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RE-READING OF KIM HWAN-TAE'S CRITICISM IN THE 1930S: AN AESTHETICIST'S 'DISINTERESTED' WAIT

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Abstract: This article examines the significance of Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism in the 1930s, focusing on the core principles of aestheticism and its connection to Park Yong-chul's poetry. Kim Hwan-tae's criticism of impressionism has been interpreted as an advocacy for the value of pure literature, serving as a counterpoint to the dogmatic criticism championed by KAPF in the 1920s. Discussions of his criticism have often focused on the influence of figures such as Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater. This study argues that Kim Hwan-tae's promotion of impressionism or art supremacy constituted a strategic framework aimed at transforming the roles

of both authors and critics, extending beyond mere opposition to the Korean Artists Proletariat Federation (KAPF) position. His emphasis on ‘humility (겸허/謙虛)’ and ‘discipline (수양/修養)’ as essential qualities for critics reflects his ideal of aestheticism. Moreover, the critic’s model he advocated, which prioritizes self-discipline and holistic cultivation of personality, draws on Romanticism’s ‘genius theory (천재론)’ and German cultural discourse (독일 교양론), making it a distinctive feature of Kim Hwan-tae’s criticism.

Keywords: Kim Hwan-tae; Impressionistic criticism; Strategic literaturism; humility and discipline; Park Yong-chul; aestheticism

1930년대 김환태 비평 재독: 한 심미주의자의 무심한 기다림

초록 : 본고는 1930년대 김환태 비평의 비평사적 의의를 심미주의의 본령 및 박용철 시론과의 영향관계를 중심으로 재구해보고자 한다. 김환태의 인상주의 비평은 1930년대 카프가 주도한 이념 중심의 교조적 비평에 대응하여 순수문학의 가치를 평가한 것으로 평가되었으며, 그동안 매슈 아놀드, 월터 페이터와의 영향 관계를 중심으로 논의되어왔다. 이 글은 김환태의 인상주의 내지 예술지상주의가 반(反) 카프의 입장을 넘어 창작계와 비평계 전체의 변혁을 주문하는 비평적 전략의 하나였음을 논증하고자 한다. 비평가의 자질로서 ‘겸허’와 ‘수양’에 대한 강조는 심미주의자로서 그가 품고 있었던 개인적, 사회적 이상향을 시사한다. 자기 수련과 전인성 함양을 중시하는 비평가 모델은 낭만주의의 천재론과 독일 교양론을 참조한 것으로, 김환태 비평의 중요한 특징이다.

키워드: 김환태; 인상주의 비평; 전략적 문학주의; 겸허와 수양; 박용철; 심미주의

1. Introduction

Kim Hwan-tae (김환태), born in Muju in 1909, graduated from Bosung High School (普成高普) in 1928. He later attended and

completed the preparatory program at Doshisha University (同志社大學) before returning to Korea in 1934, having graduated from the English Literature Department of Kuju Imperial University (九州帝國大學). Upon his return, he began his career as a literary critic. Following the dissolution of the KAPF in 1936, he became a member of the Guinhoi (九人會) and married Park Bong-ja, the sister of Park Yong-chul (박용철), a significant influence on his work.

Kim Hwan-tae's critical development was deeply shaped by Park Yong-chul, who, as the publisher of *Simunhak* (詩文學) in 1931, championed the principles of organic poetry. However, in 1940, with the Japanese government's policy to suppress the Korean language and the rise of pro-Japanese national literature, he ended his writing career. His declining health led him to resign from teaching and retire to his hometown, where he passed away in May 1944.

In addition to his biological research (Kim Yoon-sik 김윤식 1969), Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism has attracted attention in two significant areas. First, he established himself as a pioneer of impressionistic criticism in the 1920s and 1930s by advocating for 'impressionism' or 'pure' criticism, which emphasized the autonomy and intrinsic essence of literature, extending beyond the mere opposition to the Korean Artists Proletariat Federation (KAPF) standpoint (Oh Hyung-yup 오형엽 2012; Jeon Jeong Ku 전정구 2012). Second, scholarly interest has focused on his graduation thesis at Kuju Imperial University, titled *Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater as Literature Critics*, which traced the influence of foreign literature on his work (Jang Do-joon 장도준 2014; Choi Myung-pyo 최명표 2019).

