanese word, but not necessarily a familiar object; it also occurs with a phonetic gloss and evokes a sense of foreignness.

In Kim Tal-su's "*Takuju no kanpai*" (A *Takuju* Toast) 濁酒^{タクジュ}の乾杯, the title includes the phonetic reading *takuju* over two characters which would otherwise be commonly recognized by Japanese readers as *nigori-zake* 濁酒 (a type of cloudy rice-wine). The presence of the guide itself signals the appearance of something the reader might be unfamiliar with, and the sharp-lettered katakana identifies it as a foreign word before the reader has even processed the sound it represents. *Takuju* is the first word of the title, and presumably the reader's first interaction with this text is to see that a familiar word is to be read using a foreign pronunciation. The phonetic guide has a disruptive effect on the text by keeping it from appearing as a clean line of characters. Until the reader reaches one of these foreign words the text on the page had been a unified and smooth representation of the Japanese language, however, suddenly two entities, one of them being obviously foreign, are vying for space within the line.

Many of Kim's short stories are peppered with Korean words appearing in katakana, often followed by an explanation in kanji. Although it is now ubiquitous in

⁶⁵ Wender, *Lamentation as History*, 33-34.

Japanese convenience stores, the author does not expect readers in the early 1950s to know what kimchi was, and in the text it appears in katakana followed by a Japanese explanation: *tsukemono* (literally: pickled vegetables) キムチ(漬物).⁶⁶ Although the Japanese word successfully conveys the concept of fermenting a vegetable, it comes with its own associations and is unlikely to help the reader successfully visualize the spicy cabbage dish. Similar quick glosses occur for traditional Korean clothing such as the *chima* and *jeogori*, describing them simply as ‘lower skirt’ (下袴) and ‘upper clothing’ (上衣) respectively.⁶⁷ The exclamation ‘*aigo*’ often appears in Kim’s texts, as well as other Korean words such as “ajimonii” アジモニー(お内儀さん) for housewife, a word used in Korean to address married women as opposed to unmarried ones. Seeing any of these words reinforces the sense of ‘the other’ in the text. It also shakes the readers’ sense of comfort with the language by making the reader pay attention to special phonetic notes. They must stop and consciously sound out the foreign words within the story, interrupting the flow of the text.

In “A *Takuju* Toast” the Korean version of cloudy rice-wine, ‘*takuju*,’ brewed with a method brought over with the Korean immigrants, has become the economic support of the city’s Korean slum. This is why An Tongsun brings the collaborator Kōyama to the slum that Kōyama had earlier terrorized. Since Kōyama seems to think of himself as Japanese, Tongsun intends to test him by appealing to his biological Korean-ness. When An, Ebara and Kōyama arrive at a small house to eat they are

⁶⁶ KZS1 309.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 305.

served *Dongchang* ドングチャング (贓物) (giblets) “Anyone Korean was sure to love it,”⁶⁸ and they drink *takuju*. In the scene which gives the story its title, the three men toast with the *takuju*. The wine itself had been prominently identified as a marker of ethnic difference by the title.

The scene carries the message that even if there is crossover between Koreans and Japanese, people such as Kōyama and *takuju* are defined by what they are and where they come from, not by what people call them. In this story language is consciously manipulated; at times Korean words occur so frequently that they nearly crowd out the Japanese part of a passage, making the narrative voice feel like a creole. The foreign elements are brought abruptly to the reader’s eye; they dominate the landscape of the story in the same way that they dominate the text on the page itself.

“A *Takuju* Toast” is narrated from a third person perspective but allows the reader entry into An Tongsun’s consciousness. The reader shares in his anxiety during air raids, his fear of arrest, and later his rage in the climactic scene. When Kōyama, continuing to address Tongsun by his Japanese name, insults the conditions of the Korean slum, Tongsun wants to “punch him to death right here.”⁶⁹ The story ends with this same feeling, a boiling anger below the surface but with no final eruption. In the end, having witnessed events from An Tongsun’s point of view, we are inclined to make certain judgments about Kōyama’s behavior: he is a traitor; specifically, he is a traitor because he gained power and instead of using it to improve the conditions of Koreans or to protect them he used that power against them by

⁶⁸ Ibid., 231.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

spying for the Japanese. However, the story also carries a cautionary message for those who cooperate with the Japanese.

Kōyama exhibits contempt for poor Koreans and wants to associate with successful ones using Japanese language and names. He himself might be unable to associate with native Japanese because of his own heritage, but he seeks to interact with Koreans in a Japanese mode. His actions devalue Korean things and people and place a high value on the colonizer culture. Kōyama's enthusiastic adoption of his Japanese name and the material benefits he receives from the Japanese come at the cost of internalizing the Japanese prejudice against Koreans.

