

**A COLONIAL INTELLECTUAL'S  
PROJECT AND ITS LIMITATIONS IN  
TRANSCENDING 'NATION'- FOCUSING  
ON JANG HYUK-JU'S NOVELS THE MAN  
WHO WAS DIVIDED (1933) AND  
PILGRIMAGE (1943)**

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**Abstract:** This article is to illuminate the compositional principle and meaning of his novel, which could not be revealed due to the recognition of being a 'pro-Japanese' writer, through re-reading of Jang Hyuk-ju's novel published during the colonial period. In other words, it is to try to find out what topics he consistently pursued through writing novels and how he chose to create texts for this purpose. In a situation where even individual desires were suppressed and controlled, colonial intellectuals participated in the production of the discourse while expanding the universalist or inclusive dimension of Japanese nationalism as much as possible to secure their own stable position. The same is true of Jang Hyuk-ju, who had creative activities in the imperial-colonial system. Therefore, if the literary artists' actions were born out of an active and independent attitude in the antagonism against the imperial Japanese system, what should be noted is their internal logic formed to cope with this situation.

In other words, the important thing in interpreting those who are interpreted and judged by the standards of pro-Japanese/anti-Japanese, cooperation/resistance at the end of the colonial period is not to pay attention to the result of the action, but to the 'process' of how to deal with the period. This is to carefully examine the question of why 'pro-Japanese literature' committed such 'blindness' if it was 'historical blindness', or whether they (authors with pro-Japanese literature) thought that 'pro-Japanese' was not 'historical blindness', or if not, what 'historical purpose' is at work there.

**Keywords:** Koreans in Japan, Jang Hyuk-ju, liberation, defeat war, colony, Imperial Japan

**‘민족’을 초월하기 위한 한 식민지 지식인의 기획과 한계:  
장혁주 소설 <분기한 자>(1933)와 <순례>(1943)를 중심으로**

**초록:** 이 글은 식민지 시기에 발표된 장혁주 소설의 재독을 통해 ‘친일’ 작가라는 인식으로 인해 밝혀지지 못했던 그의 소설의 구성 원리와 그 의미를 조명하는 데 있다. 다시 말해, 그가 소설 쓰기를 통해 일관되게 추구했던 주제는 무엇이며, 이를 위해서 어떠한 방식의 텍스트 창작을 택했는가 하는 것을 궁구해보고자 하는 것이다. 개인의 욕망마저도 억압·제어 당하는 상황 속에서 식민지 지식인들은 스스로의 안정적인 위치를 확보하기 위해 일본 내셔널리즘의 보편주의적이거나 포용적인 차원을 최대한 확장시키면서 그 담론 생산에 참여했다. 제국-식민지 체제에서 창작 활동을 했던 장혁주 역시 이와 마찬가지로이다. 그렇기 때문에, 문학가들의 행위가 제국 일본의 체제와의 길항 속에서 능동적이고 주체적인 태도에서 탄생한 것이라면, 주목해야 할 것은 이러한 상황을 대처하기 위해 형성된 그들의 내적 논리이다. 즉, 식민 말기의 친일/반일, 협력/저항의 잣대에서 해석되고 판단되는 이들을 해석하는 데 있어 중요한 것은, 행위의 결과가 아니라 그 시기를 어떠한 방식으로 대처해 나가는지 그 ‘과정’에 주목하는 것이다. 이는 “만약 ‘친일 문학’이 ‘역사적 맹목’이라면 왜 그러한 ‘맹목’을 저지르게 되었는지, 혹은 그들(친일 문학을 한 작가들)은 우리가 생각하는 것처럼 ‘친일’이 ‘역사적 맹목’이 아니라고 생각했던 것은 아닌지, 만약 아니라면 거기에 어떤 ‘역사적 합목적’이 작용하고 있는 것인지”에 관한 문제를 신중하게 고찰하는 것이다.