This paper builds on these studies by closely examining the underlying principles of Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism. Chapter 2 explores his impressionistic criticism of literaturism as an “anti-KAPF” strategy. Chapter 3 delves into the underexplored textual dialogues between Kim and Park Yong-chul. The chapter covers Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism of Park Yong-chul's “On the Publishing of *Simunhak* (詩文學)” (시문학 창간에 대하여) and

“On Effectiveistic criticism” (효과주의적 비평논강) (1931), highlighting a central stance in Kim’s literary criticism characterized by “faith” and “waiting” for ‘change.’ Chapter 4 situates Kim’s emphasis on themes of “humility” and “discipline” within the context of modern German liberal arts theory, which focuses on the aesthetic and educational function of art. Building on the work of Hwang Seok-woo (황석우) in the 1910s, the critical ideal of a ‘whole person’ (全人), integrating both aesthetic and personal excellence, is carried forward into literary criticism in the 1950s.

2. A strategic ‘literaturism’ after KAPF

Aestheticism, which emphasizes faith in beauty¹, is recognized as a hallmark of Victorian literature. During the 1920s and 1930s, the English department of Ku Ju Imperial University, where Kim Hwan-tae studied, focused on Victorian English literature, similar to the English departments of other Japanese imperial universities. In April 1934, Kim Hwan-tae revised his graduation thesis, *On the Attitudes of Literary Critics* (문예비평가의 태도에 대하여), which was originally focused on Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater (졸업논문). Additionally, he expressed his critical perspective through works such as “Purity of Art” (예술의 순수성), “My Attitude of Criticism” (나의 비평의 태도). He also translated Francis Grierson’s “Art, Science and Beauty” (예술과 과학과 미와) and Aldous Huxley’s “Art and Self-Explanation” (예술과 자명한 것). The texts he published until the following year are important in that they have a declarative meaning that reveals his identity as a critic.

It took a certain amount of time for the ideological coercion shown by KAPF’s dogmatic criticism, including ‘creative methodology (창작방법론)’, to reveal the whole, along with its direct and

1 “아름다움에 대한 신앙을 의미하는 심미주의 (aestheticism)” (R.V. Johnson, 1979:7)

indirect results, and to act as a reflective opportunity for the establishment of literary autonomy and new creation. Aestheticism taken by Kim Hwan-tae during this period indeed corresponds to a position that many authors who are tired of KAPF's hard-line can rely on. However, as a critic, Kim Hwan-tae's self-determination work needs to be considered more closely in terms of strategic literaturism.

Then came socialist realism, creative methods, humanism, activism, psychology, modernism, and intelligence. A new trend was advocated before the author even captured the true meaning of the idea, and the critic who advocated the new trend immediately suggested another one. To keep pace with all this caution, the progressive writer was unable to get his act together and thus had no time to cultivate a firm literary spirit.

Works are the subject of literary trends. Therefore, the occurrence of a trend must be based on a work that can be disciplined (律) as a trend that is the driving force for the trend to react. Therefore, in front of a new trend, there must be a work that ultimately embodies the trend that preceded it. Nevertheless, there was always a trend in our literature before there was an ultimately embodied work.² (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 141-142)

The above is part of the article submitted during a debate with Yi Won-jo (이원조). Kim Hwan-tae points out the absurdity of

² “뒤미처 사회주의적 사실주의니, 무엇무엇하는 창작방법이니, 휴머니즘이니, 행동주의니, 심리주의니, 모더니즘이니, 지성이니 하는 잡다한 주의에 사상이 설사있어도 없이 나왔다. 작가가 한 주의의 진의도 포착하기 전에 새 주의가 제창되었고, 그 새 주의를 제창한 평가가 하루 밤 새에 또 판 주의를 제시하였다. 이에 이 모든 주의에 보조를 맞추려면 진보적(?) 작가는, 그 송영에 실로 정신을 가다듬을 수 없었으며, 따라서 **일정한 문학적 자세가 방향을 가질** 수 없었던 것은 물론, **확호한 문학정신을 함양**할 겨를도 없었던 것이다. 문학상의 주의의 대상은 작품이다. 그러므로 한 주의의 발생은 그 주의가 반동하려는 원동이 되는 주의로서 율(律)할 수 있는 작품 속에 그 발생 근거를 두지 않으면 안 된다. 따라서 새로이 발생한 한 주의 앞에는, 그에 선행한 주의가 궁극적으로 형상화된 작품이 있어야 한다. 그럼에도 불구하고 우리 문단에는 언제나 궁극적으로 형상화된 작품이 있기 전에 주의가 있었다.” (김환태 1988: 141-142). All translations from Korean and highlights are by the author, unless otherwise stated.