Yamada Haruo of "In the Light," in his violent reaction to all things Korean, has also absorbed the usual Japanese attitude toward Koreans. While Kōyama was enticed by ambition to acquire Japanese-ness, or to escape poverty, Haruo internalizes the attitudes of his father who uses violence to assert a colonial order within his house. His father, Hanbei, stole his wife from a family of Koreans by threatening to burn down their restaurant, and he continues to brutally beat her to control her movements and keep her from associating with other Koreans. Early in the story Haruo will do anything to avoid being identified as a Korean; his primary strategy is to set himself up in the role of the colonizer by verbally demeaning Korean people such as Minami.

In contrast to these two first-generation stories, Kin Kakuei 金鶴泳 (1938-85), a contemporary of Ri Kaisei, also took up the problem of Koreans who adopt Japanese views of their own people in a short story titled, "The Wall of the Gaze," (眼差しの壁 Manazashi no kabe). As the title suggests, the story describes the

narrator's constant awareness of being identified by the Japanese around him as different; a process that has ingrained itself deeply in the narrator's psyche, so much so that standing in a public place he imagines the eyes of everyone present trained on him. However, when he himself sees another Korean he identifies him with the negative qualities contained in Japanese stereotypes: "Greedy, pushy, a drinker, quick to get in fights, poor, dirty; in other words uncivilized, an uncontrollable barbarian."⁷⁰

In an article titled, "Kids Between Nations," Jeffrey Hester describes the strategies of Japanese educators in Osaka (the city with the largest population of Koreans in Japan) for teaching young Koreans; his article points to the important role of using ethnic names among Korean children.⁷¹ "Echoing an approach developed early in the Buraku liberation movement, embracing rather than trying to hide a status that has been stigmatized works to neutralize the stigma." This theory suggests that using Japanese names validates the proposition that Korean names (and by implication Korean heritage) are things to be hidden. In contrast, using Korean names helps to prevent the children from suffering the psychological stress of having to hide their identity.

In the next chapter, as I turn to Kim Tal-su's depiction of ethnic education and the closing of Korean schools we should consider how the writings of these authors reflect shared concerns in the Zainichi community over time. Both the Korean-born authors Kim Saryang and Kim Tal-su, as well as Japan-born authors such as Ri Kaisei

⁷⁰ Wender, *Lamentation as History*, 72.

⁷¹ Jeffrey Hester, "Kids Between Nations" in Ryang, *Koreans in Japan*. p. 175-196.

and Kin Kakuei write about Koreans in Japan who suffer identity conflict. Unlike stories focused on themes of discrimination, in which Koreans can be defined as the oppressed and Japanese as the oppressors, these conflicts more commonly divide a single person against him or herself. We observed this to be the case with Kim Saryang's *Minami* who wanted to maintain his social position without admitting that he was hiding behind his Japanese name. Similarly, in Kim Tal-su's "Hanrangun," (1949) the protagonist Ch'oe Hun is divided between his desire to assert the independence of his people and his physical desire for a woman who refuses to call him by his Korean name. In contrast to these two examples, Ri Kaisei's Akutagawa prize-winning short story creates a more ambiguous type of ethnic conflict by using the name "Jojo." Although clearly identified as a Korean word, "Jojo" is not a formal Korean name, nor can it be altered to become a Japanese name.

The article mentioned above by Jeffrey Hester suggests that the use of Korean names exists at the nexus of forming Korean identity and defeating racism against them. Hester, however, is describing the actions of the Osaka school board half-a-century after *Zainichi* literature took up the problem. From its inception with first-generation authors, literature in the resident Korean community has been a space to consider identity conflicts. It also reflects the variety of different social situations and other circumstances in which Koreans have found their identities challenged. This capacity helps us explain why *Zainichi* Koreans have been moved to write, and how their literature has become gradually more prominent in the Japanese mainstream.

Chapter Three

The Closing of Early Korean Ethnic Schools: “A Chapter from the Other Night” and “Big Barrel Granny”

Some of the motivations for resident Koreans to found separate, Korean-only schools may have already become apparent. In the preceding chapters the stories we have examined so far suggest the confusion of Japanese and Korean identities among Koreans who have spent most or all of their lives in Japan. Despite the preservation of Korean culture within closely-knit communities, the children of the second generation are surrounded by Japanese; the process of assimilation seems inevitable and ties to the Korean homeland become more distant. Although Koreans are liberated as a people from the imperialist state in 1945, racism and prejudice against them continue in society. Kim Tal-su’s own life included bitter experiences within Japanese schools despite his display of talent. Immediately after their liberation Koreans faced an educational challenge that remains a prime concern of the community today: how to create an environment in which Korean-ness is the norm and in which Korean students and teachers are treated respectfully instead of as second-class citizens. This would enable them to preserve Korean culture and at the same time spare their children the bullying and isolation they typically encounter in Japanese classrooms.