**키워드:** 제일 조선인, 장혁주, 해방, 패전, 식민지, 제국 일본

## 1. The Need for Reinterpretation of Jang Hyuk-ju's Novels

The purpose of this paper is to re-examine the works published by Jang Hyuk-ju (장혁주, 1905–1997) during the colonial period. In doing so, it seeks to illuminate the compositional principles and meanings of his novels that have long remained unexplored due to his entrenched reputation as a “pro-Japanese” writer. More specifically, it examines the themes Jang consistently pursued in his colonial-era fiction. It also considers the textual strategies he adopted to realize them.

Since Lim Jong-guk (임종국) published *Pro-Japanese Literature*, Jang Hyuk-ju has been regarded in Korean literary history as a humiliating “pro-Japanese” writer. This perception of him as a cowardly defector has left little room for discussion of his literary merits, even though he was the first “Zainichi” (resident in Japan) writer to flee to Japan and pursue literary activities. Most studies have instead focused on ethical judgments of his pro-Japanese stance. Lim Jeon-hye (임전혜), for example, identifies Jang Hyuk-ju and Kim Sa-ryang as the most representative cases of “humiliation and resistance” during the colonial period, characterizing Jang as a writer who abandoned national pride and embodied shameful corruption. (Lim jeon-hye, 임전혜 1965) Building on this argument, Ahn Woo-sik (안우식) further contends that, whereas Kim Sa-ryang was a nationalist writer from the outset, Jang Hyuk-ju was one who ultimately succumbed to Japanese imperialism. (Ahn woo-sik, 안우식 2005)

Decades after the publication of *Pro-Japanese Literature* as the debate on “pro-Japanese literature” entered a new phase, Kim Jae-yong (김재용), through “Collaboration and Resistance,” sought to narrow the scope of pro-Japanese literature by dividing colonial-period literature into various layers and reconstructing the voluntary internal logic of pro-Japanese literature. (Kim jae-yong, 김재용 2004) Accordingly, Kim Jae-yong also revealed that Jang Hyuk-ju's literature stemmed from issues of ethnic discrimination. However, perhaps because the result-oriented framework of ‘collaboration/resistance’ was already established, he defined Jang Hyuk-ju similarly to previous studies as a writer who collaborated with the Japanese regime by advocating for assimilation based on bloodline.

Meanwhile, Shirakawa Yutaka (시라카와 유타카) points out

that Jang Hyuk-ju studies have proceeded by presenting materials to verify a preconceived notion of him as a ‘pro-Japanese writer’. He argues that the primary consideration in studying Jang Hyuk-ju’s literature must be recognizing that Jang was an individual situated within the unique environment of a colony, and examining the internal logic through which Jang navigated the imperial-colonial system within that context. (Yutaka Shirakawa, 시라카와 유타카 2009) Although not particularly active recently, empirical research on Jang Hyuk-ju’s literature, which had been minimal until now, is being conducted. (Kim joo-hyun, 김주현 2023) Discussions are also underway to illuminate the unique characteristics of Jang Hyuk-ju’s literature, which cannot be captured through a nationalist perspective or the dichotomy of cooperation and resistance.

These attempts can be understood as an extension of ongoing reflection on the compulsive tendency to frame and evaluate colonial-period literature within the binary structure of collaboration versus resistance, or pro-Japanese versus anti-Japanese. Yet, despite the accumulation of research seeking to move beyond this cyclical and inertial discourse, the view that Jang Hyuk-ju’s literature embodies only unequivocal “pro-Japanese” acts continues to prevail.

It is certainly true that in the late colonial period Jang assimilated Japanese ideology and adopted a cooperative stance toward the regime. Since this position effectively rationalized the inhumane acts of imperialism, ethical critiques of Jang’s actions are both significant and valid. However, discussions that focus exclusively on the outcomes of such actions – labeling colonial-era writers as “pro-Japanese” as if they were criminals – risk collapsing the distinction between texts that cooperated with the regime and those that did not. Interpretations that erase the “ambiguous political distance” between texts by the same author carry the danger of reconstructing an entire body of work solely in terms of collaboration or resistance.