all kinds of “ism” in the literary field that prevailed after naturalism, and argues that all “ism” discussed in literature should be based on individual works. The primary purpose of Kim’s request for ‘the work before interpretation’ while reversing the previous sequential relationship between ‘ism’ as a worldview and the work as its literary configuration was to criticize the entire literary malaise caused by KAPF’s Social Realism. However, his criticism is directed at the trend of the entire literary field, which has regarded such mechanical blind fellowship as a “progressive” attitude while indiscriminately accepting and emptying various trends such as humanism, activism, psychology, and modernism as well as KAPF. He criticizes the rigidity of criticism that tried to dissect the work on the premise of “ism (主義)” that precedes the work. On the other hand, he calls for the artist’s ability to embody his worldview as an order that rules the reality in his work. In other words, this is nothing less than an argument to understand that the trends of the past, which have constantly appeared, were formed under political, economic, and social conditions, and to derive them under the literary conditions of ‘reality’ and ‘work’. Criticism should be directed at the work, and the author should have his own ‘care’ to embody the realistic order as the work’s inner order.

Kim Hwan-tae defines the literary spirit as “an exploration of humanity, a creative effort to dress it with the expression” and cites Lee Tae-joon (이태준), Park Tae-won (박태원), and Jung Ji-yong (정지용) as those who have shown a lively world of works by sticking to the literary spirit without adhering to the preceding “ism”. The literary spirit advocated by Kim Hwan-tae can be said to be an attitude that is faithful to oneself until he can discover and express “ism” based on his personality. Indeed, this lack of literary spirit was true of both writers and critics of the day, who escaped from the frenzy of “Ismism(主義主義).” In this respect, Kim Hwan-tae’s impressionistic critique, which denies the leadership of criticism, can be read as a demand that writers take the lead in the maturity and birth of “work-down works.”

Considering Kim Hwan-tae's literary strategy as a request for the transition from “the leadership of criticism” to “the leadership of literature,” we can understand the context in which his “impressionistic criticism” insisted that criticism was also a creation.

A literary critic must first speak of himself. You must confess how impressed and pleased you were in a work and how much you were transformed by it. It is easy to establish an orderly logic. However, it is difficult to express yourself. It is only through this path that literary critics experience the pain of self-expression with creators, that is, the pain of creation. However, in the past, was there a literary critic who tried to speak for himself and tried to infiltrate the world of literature and make it speak its laws to feel the pain of the author's creation as his own?³ (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988:80)

While the standard of the criticism is inclined to the quantitative aspect of measuring the degree of forward-looking edification during the period when dogmatic criticism was inundated, Kim Hwan-tae's confession of ‘self-transformation’ in this article is qualitative. This ‘transformation’ is a self-internal change that occurs after the appreciation of literary works, and the direction and nature of change are subject to the individual critic's reflective observation and confession.

Kim Hwan-tae, who says that the pain of expressing the truth of self-change is not different from the pain of creation, reveals that this self-confession of a critic is the only way to make literature “speak its laws.” If a work has a 'literary order', that order must be