Before the end of the Pacific War Korean schools did not exist. In 1930 the Ministry of Education extended the law of compulsory education to include Korean children, but it went largely un-enforced. Those Korean students who did attend school went to Japanese public schools and were given no special treatment. Schools with a large number of Korean students sometimes set up cheap independent facilities

to separate them from the Japanese students. Some went to tutors or after-school programs to learn Korean, and many, like Kim Tal-su, attended night school.⁷²

Approximately one year after the end of the war, the League of Koreans⁷³ (hereafter: the league or *Chōren*), a political organization which had originally been founded to assist repatriating Koreans, began to shift its focus to the lives of Koreans who were staying in Japan. Hiromitsu Inokuchi reports that it had founded “541 elementary schools, seven junior high schools, twenty-two adolescent schools, and eight high schools” by October of 1947.⁷⁴ This was accomplished primarily by pooling the resources of the Korean communities but often with partial cooperation from government officials.⁷⁵

From the start the Japanese government’s official stance was one of non-involvement; the Ministry of Education permitted Koreans to build their own schools but denied them any public funding. The occupation forces’ Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (SCAP), however, feared the potential for social conflict posed by ethnic education and interpreted the issue in terms of Zainichi Koreans’ ambiguous nationality. To simplify Koreans’ legal treatment and because Japan had not formalized relations with Korea, SCAP propagated a policy of treating Koreans in Japan as Japanese nationals.⁷⁶ Under the close direction of SCAP and over the

⁷² Inokuchi Hiromitsu, “Korean Ethnic Schools in Occupied Japan, 1945-52” in Ryang, *Koreans in Japan*, 143.

⁷³ 在日朝鮮人連盟. The ‘Zainichi chōsenjin renmei,’ (abbreviated 朝連 ‘Chōren’) was founded in October of 1945, and then suppressed in 1949. Ryang, *Koreans in Japan*, 5.

⁷⁴ Inokuchi, “Korean Ethnic Schools in Japan,” 149.

⁷⁵ Inokuchi mentions specifically the governor of Osaka and mayor of Kobe who helped facilitate the development of Korean schools in those areas.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

objection of some cabinet members, on January 24, 1948 the Ministry of Education issued an order stating that school-age Korean children must attend either a Japanese school or a Korean school accredited within the Japanese system (in which the teaching of Korean would be only extracurricular and the language of instruction would be Japanese). Needless to say, the League of Koreans strongly opposed this measure, and although orders were given to close Korean schools by the beginning of the new school year (starting in April), Korean schools continued to hold classes as usual.⁷⁷ As the deadline approached it seemed more and more likely that the Japanese government would have to use force to shut down the Korean schools.

Kim Tal-su was affiliated with both the League of Koreans and their schools. In his first-hand accounts of the closing of ethnic schools we can gain a unique perspective on the culmination of the policy outlined above. In this chapter I focus on two translations submitted with this study, “Big Barrel Granny” and “A Chapter from the Other Night,” to analyze Kim’s depiction of these events. “Big Barrel Granny” (四斗樽のお婆さん *Shidotaru no obaasan*) was serialized from March to October of 1949 in *New Kanagawa*, a publication of the Kanagawa Communist Party.⁷⁸ However, along with the general suppression of the Communist Party, the journal was abolished and Kim’s story cut off mid-way. “A Chapter from the Other Night” (前夜の章 *Zenya no shō*) appeared three years later in the April 1952 issue of *Chūō Kōron* (中央

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Originally published Kim Tal-su. “Shidotaru no obaasan,” *Shin Kanagawa*, March – October 1949.

公論).⁷⁹ This ‘composite magazine’ (総合雑誌 *sōgō zasshi*), containing literary works as well as non-fiction essays on topics of social or political interest, has been continuously printed since its founding in the Meiji period, and has featured several of Japan’s greatest modern authors.⁸⁰ For Kim Tal-su the reputation and readership of *Chūō Kōron* meant bringing the story of Korean school closings to a wider audience than that of *New Kanagawa*.

In the foreword of the first of these two stories to be published Kim calls “Big Barrel Granny” a *reportage*-style short story. If we take him at his word the recording of this story is presumably an accurate depiction of the closing of Korean schools in Tokyo. As we shall see throughout this chapter, the circumstances that Kim describes in the story coincide with historical sources, but the perspective is significantly different. “Big Barrel Granny” can be used as a baseline against which to compare Kim’s fictionalized version of the same events in “A Chapter from the Other Night.” The historical elements that Kim chose to preserve as well as the elements that he chose to change for literary reasons come to the fore in this comparison and help us to further investigate the intersection of autobiography and literature. In this chapter my analysis of these stories reveals the political climate circulating around the closing of Korean schools and examines the way Kim used literature to bring this issue into the public dialogue.