Imperial Japan devised various mechanisms to realize the ideal of the “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere,” and within these mechanisms it sought to subsume all entities. Korean literature was likewise captured and objectified as regional literature by the empire’s legal, political, and military power. Through this technology of capture and subjugation, it was ultimately absorbed into category of imperial literature. What must not be overlooked, however, is that even under conditions where individual desires were suppressed and tightly

controlled, colonial intellectuals actively engaged with the imperial-colonial system in their own distinct ways. They were not merely passive recipients of Japan's colonial discourse. Rather, they participated in its production, seeking to secure their own positions by maximizing the universalistic and inclusive dimensions of Japanese nationalism.

If the actions of these literary figures were grounded in active, autonomous efforts to navigate or even resist the imperial system, then what deserves greater attention is the internal logic they developed in the process. In other words, when evaluating these writers – who are so often judged through the late-colonial framework of pro-Japanese versus anti-Japanese, or collaboration versus resistance – the focus should not be placed solely on the outcome of their actions. Instead, it should rest on the process by which they navigated that historical moment. This calls for a more careful interrogation: If “pro-Japanese literature” represents “historical blindness,” why did such blindness occur? Did these writers truly regard their actions as a form of blindness, as we understand it today? If not, what “historical purpose” did they perceive in those choices?

Korean writers residing in Japan, who traversed imperial-colonial spaces in their creative activities, voiced demands for the abolition of discrimination against Koreans. At the same time, however, they also employed the subject of discriminated Koreans as a tool to gain recognition within the Japanese literary world.

Kim Sa-ryang (김사량), often celebrated as a resistance writer or nationalist fighter, exemplifies this contradiction. While criticizing imperial Japanese ideology, he nonetheless produced works centered on “Koreans” – a theme that resonated with Japanese readers and provided the quickest and most effective path to recognition in the metropolitan literary world.

Jang Hyuk-ju, the central figure of this study, displayed a similar complexity. Influenced by Kurahara Korehito, the theoretical leader of the NAPF, he published *Realm of the Hungry Ghosts* (아귀도) in 1932, a novel that denounced colonial realities and criticized imperial policies. Furthermore, as will be discussed in detail below, even during the wartime regime – when his pro-Japanese activities appear most prominent – Jang simultaneously endorsed the policy of "Unity of Japan and Korea" while sharply criticizing the politicization of the domestic literary world and its alignment with imperial policies.

This raises a crucial question: can we fully capture the image of this Zainichi Korean writer – fractured, contradictory, and thus multilayered and complex – through the simple binary of collaboration and resistance? If his texts both criticized Japan's discriminatory, exclusionary ideology toward Koreans while at the same time aligning with the imperial ideology that produced them and endorsing “Unity of Japan and Korea”, then these acts must be read as part of his internal logic as a literary figure. They constituted his strategy for coping with the imperial-colonial system. What, then, was the “historical purpose” that operated within this series of contradictory actions? This essay seeks to trace precisely that question.

This essay seeks to re-read, on a continuum, both the novels Jang Hyuk-ju published relatively early in his career and the state-policy collaborative writings produced in the late colonial period. The underlying assumption is that Jang himself possessed a unique historical orientation that shaped both his actions and his literary creations.

In 1932, Jang won second prize in the Kai jo (개조) literary contest with *Realm of the Hungry Ghosts* (아귀도), which brought him recognition in the metropolitan literary world and marked the beginning of his career there. During this period, he published several novels exposing the harsh realities faced by Koreans and criticizing the discriminatory attitudes of mainlanders. Among his early works, *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) most vividly reveals the national reality. This novel is especially significant because it not only continues the nationalistic perspective on discrimination that emerged in *Realm of the Hungry Ghosts* (아귀도), but also explicitly exposes the contradictions within Japan's colonial education policies of the 1930s.

The publication of *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) marked another turning point. Through this work, Jang came to recognize the hierarchical, discriminatory structure of the imperial-colonial system. As will be discussed later, he often depicted the suffering of Koreans in a self-flagellating mode of representation. Yet, he also underscored the fact that this miserable reality was shaped by Imperial Japan and by those who sustained its logic. Even when colonial intellectuals like Jang reflected the literary and publishing trend known as the “Joseon trend” (조선붐) what Japan desired were not critical interventions but vivid depictions from the periphery that could invigorate its stagnant domestic literary scene. As a result, Jang

frequently faced censorship, and in some cases, entire media outlets carrying his works were banned from publication.