3 “문예비평가는 먼저 자기를 말하여야 한다. 한 작품에서 어떠한 감동과 기쁨을 받았는가를, 그리고 그로 인하여 자기가 얼마만큼 변모되었는가를 고백하여야 한다. 정연한 논리를 세우기는 쉽다. 그러나 자기를 표현하기는 어렵다. 문예비평가가 창작가와 함께 자기표현의 고통을, 다시 말하면 창작의 고통을 맛보는 것은 오직 이 길을 통하여서인 것이다. 그러나 과거에 우리의 어떤 문예비평가가 자기를 말하려고 노력하였으며, 작가의 창작의 진통을 자기의 것으로서 느껴보려고 하였으며, 문학의 세계에 침잠하여 문학 그것으로 하여금 스스로 제 법칙을 말하도록 하려고 하였던가?” (김환태 1988: 80)

identified afterward, through the viewer's inner change and the confession. The identification work requires the courage of critical hesitation that can suspend judgment in the room of reflection created by the distance between the work's inner order and the realistic order. Kim Hwan-tae's proposition of "Return to yourself," which presents appreciation and praise as the mission of criticism, is understood as a strict reality recognition command that attributes the basis and responsible material of creation and criticism to individual critics.

3. Faith and 'disinterested' waiting – "I have something pregnant"

After all, aestheticism is no different from the belief that the experience of aesthetic pleasure can make qualitative changes in an individual's life and society as a whole. When the object of that belief is beauty and the response to the belief is an aesthetic pleasure, It is enough to call aestheticism a faith without God. Then, how can we learn the attitude of waiting to face this moment of 'pleasure'? And what does it prepare? In this chapter, we read Kim Hwan-tae's criticism overlapping with Park Yong-cheol's criticism in the 1930s, and try to view the attitude of 'disinterestedness' that he emphasized from the perspective of 'belief' and 'waiting'.

Criticism of Impressionism still has many lovers today. It tries to impress the work with a relatively simple mind without sincerity and describes the impression with an attractive style. It is closer to interpretation than judgment of the value of the work, and it becomes a guide for our appreciation, based on the work, it creates an artistic work that expresses one's feelings. (Impressionism only describes an individual's aesthetic experience and does not consider its social impact separately, but it has an ideal of appreciating its social value) (···) Literature is delightful, but it is (···) Uninterested interest. It refers to pleasure by contemplation, not pleasure by practice. (···) Art is expressed not by abstract ideas but by concrete forms, and its in-

fluence on society is not as a conviction of logic but rather through the transmission of emotions.⁴ (Park Yong-chul 박용철 2004:29-31)

The quotation is Park Yong-chul's text written in 1931, three years before Kim Hwan-tae's debut as a critic, and is an important article that outlined the flow of criticism and presented the gist of impressionistic criticism. Park Yong-chul explains that impressionistic criticism presupposes a review of the social value of aesthetic experience itself. The basic principle of becoming a guide for appreciation and producing works of art that "express one's feelings" by presenting a perspective of interpretation rather than value judgment is in line with the task of the critic suggested by Kim Hwan-Tae. From an impressionist's point of view, the contemplative pleasure given by the interests as a living person and the aesthetic experience that has left the subjectivity is a germ that can lead to social change due to "transmission(傳染) of emotion" in itself. Aesthetics that trust the ideal of concrete social change caused by contemplation and empathy, not logic and practice, affirms the dialectic of "sense" and "thinking" through art. Let's look at Kim Hwan-tae's mention of the social function of aesthetic experience through art.

Art teaches us love and sympathy, and it inspires ideal passion and new hope for the ideal. (...) This noble experience never disappears without any trace. This artistic excitement does not directly stimulate

⁴ “인상주의비평 이것은 오늘날까지도 많은 애호자를 가지고 있다. 성심을 가지지 않고 비교적 소박한 마음으로 작품을 대해서 인상을 받아 드리고 그 인상을 매력있는 필치로 기술하려 한다. 작품의 가치판단보다 해석에 가까워 우리 감상의 지도가 되며 그 작품을 기연삼아 자기의 심정을 토로하는 예술적작품을 스사로 지어낸다. (인상주의가 개인의 미적경험을 기술하는 데 그치고 사회적영향을 따로 고찰하지 아니하는데는 미적경험 그것의 사회적가치를 높이 평가하는 이상이 내재되어 있다) (...) 문학은 쾌감을 일으키는 것 그러나 그것은 (...) 직접 실생활의 이해관계를 떠난 쾌감(Uninterested interest), 실행에 의한 쾌감 아닌 관조에 의한 쾌감을 말한다. (...) 예술은 추상적 관념에 의해서가 아니라 구체적 형상에 의해서 표현하는 것이며 사회에 끼치는 영향도 논리의 설복으로서가 아니라 감정의 전염으로 하는 것이다.” (박용철 2004: 29-31)

our actions but potentially or slowly becomes a factor that determines the actions of our lives. Thus, a great artist is always an educator for mankind.⁵ (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 25)

Criticism as an ‘interpretation’ that faithfully describes an individual’s aesthetic experience must form the base to lead to individual qualitative boost through its dialectical principle to lead to empathy and transformation of the interests that dominate the real world. This is the educational function of art and criticism.