The most conspicuous difference between the two stories is Kim Tal-su himself, who appears as the first person “I” in “Big Barrel Granny,” but in “A

⁷⁹ Originally published Kim Tal-su. “Zenya no shō,” *Chūō Kōron*, April 1952.

⁸⁰ Including Tanizaki Junichirō, Shimazaki Tōson and many others. <http://www.chuokoron.jp/>

Chapter from the Other Night” is replaced with An Tongsun 安東淳, by now a familiar name to us from “A *Takuju* Toast.” Still, he is easily identifiable as Kim for a number of reasons: in both stories “I” and An Tongsun have been preparing to open a bookstore in a former *Chōren* office, an organization with which they were both affiliated before it was disbanded. In both stories the central character is absent when the actual police action takes place, and he suffers guilt when seeing injured friends and family.

As we read “Big Barrel Granny,” if we assume Kim’s efforts to open a bookstore and the simultaneous closing of Korean schools to be a coincidence, naturally the next question is why the bookstore occupies such a large role in “A Chapter from the Other Night” as well. We have already observed that writers in the Zainichi tradition commonly borrow elements from their own experiences in the writing of fiction, yet life experiences and literary devices are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In other words, I believe Kim is consciously trying to convert the personal significance of his efforts to open this bookstore into a symbol within the story.

Actually, the bookstore sits at the intersection of several themes connected to Zainichi education and politics. Kim seems to be better off than some of his friends and students, but he too is financially constrained. At its most basic level the bookstore is his attempt at sustenance. More broadly speaking it is a test of whether Koreans can participate in the larger social and economic system, and therefore whether they have a place in Japan itself. The bookstore exists in the space formerly

occupied by an office of the League of Koreans; Kim writes that he had wanted to set up such a bookstore for some time but could not until the League was disbanded.

The League's founding principle was the repatriation of Koreans. Kim Tal-su, being left without money or employment because of the dissolution of this organization, tries to use the opportunity to start a business. It is an action which at once implies that he is setting down roots in Japan and is unlikely to repatriate, but it is also a test of the capitalist dynamic. If Japan is truly a democracy and Koreans have truly been liberated, then he should be able to pursue his dream as an equal member of society.

Like Kim's character, the schools in these two stories undergo a literary transformation. In "Big Barrel Granny" the Tokyo Korean schools are virtual powder kegs. In the same paragraph that Kim describes the middle school and high school as "renovated gunpowder storehouses" he alludes to a possible explosion of violence, describing the characters of slogans on the school's gates as "the angry faces of people who were going to keep the armed police from taking even one step inside no matter what happened."⁸¹ Later he goes on to describe the students as 'bloodthirsty' (血気盛らん) and vividly imagines the coming clash with armed police officers.

It is ironic that such an eruption of violence could be the result of a SCAP policy designed to deter ethnic conflict. However it seems feasible when we consider that SCAP's strategy for dealing with Koreans was to treat them as legally Japanese. Four short years after Korea's long and traumatic colonial experience, the people in

⁸¹ KZS2 262.

Kim Tal-su's story still have stores of anger and suspicion towards the Japanese. Nevertheless, however much the policy of the occupation officials may have to do with outbreaks of violence, such an outbreak would likely reflect badly on the Korean community, leading to further suppression. This constitutes a possible reason for the particular change in tone in "A Chapter from the Other Night."

As opposed to the middle school and high school in Tokyo, "A Chapter from the Other Night" centers on an elementary school in a naval town. Unlike the youths Kim describes in "Big Barrel Granny," who number in excess of a thousand and are ready to fight passionately to protect their school, the children in this school, a mere hundred or so, are helpless under the siege of armed police. Kim uses striking images to convey both the brutality of the raid and the overwhelming force of the police as they invade the building. The officers are a "pitch black mountain." They catch people by their collars and throw them out of the building. Children still clutching their desks "were thrown outside like dogs or cats, desks and all."⁸²

After the raid, the school is occupied by the police. A standoff ensues for over a month as the Koreans try to negotiate with government officials; during this time the students remain devoted to studying peacefully in the empty space outside the school, even with the presence of the guards. There is a palpable tension between the police occupying the school and the Korean community members who gather opposite them while the children study; however, the threat of Koreans initiating violence seems relatively negligible.

⁸² KZS2 56.

The school as a physical entity has certain associations as well. On the one hand it is a very small, tin-roofed building. The simplicity of the facilities, and the students who are willing to study outside on the ground if they have to, suggests that the matter at hand is the very simple right of the community to educate its own children, as opposed to a struggle over the school itself. To the members of this community the property is only relevant insofar as it is the minimum basic accommodation required to continue passing on Korean culture to their children. On the other hand, like the school in “Big Barrel Granny,” this elementary school is remodeled from a military facility, in this case a naval barracks. While this building comes without the explosive connotation of the gunpowder storehouses, in both stories Korean schools have replaced sites of the Japanese military establishment. The subtext is now that the war is over, it is fitting that these places be used as a means to better the lot of the people who were oppressed by Japan’s imperialist ambitions.