Through this experience, he came to realize that his literary value was reduced to mere entertainment for the metropolitan audience. As a “colonial subject,” he also recognized that the possibility of gaining acknowledgment for the originality of Joseon literature – or for his own literary talent – was blocked from the outset by a hierarchical and discriminatory structure. Confronted with this impossibility, he concluded that to exist as a writer in his own right, he had to seek something beyond the framework of the “nation” that had produced such discrimination. This became the central mission of his life.

Despite this mission, Jang shifted his stance as the Sino-Japanese War intensified. He produced works such as *Pilgrimage* (순례), which endorsed the assimilation of Korea into Japan and urged Koreans to follow suit. His reputation as a writer who abandoned his ethnicity and chose pro-Japanese collaboration in pursuit of literary recognition stems largely from this phase. Yet, his actions should not be dismissed as a simple or abrupt descent into blind collaboration. Beneath his advocacy of the “inner and outer as one” policy lay profound fissures and conflicts in his relationship with the imperial-colonial system. While there were points of ideological alignment with Imperial Japan that led him to publish collaborative works, it is crucial to note that he subjectively “appropriated” imperial discourse within the bounds of his own understanding.

Seen in this light, Jang’s collaborative acts cannot be reduced to isolated incidents or explained solely as pro-Japanese objectives. Instead, they must be traced as part of a continuous effort to realize his own aspirations or historical orientation through the medium of colonial discourse. The historical orientation of colonial intellectuals, in fact, long preceded the emergence of grand colonial discourse. It served as both the driving force of their creative work and the philosophical foundation of their thought. Moreover, this orientation, regardless of the fall of Japanese imperialism, was often carried forward into subsequent history as an unresolved task and unfinished project.

Therefore, to reveal the true value and significance of Jang Hyuk-ju’s texts from this period, it is essential to examine how he understood and reinterpreted colonial discourse in his own way. To this end, this paper first considers how Jang perceived ethnic discrimination within the imperial-colonial system, tracing the origins of his project to

abolish such discrimination through *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) and the events surrounding it. It then turns to the short story *Pilgrimage* (순례) and the critical essay *An Appeal to the Intellectuals of Joseon* (조선 지식인에게 호소함), exploring how Jang understood and accepted the “Unity of Japan and Korea” movement, part of the empire’s assimilation policy, and at what points his internal logic aligned with imperial ideology. Finally, it examines why he adopted this ideology as a means to advance his project of abolishing ethnic discrimination, despite harsh criticism from Korea.

This effort is not intended to argue that Jang’s pro-Japanese activities were undertaken solely for the benefit of the Korean people or to justify his actions. Rather, it seeks to recover the inherent value and meaning of his literature, born of a complex and multilayered historical moment, and to illuminate the contradictions of the imperial-colonial system in order to better understand the essence of imperialist domination.

## 2. The Ban on the Release of Bungei Shuto (문예수도) and An Expression of Twisted Desire

To examine the true intent of Jang Hyuk-ju's literature, it is necessary to review the historical context at the time he published his novels. Furthermore, one must consider what readership his literature target-ed, and if Jang Hyuk-ju deliberately selected a readership, what he sought to convey to them. As Kim Ji-young (김지영) pointed out, “For a colonial writer to publish works containing ‘colonial elements’ in the dominant language was, first and foremost, an intentional act that took into account not only colonial readers who could read and understand the empire's language, but also readers within the empire itself.” (Kim ji-young, 김지영 2013: 80) This essay seeks to interpret the novel *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자), published in 1933, and the series of events surrounding it with this in mind. Through this, it aims to trace the process by which Jang Hyuk-ju, who had been writing in Japanese as a means to convey the reality of Joseon, came to recognize the framework of ethnic discrimination within the imperial-colonial system.