Aestheticists have faith in social changes that literary works and the various ‘interpretations’ presented by viewers who have undergone internal change will create through mutual “transmission of emotions.” As discussed in Chapter 2, what a critic who observes and records the possibility needs is the belief that the driving force of change is growing within himself as a daily living person who is faithful to the proposition of “go back to yourself.” It is also ‘waiting’ and patience, which can bring up the language of self-confession that is condensed in the process of immersion in the work and reconstructing the order. It is the attitude of a ‘possibleist’ to believe in the qualitative changes of individuals that occur repeatedly in the process of enjoying and describing aesthetic pleasure through contemplation and the ‘mental’ process of sharing and empathy.

It is the author/poet who is at the forefront of this ‘belief’ and ‘waiting’. A poet who can embody the high-order combination of ‘sense’ and ‘thought’ in the language in his work is referred to as a ‘genius(天才)’. The most important virtue of this ‘genius’ is also ‘waiting’ as a belief that a certain ‘meaningful moment will arrive, and an integrated ‘intelligence’ that can unify senses and thoughts. This theory of genius, and the theory of poets and critics that as-

⁵ “예술은 사람에게 사랑과 동정을 가르치며, 이상적 열정과 이상에 대한 새로운 희망을 고취하여 준다. (...) 이 고결한 체험은 결코 아무런 흔적도 없이 소멸하지는 않는다. 이 예술적 흥분은 직접 우리의 행위를 자극하지는 않으나, 잠재적으로 또는 서서히 우리의 생활의 행위를 결정하는 요인이 되는 것이다. 이리하여 위대한 예술가는 언제나 인류의 교육자다.” (김환태 1988: 25)

sumes the existence of ‘God’ are both confirmed by Park Yong-chul and Kim Hwan-Tae.

In the poet's heart and soul comes a lake that sometimes floods in response to outer space or overflows by itself. The engineer, who does not wait for this inspiration and gives up self-help to show off his talent, finally throws away his empty hand. Inspiration comes to us, impregnates us with poetry, and leaves after giving notice of conception. We must reverently raise it like a maiden. (...) When full maturity is reached, the placenta rotates and a new creation is born.⁶ (Park Yong-chul 박용철 2004: 8-9)

He is by no means a poet maker. He waits until an inspiration blows into his mind like the wind at the end of a tree, and it grows on its own and drops the placenta. And, nourishes, shapes, and attaches flesh to him until it drops the placenta is his emotion, his intelligence, and his senses.⁷ (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 112)

Even if my criticism is no more than an appreciation, I believe that as the days of my pilgrimage to the garden of art(藝苑) go on, and as I hone my sensitivity, my criticism acquires objectivity and universality so that it moves closer to an increasingly complete critique (there is only God, man is always an imperfect critic).⁸ (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 28)

⁶ “시인의 심혈에는 **외계에 감응해서** 혹은 스사로 넘쳐서 때때로 밀려드는 호수가 온다. 이 영감을 기다리지 않고 재조보이기로 자조 손을 버리는 기술사는 드디어 빈손을 버리게 된다. 영감이 우리에게 와서 시를 잉태시키고는 수태를 고지하고 떠난다. 우리는 처녀와 같이 이것을 경건히 받들어 길러야한다. (...) 완전한 성숙이 이르렀을 때 태반이 회동그란이 돌아떨어지며 새로운 창조물 새로운 개체는 탄생한다.” (박용철 2004: 8-9)