Further, the school is isolated. It is set apart from the regular elementary school and other city buildings ‘in an open place on the shore.’⁸³ Koreans live on the margins of Japanese society; this school on the shore literally places them at the edge of the country itself. In this story the beach stands out as a liminal space, as does the window through which the Koreans must enter the part of the school they still possess. These places of transition suggest larger changes in the lives of the people involved. When they are forcibly removed from the school the children remain studying outside near the ocean, pushed even further out of Japan by the repression of ethnic education.

⁸³ KZS2 58.

At this point the Koreans who wish to preserve their culture while living in Japan have been denied any physical space at all in which to do so, the only place they have left to go is the ocean at their backs; in other words, if they wish to be Korean they must return to Korea.

In fact, when “Big Barrel Granny” was published in 1949 the prospect of crossing that ocean was still strong in people’s minds and this is one of the reasons ethnic education was developed. When SCAP chose to define Koreans in Japan as Japanese nationals, the League’s response asserted that they were in fact Korean nationals and their children would need the Korean language because they intended to repatriate.⁸⁴ If Korean children born in Japan were to be reintegrated into Korean society they would need to speak Korean and understand its culture and history. Thus Korean negotiators made Korean language and cultural education their conditions for sending their children to Japanese schools. This story and other early works by Kim Tal-su often imply that Japan is only a temporary home for Koreans:

“[Their] home, Korea, was reaping the benefits of voluntary North-South talks, but unification still looked a long way off. In other words, they still didn’t know when they would be able to go home.”⁸⁵

Political disunity was one of the myriad reasons some Koreans stayed on in Japan. But of the approximately two million who were there at war’s end, almost three quarters had returned to Korea by March of 1946.⁸⁶ In the remaining expatriate

⁸⁴ Inokuchi, “Korean Ethnic Schools in Occupied Japan” 150.

⁸⁵ KZS2 69.

⁸⁶ Inokuchi, “Korean Ethnic Schools in Occupied Japan,” 146.

community the vast majority (98 percent) of Koreans had come from the South, yet in general the group tended to support North Korea and leftist political organizations. Sonia Ryang points to Korean communist leaders who participated in the anti-Japanese resistance movement before and during the war as one reason for this tendency, along with better organization among the communists.⁸⁷ In addition to these points, Beverly Nelson also alludes to the basic appeal of the Marxist doctrine of class struggle among Koreans who regarded themselves as a large and impoverished laborer class subject to the Japanese.⁸⁸ Certainly this is borne out by Kim's description of the Korean community leaders in "A Chapter from the Other Night."

Kim Tal-su's own political inclinations are clearly in the leftist vein as well. "Big Barrel Granny" was originally published by a communist organization in Kanagawa, and in Kim's stories characters who do repatriate consistently go to the north. Its leftist tendencies are the most frequently cited reasons for dissolving the League of Koreans and their schools.⁸⁹ The political overtones of "A Chapter from the Other Night" are not necessarily overtly communist, but Kim does emphasize the dynamic of oppressed people fighting back against injustice. He describes the school closings as the "suppression" of ethnic education and during the negotiations Yi Pyeonggu, one of the Koreans' representatives, haltingly asks the city officials, "Don't you recognize our independence?" The narrator's attitude toward unjust

⁸⁷ Ryang, *Koreans in Japan*, 5.

⁸⁸ Nelson, "Korean Literature in Japan", 129.

⁸⁹ Wender, *Lamentation as History*, 20.

authority is particularly evident in the moment when An Tongsun, thinking about why the authorities had suddenly demanded that the schools be closed, is overcome by a sudden ‘confusion,’ and crushes his cigarette on the ‘immaculately white’ steps of city hall.

At first the Koreans in this story use every method at their disposal to work within the system to maintain some kind of control over the education of their children. To apply pressure on government officials the women of the community gather at the school everyday as the stalled negotiations continue. In the story’s climax the Korean mothers and students make a show of force by taking over city hall and causing chaos until the mayor concedes to their demands. Although violence is threatened and the Korean women physically intimidate the bureaucrats of city hall, in Kim’s depiction it is the *will of the people* that wins out. While “Big Barrel Granny” threatens the all-out clash of over one thousand able-bodied Korean students against the police, through most of “A Chapter from the Other Night” Kim depicts the students and mothers of the school stuck in a frustrated pattern of inaction. When they do occupy city hall it is the chaos they create, including the loud voices of the students singing songs of independence, that forces the mayor into giving in to their demands.