After graduating from Daegu High School in the spring of 1926, Jang Hyuk-ju became active with anarchists in the ‘True Friends League’. Due to this involvement, Jang Hyuk-ju in his early creative period was greatly influenced by proletarian literature, employing it as a methodology for his own writing. Subsequently, from 1927 until the spring of 1929, he worked as a teacher in the rural areas of Cheongsong County and Yecheon County, Gyeongsangbuk-do. Earlier, Jang Hyuk-ju had stated, ‘I want to make the miserable lives of those people known to the world. I want to appeal. My literature exists for that purpose, and I want to do something worthwhile.’ This reveals that his experiences – reading proletarian literature while active in the League and witnessing the dire reality of colonial Joseon farmers firsthand during his time as a rural teacher – became the literary origins of Jang Hyuk-ju.

To achieve this goal, he wrote novels in Japanese rather than in the Korean literary world and published them in the Japanese literary world. The reason he targeted Japanese readers and published his works in ‘Japanese’ rather than Korean was because “he believed publishing in the Japanese literary world, where censorship was less severe than in the Korean literary world, would allow him greater freedom in his creative activities.”

As the author himself stated, he considered exposing the miserable reality faced by the Korean people and revealing the contradictions in the colonial power’s policies to be his literary mission. To effectively convey this thematic consciousness, he strategically chose Japanese as the language for his novels. In other words, Jang Hyuk-ju used Japanese as a means to inform the world about the reality of Korea. Following the publication of *Realm of the Hungry Ghosts* (아귀도), Jang Hyuk-ju received high praise from mainland Japanese readers for creating a work that vividly expressed anguish over his nation. Judging by the domestic reception of *Realm of the Hungry Ghosts*, Jang Hyuk-ju's strategy of exposing Joseon's realities through Japanese writing can be considered relatively successful.

However, contrary to his initial plans, a significant portion of his subsequent works, including *The Farm* (박전농장) were censored by the Japanese authorities, with certain words blacked out. His work *The Hunted* (쫓기는 사람들) was even banned from release. Facing intensifying censorship of his works, Jang Hyuk-ju sensed a crisis and recognized the need to change the creative methodology he had adhered to until then. He endeavored to devise a solution to this problem.

*Seok-Yeol CHOI: A Colonial Intellectual's Project...*

I believe that correct understanding can be attained only through the dialectical materialist method, both in politics and in art. Yet I neither regard existing Japanese proletarian literary theory as infallible, nor do I force my own literature to conform to it. (omission) Here too, I hold a particular position.<sup>1</sup> (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 1933: 67)

The above quotation is from a text published prior to the release of *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자). This piece candidly reveals Jang Hyuk-ju's sentiments as a writer. While fundamentally acknowledging the dialectical materialist method, he states that due to his 'special position,' he neither took proletarian literary theory for granted nor attempted to forcefully impose it on his own writing. Here, 'special position' refers to the fact that, while conscious of the censorship authorities, his works adopted the creative methodology of proletarian literature, yet this did not serve as his literary foundation. It is also akin to a declaration that he would no longer impose proletarian literary theory onto his works. Viewing this declaration within its preceding context, Jang Hyuk-ju's decision to break with proletarian literary theory can be understood as stemming from his realization that continuing to publish works in the existing manner would prevent him from releasing pieces containing the literary themes he sought to express, due to Japanese colonial authorities' censorship.

Having broken with proletarian literature amidst the atmosphere of the 'Literary Renaissance,' Jang Hyuk-ju published *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자). in the September 1933 issue of *Bungei Shuto*(문예수도), Compared to Jang Hyuk-ju's earlier novels published in the early 1930s, this work places relatively less emphasis on class struggle. Instead, it focuses on exposing the contradictions of Imperial Japan's policies and the resulting reality faced by the Korean people. This short story centers on Kim Cheo, a character who, while a dedicated fighter for his homeland during his participation in the 'Reading Club' at teachers' college, becomes apathetic after witnessing fellow members arrested and imprisoned, losing his conviction in the

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<sup>1</sup> 나는 정치와 예술 모두에서 변증법적 유물론의 방법을 통해서만 올바른 인식에 도달할 수 있다고 믿는다. 그러나 그렇다고 해서 기존의 일본 프롤레타리아 문학 이론을 무오류의 것으로 보지도 않으며, 나 자신의 문학을 그것에 억지로 맞추려 하지도 않는다. (중략) 이 점에서도 나는 분명한 나만의 입장을 가지고 있다. (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 1933: 67)

struggle. It also features Hayashi, the Japanese principal who discriminates against and oppresses Koreans.