⁷ “그는 결코 시를 만드는 사람은 아니다. 그는 영감이 나무 끝에 오는 바람결같이 그의 마음 속에 불어 오면 그것이 스스로 자라 태반을 떨어뜨릴 때까지 기다린다. 그리고, 그것이 태반을 떨어뜨릴 때까지 그에게 자양을 공급하고, 모양을 만들고, 살을 붙이는 것이 그의 감정이요, 지성이요, 감각이다.” (김환태 1988: 112)

⁸ “나는 나의 비평이 단지 감상에 지나지 않더라도, 나의 예원의 순례의 날이 길어 갈수록, 그리고 나의 감수성을 연마하여 갈수록, 나의 비평은 객관성과 보편성을 획득하여 점점 완전한 비평(완전한 비평가는 오직 신뿐이다. 인간은 언제나 불완전한 비평가다)에 가까이 갈 줄 믿는다.” (김환태 1988:28)

Park Yong-chul explains poetic inspiration and the process of writing using the “Annunciation” motif. What he emphasizes more fundamentally as an “awakened” posture to uphold this “notice” is “an unnamed flame (無名火),” which is an image that embodies the belief and waiting attitude for the birth of a new life. On the other hand, in Kim Hwan-tae's “theory of Jeong Ji-yong (정지용론),” the poet's emotions, intelligence, and senses are presented as qualities necessary to express the inspiration that arrived, such as the “Annunciation.” Park Yong-chul's theory of poetry creation, thoroughly explains the detection of “poetic things” and the process of its work itself in the realm of personal experience, and sets its source and origin as “alien(外界)” on an agnostic level. His point of view lies in the context of ‘the theory of genius’(天才論) which inherited the romantic poetics from Hwang Seok-woo(황석우) in the 1910s. Kim Hwan-tae also regards the work as “an organism in which life was introduced by the author’s inspiration.”

On the other hand, the idea of impressionistic criticism assumed by Kim Hwan-tae is explained as the degree to which the subjectivity of “appreciation” is consistent with analytical objectivity. The fact that “God” is assumed to be such a complete critic, that is, the attitude of acknowledging that it is impossible to criticize in which subjectivity and objectivity are unified at a human level, is the driving force for sustaining his “pilgrimage(巡禮)” and the basis for proving the inherent value of criticism. Kim Hwan-tae’s critical theory, which paradoxically succeeded in proving the permanence of criticism while insisting on continuing toward the impossible, proceeds to the dialectic of “humility” and “discipline” through Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater.

4. The baptism of Classical Aesthetics – a Self-completion with ‘humility’(謙虛) and ‘discipline’(修養)

What is the origin of the figure of a critic devoted to a world of absolute beauty, using a humble attitude and the practice of self-discipline as a personal virtue? As mentioned earlier, Matthew Arnold’s concept of “disinterestedness (허심탄회)” has always been important in discussing the influence of Kim Hwan-tae’s criticism. However, Kim Hwan-tae himself confessed that he remained in a superficial understanding of M. Arnold and W. Pater, the subject of this graduation thesis, and recalls that he was deeply literary influenced by other foreign writers, especially classical aesthetics and artistic philosophy, covering various East and West. Among them, the part that mentions Goethe stands out.

After entering college, I could not be immersed in this romantic reading because of my major in English literature. In general, in the first grade, I tried to understand classicalism by reading the works of each country, such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Alexander Pope in the UK, works of Racine, Corneille, and Moliere in France, and works of Goethe and Schiller in Germany. Meanwhile, I learned a great lesson from Goethe not from literature but from the philosophy of life. The first is the “effort toward eternity” learned through <Faust>, and the second is the ideal of ‘whole person(全人)’, whose all human functions are fully, harmoniously developed. It is from P. Eckermann’s “Conversation with Goethe”.⁹ (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 181)

⁹ “대학에 들어간 후는 전공하는 영문학 텍스트 공부 때문에 이런 낭만적 독서는 할 수 없었으나, 대체로 1 학년 때에는 각국의 고전주의 작품을, 즉 영국의 셰익스피어, 밀턴, 포우프 등의 작품과 볼란서의 라신느, 코르네이유, 몰리에르의 작품과, 그리고 독일의 괴테, 실러 등의 작품을 읽고 고전주의에 대하여 이해를 얻으려 하였다. 그러는 동안에 나는 괴테에게서 문학상으로가 아니라, 인생철학상으로 큰 교훈을 얻은 것이 있다. <파우스트>를 통하여 받은 「영원의 노력」과 엑켈만의 <괴테와의 대화>를 통하여 배운 모든 인간적 기능이 완전히 조화. 발달된 전인애의 이상이다.” (김환태 1988:181)