The contents of “A Chapter from the Other Night” closely resemble the events that unfolded during the efforts to close the city of Kobe’s Korean schools. After evicting Koreans from two schools on April 23, the authorities were unable to close a third one due to the interference of Korean parents and teachers. The next day a mass

demonstration occurred around the prefectural capital in which a group of protestors stormed the building and forced the mayor to meet with their representatives. Like the fictional ‘Mayor Kutsukuchi,’ the actual mayor of Kobe, Koderu Kenkichi, had refused to meet with *Chōren* officials and had also publicly shown them contempt, telling them to go home if they were unsatisfied with the situation in Japan.⁹⁰ The mayor was compelled to acquiesce and agreed to rescind the order to close the schools and also agreed to make a special dispensation for Korean education.

That day the American occupation forces declared a state of emergency and swept in, arresting 1,732 people, including seventy-four Japanese protestors who were sympathetic to the Korean cause. Large-scale protests were also going on in Osaka where 15,000 people surrounded the capital building on April 23. An even larger protest was held on the 26th with participants numbering in excess of 30,000. On the latter date the governor met with league representatives but offered no compromise. This was the day that the sixteen-year-old Kim T’ae-il was shot when the U.S. military ordered the Japanese police to break up the crowd of protestors.⁹¹

Some of these same elements in “A Chapter from the Other Night” have similarities with Kim’s novella, “Paku Tari no saiban” (朴達^{パクタリ}の裁判 The Trial of Pak Tal), for which he was nominated to receive the Akutagawa award in 1958.⁹² The protagonist, Pak Tal, wants Koreans to reject the false dichotomies of ‘North versus South’ and ‘democracy versus communism’ as they have been presented by the U.S.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 151.

⁹¹ Ibid., 151-2

⁹² This story is set in South Korea and because my focus is the lives of Koreans in Japan it has been generally outside the scope of my inquiry

military. He insists that, like the Japanese before them, the U.S. military is not there on behalf of the well-being or unity of the Korean people, but rather its own interests. He secretly organizes a massive strike among the laborers who occupy support positions in the large American base in their area; as planned, the strike brings base operations to a standstill and Pak and several others are arrested for organizing it.

One connection with “A Chapter from the Other Night” is Pak’s method of resisting Japanese police interrogation as well as the American army. The strike itself is a nonviolent method of resistance against what Pak calls a ‘new imperialist’ presence in Korea. Further, when he is tortured by the police Pak does not resist, but continues to smile and act congenially no matter how brutal the beating. In the end Pak is on the ground of his detention cell being kicked by a detective who is furious that he refuses to crack, but it is the detective who then collapses, having defeated himself in his effort to harm Pak Tal.

Both “A Chapter from the Other Night” and “The Trial of Pak Tal” include nonviolent confrontations with authority and the theme of solidarity among communities; one more key parallel is Kim’s attitude toward the American military occupation forces. The American military in “A Chapter from the Other Night” is ever-present but never identified with words such as “America” or “occupation,” and no individual American appears during the story. Kim wrote that this was necessary to avoid censorship;⁹³ however, it has another effect as well. The American forces are identified as ‘a new navy’ that quickly steps into the role of the old one. “Y City had

⁹³ KZS2 431.

always been known as a naval port, and its economy had always relied on the navy, thus at first it looked especially odd to have a new navy in town, but now everyone was completely accustomed to it.” Americans simply replace the Japanese. For example, the new sailors in town quickly revive the Japanese officer’s restaurant, where a cabaret is being built for their entertainment.

As we have already observed, SCAP was the main force attempting to abolish ethnic education, but the ones swinging the clubs and throwing students out of the rooms were still Japanese. The most basic conflict is that of Koreans versus Japanese, just as it had been since the beginning of the colonial period. While Kim might blame the American Occupation for policies that deny the independence of his people, I believe the critique voiced in “A Chapter from the Other Night” is of American inaction. The people who managed to defeat the Japanese are in total control of the town, but all they do is fade into the places where the Japanese used to be. As in “The Trial of Pak Tari,” the people holding the guns have changed, but the fact remains that they are not truly concerned with the Koreans’ well-being.

“Big Barrel Granny” was published less than a year after the first armed raids on Korean schools and Kim wrote it during the period in which Koreans continued negotiations with the Ministry of Education for permission to operate outside the Japanese school system. The story itself was part of the battle to acquire this right. I have encouraged us to look for descriptions of Zainichi Korean’s lives in Kim’s work, and Kim asked the same of Japanese readers. He wanted to publicize that this

violence had happened to “innocent,” “healthy,” “devoted,” “hardworking” students, and that even old women like his own mother had been treated like criminals. With the Japanese government having censored all pro-Korean media coverage of the closings and demonstrations,⁹⁴ “Big Barrel Granny” and “A Chapter from the Other Night” pass along the experiences and words of people close to these historic events. While these stories certainly have their own bias, reading them helps us to complete our understanding of the motivations and people involved. This literature can be used to supplement historical sources most importantly because it gives a voice to the subaltern. At a time when Koreans are still unwelcome in many parts of society and have no or little place in the public domain, literature is an outlet to express the Korean perceptions of the politics they are subjected to.