Whereas previous works featured protagonists engaged in class struggle, this story uniquely presents a protagonist who appears somewhat passive, having lost his sharp class consciousness. As mentioned earlier, this shift can be attributed to a change in the author's approach, moving away from proletarian literature-based techniques. However, as a work that changed its creative methodology to further strengthen its critical tone toward Japanese colonial policies, the conflict structure between 'Japanese' and 'Koreans' is more clearly depicted here than in previous works. The conflict between the two ethnic groups arises not merely from differences in the social positions of individual characters, but explicitly from the hierarchy and discrimination imposed by the 'ethnicity' of 'Japanese' as members of the colonial power and 'Koreans' as subjects of the colony.

Kim Cheol, seeing the children's pensive faces and shabby appearance, felt like shouting XXXX. Hayashi's lectures all seemed to say, "Become XX." The morality, history, geography, and every other subject taught in the classroom, every textbook, taught that XXX had been Japan's X country since ancient times, and its present state was only natural, even inevitable. It was an infinite honor for the Korean people to have received the sacred grace of being exposed to the world's culture. Therefore, they taught us to accept all lessons sweetly, simply say thank you, and obey XXXXXX no matter how we are XXed or XXed.<sup>2</sup> (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2002: 76.)

The above quotation is Kim Cheol's soliloquy describing the scene where Principal Hayashi of his school lines up students on a cold day to deliver a lecture. As seen in the monologue, Principal Hayashi, a

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<sup>2</sup> 김철은 아이들의 침울한 얼굴과 초라한 차림을 보고 XXXX라고 외치고 싶은 심정이 되었다. 하야시의 강의는 모두 "XX가 되어라"라고 말하는 것처럼 느껴졌다. 교실에서 가르치는 도덕, 역사, 지리, 그 밖의 모든 과목과 모든 교과서는 XXX가 예로부터 일본의 X 국가였으며, 현재의 상태 또한 지극히 자연스럽고 나아가 필연적인 것이라고 가르치고 있었다. 세계 문화의 성스러운 은총을 입게 된 것은 조선 민족에게 무한한 영광이라는 것이었다. 그러므로 우리가 어떤 식으로 XX되든, XX되든 모든 가르침을 달게 받아들이고, 그저 감사하다고 말하며 XXXXXX에 복종하라고 가르쳤다. (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2002: 76)

member of the colonial power, lectures the Koreans that Korea becoming a colony was “thanks to Imperial Japan, which allowed you savages, ignorant of new culture, to live in today’s civilized society,” and that they should consider this an ‘infinite glory’. While delivering this imperial Japanese narrative, Principal Hayashi sees a Korean student shivering violently in the cold and humiliates him, saying, “This is why you are weak.” Although somewhat softened, the work clearly reveals the hierarchy and discrimination between ethnic groups within the imperial-colonial system, likely due to changes in creative methods.

Meanwhile, the contradictions within Imperial Japan’s education policy and the criticism directed at it also come to the forefront. In the work, the Japanese principal Hayashi orders the Korean teacher Kim Cheol to collect money from students who cannot pay their class fees or else expel them. The protagonist Kim Cheol, aware of the reality that “many preschool children suffer because of tuition fees and cannot enter school”, left “abandoned like wolves” due to poverty, feels a sorrowful emotion. He realizes that by informing the students, as ordered by the Japanese principal, that they would be expelled if tuition fees were overdue, he himself is no different from the Japanese.