Matthew Arnold's "disinterestedness" and "culture", which refers to a state of immersion unrelated to partisanship or interest, were concepts that included conservative and classist perspectives to resolve the social turmoil of Britain at that time and restore order. In contrast, the "disinterested interest" borrowed by Kim Hwan-tae remained a narrow concept that just emphasized immersion in the work. The two qualities of a critic emphasized by Kim Hwan-tae were 'humility' to the artist as a creator and 'discipline' to enhance his aesthetic sense. The argument that the artist should be respected as a creative subject who provides an opportunity for accurate appreciation of the work and an opportunity for aesthetic and personal enhancement reaches the ideal of "Zarte Empirie" (Goethe). It means "the unity of subjectivity and objectivity." The leadership of literary criticism he set and expected after KAPF was a role of presenting the variety of "beauty" that literature can show through "artistic pilgrimage" rather than deduction. At least, Kim Hwan-tae's criticism differed from Arnold's concept of social criticism in the legitimate aspect of the argument. At the same time, his criticism was also different from Pater's self-sufficient sensualism. This is because the core of his criticism was not just the follow-up of Arnold and Pater, but the classical aesthetics and metaphysical orientation.

In the literary situation after KAPF's withdrawal, Arnold's 'disinterestedness' had no choice but to be reduced to the 'pose' of personal appreciation amid 'indifference' to the social dimension. Naturally, the 'humility' claimed by Kim Hwan-tae was a critic's thorough non-interventionism or isolationism through his work and had room for interpretation as part of its concealment strategy. However, this interpretation paradoxically shows the contemporary situation of the decline in the status of criticism itself and dwarfing. At this point, we can infer the background of Kim Hwan-tae, who studied Goethe and Schiller, focusing on the relationship between 'Bildung' (self-completion/culture), literature, and the educational function of art.

The journey of 'self-completion' through the mediation of timeless classical works of art presupposes the uniqueness of an irre-

placeable individual. The cultural discourse of Germany in the 19th century served as a driving force to break through the uncertainty of the times while enjoying the universal value of human beings that is eternal to individuals and contributed to the solidarity of the national community. In this context, the critic is at the forefront of aesthetic training and self-cultivation and is assumed to be a mediating entity that performs the educational function of the art.

Kim Hwan-tae's impressionism in the 1930s was submitted as an alternative to social transformation through literature after the frenzy of political ideology. He positioned criticism as the rank of creation and called on both authors and critics to train themselves as an outstanding individual who combines intelligence, emotion, and virtue with "Willie zur Gestaltung (창조에 의지)." Kim Hwan-tae trusted the gradual changes in individuals and society brought about by the experience of aesthetic pleasure and emotional training through works of art.

5. Conclusion

This paper is a comprehensive analysis of the literary criticism of Kim Hwan-tae, who advocated impressionism and aesthetic criticism in the 1930s, following the decline of KAPF. First, we examined how his impressionism was adopted as a form of strategic literaturism with implications beyond anti-KAPFism. He established his identity as a critic by urging both writers and critics to return to their 'inside self' and rebuild literature itself. Second, by analyzing the poetry of the contemporary Park Yong-chul and the criticism of Kim Hwan-tae, we demonstrated the utopia they shared. Both figures placed trust in the qualitative changes that individual artistic experience, creation and appreciation, and the interaction of criticism could foster in emotion, life, and society as a whole. This perspective was expressed through an attitude of 'faith' and 'waiting' for the qualitative transformation of modern society. Finally, we reconstructed the context of

Kim Hwan-tae's work within the history of modern Korean criticism by confirming that the virtues of 'humility' and 'discipline', which Kim Hwan-tae emphasized as the cornerstone of a critic's role, shared commonalities with modern German cultural discourse and the genealogy of impressionistic criticism.

Conflict of interest statement:

The author states that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

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