⁹⁴ Inokuchi, “Korean Schools in Japan,” 150 .

Conclusion

Kim Tal-su lived until 1997, but in the latter part of his life he abandoned the writing of fiction to pursue exclusively his interest in studying the Korean origins of Japanese culture. His stories about the lives of Koreans in Japan were replaced by anthropological writings that centered on the premise that Koreans were not, in fact, an entirely foreign entity in Japan. He continued to write in Japanese, attempting to reveal a connection between the two peoples that had been forgotten or overlooked by historians. Kim stopped writing fiction just as the second generation of Zainichi authors began to find their voices.

In one sense it seems natural that Kim Tal-su should discontinue his writing of fiction given the stark shift in the paradigm of Zainichi life. With the passing of years, Koreans in Japan produced progeny and inevitably they and their offspring assimilated more and more completely into Japanese society. When Japan formalized diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1965, legal treatment improved for those who chose to take South Korean citizenship, but those such as Kim Tal-su, with loyalties to the North, retained a legally ambiguous status. For as rapidly as conditions have changed for Koreans in Japan, the divide between North and South Korea shows no sign of narrowing even today. Kim Tal-su's literature was framed by the presumption that Korea would eventually be reunited, and his stories often explicitly reiterated Kim's opinion that North Korean government and leadership were preferable to that of the South. Perhaps more widely available information about

true conditions in North Korea and the dimming possibility of reunification were among Kim's reasons for bringing his fiction-writing career to an end.

If political circumstances were at work in bringing Kim Tal-su's literary career to a close, they were no less involved in its original inception, and his writing itself was inherently political. With the goal of enlightening the Japanese-speaking populace about the Korean minority, Kim's writing challenged predominant modes of thought, in particular in the wake of the imperialist policy of oppressing Korean culture. Zainichi who took up the pen and published in mainstream media held the potential for Koreans to contribute to the public discourse that they were otherwise essentially shut out of.

In the present study my primary goal has been to provide an introduction to Kim Tal-su and his writing. Although this author fits into an important niche in the development of Zainichi literature, he and first-generation authors in general have yet to receive the attention they deserve from the Western academy. In order to provide a wide sampling of Kim's work, my methodology has been to use brief descriptions from several of his short stories and to present three short translations, thereby enabling the reader to interact directly with the texts. In the three chapters of this thesis I argue that literature evolved in the Zainichi community first as a means for otherwise voiceless Koreans to assert their position in Japanese society by calling attention to the living conditions of Koreans and protesting their unfair treatment at the hands of the Japanese. Secondly, I argue that literature also emerged as an intellectual space in which Koreans might consider the psychological ramifications of

Zainichi life and the new dilemmas born out of their colonial experiences and subsequent liberation. Finally, the study of Kim Tal-su's literature today, nearly a century after imperial Japan first annexed Korea, provides a new perspective on the lives of Koreans in Japan in the immediate postcolonial era and expands our understanding of their interaction with the Japanese.

In Chapter One my description of Kim Tal-su's life begins with the economic ruin and multiple family deaths that precipitate his crossing to Japan. This episode and many other events from Kim's life, for example his work as a newspaper reporter and his involvement with the Korean Alliance, often comprise the background of his fictional characters. Scholars of Zainichi literature routinely observe the tendency of Korean authors in Japan to write fiction with autobiographical elements; however, in my analysis, the origin of this tendency may have roots in Japanese literature itself. Kim Tal-su records that the works of Shiga Naoya opened his eyes to Japanese authors' tradition of using their own lives and the events that happen to people around them as material for their literary creations. Kim was well-served by this practice because the very situation he was determined to write about was the condition of his own people, which he had personally experienced from the lowest level of poverty to life as one of the few Korean literati in Japan. Kim's literature is useful because it offers first-person insight into the lives of Koreans both high and low.

In Chapter Two I explore commonalities in the works of Kim Tal-su and those of other Zainichi authors. In this section I argue that Kim is actually one of the earliest members of a cohesive literary community with a shared concern regarding

the identity conflicts of Koreans in Japan. In order to bridge the gap in scholarship of first and second-generation authors, I compare two of Kim's short stories with the selected works of other Zainichi authors to be recognized by the Japanese literary community; Kim Tal-su and his prewar predecessor Kim Saryang represent Korea-born authors, while the first Zainichi to win the Akutagawa prize, Ri Kaisei, represents the second generation. Although the works fall across the span of four decades and the political circumstances of the times were wildly different, there were several unifying characteristics. Regardless of the author's place of birth, all of these works used Japanese or Korean names in some capacity to convey dual or confused identities; however, as time progresses Koreans begin to feel estranged from Korean names and signifiers of Korean heritage, while in the works of the first-generation authors Korean names are understood to be true and proper; and are seen as reliable links to a distant homeland. The works of both generations also displayed a shared concern that Koreans might internalize Japanese prejudices against their own people, in particular among younger people without knowledge of their Korean cultural heritage.

One of the Zainichi Koreans' means of passing on this heritage is the topic of my last chapter: ethnic schools. Here I turn to two of the translations prepared for this study, "Big Barrel Granny," and "A Chapter from the Other Night." Both stories describe a non-fictional event in essentially the same terms: the Japanese government orders Korean ethnic schools to shut down and then forcibly disbands the Korean Alliance. When the schools refuse to comply with the order they are assaulted by

armed police. Reading these stories reveals how strongly Koreans felt that ethnic education was an important part of their independence. Their schools were founded not necessarily with the intention of preserving Korean culture within Japan, but rather as a way to prepare children for their eventual return to Korea. Historical sources cite the left-leaning tendencies of the Korean Alliance as inevitably leading to the closing of the schools, but reading of these events from the Korean perspective comes with a distinctly different feeling. Kim depicts heartlessly violent treatment of students and parents, as well as an authority which was completely unwilling to negotiate with the Koreans. As the government insists that Korean children attend regular Japanese schools, and refuses to allow any ethnic education within that system, a familiar dynamic emerges of the Japanese suppressing Korean culture by forcing the children of Koreans into the Japanese educational system. While attending Japanese schools and learning the Japanese language they remain largely ignorant of their own cultural history with the exception of efforts made within the home. The publication of these stories is one way in which Koreans fought against the closings by exposing the events to a wider audience and injecting their own perspectives into the public conversation.

As I conclude, I ask the reader to forgive some of the limitations of this study, and consider the opportunities for broader research on this topic. In order to make this project a viable master's thesis I have limited its scope considerably by focusing only on short stories from the first decade of Kim's career. In fact he wrote fiction for twenty-five more years and published five full-length novels. Even among the stories

that I have selected to present, significantly more in-depth analysis is possible; however, I have attempted to introduce a wide variety of Kim's works to emphasize the diversity within his fiction. The characters of his fiction are Koreans with widely different problems and perspectives, as different as the experiences of the author himself during his complicated life.

Although Zainichi literature in general deserves the attention of Western scholars, study of the literature of the first generation in particular has to yet to come into full bloom. Given the too brief introduction to Kim Tal-su's work which the present study is able to provide, I believe there is ample reason to inquire more deeply into Kim's fiction, including his full-length novels. His works comprise the earliest explorations of Zainichi Koreans' thoughts and circumstances as a liberated people living in Japan. Aside from this valuable historical perspective, Kim's works are an important part of the foundation of Zainichi literature and therefore essential in understanding the works of later authors. This author and the community to which he belonged have been ignored for a number of reasons: for one, a distinct leftist trend characterizes Kim and his associates, and as a result their activities were highly scrutinized or flatly suppressed by the Japanese government and American occupation forces. The community of Koreans in the literature I examine here was still largely comprised of Korea-born expatriates and very few are still alive today; the Zainichi community is now dominated by those born in Japan. However, there is still significant value in studying the writing of the early Koreans in Japan.

Kim was writing with a message for the next generation. His stories advise Koreans who live in Japanese society of every class and circumstance to value and preserve their heritage. The protagonists in his fiction who have the opportunity to assimilate into Japanese society assert the primacy of Korean culture in their lives, and his stories are highly critical of Koreans such as Kōyama who abandon their people for personal gain. He also passes on to the next generation written records of some of the significant events in their history. He depicts Koreans as a united people, with their political divisions (North versus South, communism versus democracy) as secondary to their overall struggle for freedom from “Japanese facism,” and their ambition to someday return to their homeland. Kim Tal-su’s writings were part of an ethnic struggle that was quickly changing. By injecting accounts of Korean experiences and psychological conflicts into the public dialogue, Kim’s literature performs the valuable function of presenting a Korean perspective, something to which very few Japanese had any exposure.

Kim Tal-su’s fiction vividly depicts the lives of Koreans during the period that most dynamically shaped their community. A broad survey of Kim’s fiction, such as this, amounts to little more than a slideshow of the lives of Zainichi Koreans in Japanese society. With further analysis I am confident that the individual images presented in this study will continue to take on a new vibrancy. Clearly this author’s work is an indispensable element in completing our understanding of the overall picture of Zainichi literature.

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