The children who enrolled did not learn in Korean from the very first day. They were taught in Japanese (which was forcibly imposed as the national language in the colony). The children could not understand what the teacher was saying. Encountering an unknown language for the first time, they were extremely confused. Yet they memorized two or three words a day and went home. (Omitted) The children are very diligent. Day by day, they memorized many words. A strong desire to memorize, to understand quickly, was evident on their faces. Moreover, they developed a kind of pride in memorizing Japanese, leading them to despise their mother tongue. Ah, this is how colonial subjects, from their boyhood, make themselves servile.<sup>3</sup> (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2002: 69-70)

The above quote reveals Kim Cheol’s inner thoughts as he

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<sup>3</sup> 입학한 아이들은 첫날부터 한국어로 수업을 받지 않았다. 그들은 식민지에서 국어로 강제로 부과된 일본어로 교육을 받았다. 아이들은 교사가 무슨 말을 하는지 이해할 수 없었다. 난생처음 접하는 낯선 언어 앞에서 그들은 극도로 혼란스러워했다. 그럼에도 불구하고 하루에 두세 단어씩 외워 집으로 돌아갔다. (중략) 아이들은 매우 근면했다. 날마다 많은 단어를 외워 나갔다. 빨리 외우고

teaches Japanese to students. Kim Cheol states that while colonized people take pride in learning the national language (Japanese), taking pride in learning Japanese to the point of despising one's own mother tongue merely makes oneself servile. He also takes a critical stance toward Japan's colonial education policy, arguing that while teaching subjects like morality, geography, and natural sciences in Korean would allow "learning to proceed very easily," the use of Japanese for instruction means "the original purpose is not even half achieved," leading to a "keenly felt sense of national oppression." In other words, Jang Hyuk-ju's *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) is a work where the contradictions of Imperial Japan's colonial education in the 1930s are grasped with a quite explicit national consciousness.

As briefly examined, "The Resentful" clearly reveals the discriminatory hierarchical structure between nations while simultaneously reproducing Jang Hyuk-ju's critical consciousness toward the contradictions of imperialist policy in the most acute manner. Thus, Jang Hyuk-ju did not merely list the destitution, misery, or disaster-induced suffering of Joseon peasants in his work. Instead, grounded in the understanding that the various problems confronting the Joseon people arose within the imperial-colonial relationship, he sought to reconstruct the reality of Joseon through diverse means: the conflict between Joseon people collaborating with imperialist power and Joseon peasants, the oppression and violence of the Japanese against the Joseon people, and so forth.

While writing *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자), Jang Hyuk-ju believed that "unfettered by any partisan theory," he could conceive "the most correct literature" embodying his intended thematic consciousness. As mentioned earlier, perhaps because the author consciously crafted his writing, *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) actually passed censorship relatively unscathed. Only sections evoking class struggle received minor redactions. For this reason, unlike his previous works, Jang Hyuk-ju's critical perspective was

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이해하고자 하는 강한 욕망이 그들의 얼굴에 그대로 드러나 있었다. 더 나아가 일본어를 암기하는 것 자체에 일종의 자부심을 느끼게 되었고, 그 결과 자기들의 모어를 경멸하기에 이르렀다. 아, 바로 이렇게 해서 식민지의 신민들은 유년기부터 스스로를 복종적인 존재로 만들어 가는 것이다. (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2002: 69-70)

clearly discernible in *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) However, immediately after its publication, not the work itself but the issue of Bungei Shuto (문예수도) Vol. 1, No. 9 containing *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) became the target of censorship and was banned from sale. Given Jang Hyuk-ju's own statement that "in just two years since entering the literary world, I've faced publication bans twice" and that "I apologize to Brother Yastaka for the losses he suffered on my behalf," it appears that Bungei Shuto (문예수도) was banned specifically because of Jang Hyuk-ju's work. In other words, while the work itself could have avoided censorship – like the numerous instances of censorship marks – and been published, precisely because his work was published, the 'medium' itself that the Kai jo (개조) members had moved to in order to publish their work was banned.

The news that his work had led to the banning of the publication of Bungei Shuto (문예수도) was a significant and shocking 'incident' for Jang Hyuk-ju, who was active in the mainland literary world while maintaining his identity as a colonial intellectual. This incident brought about a major shift in Jang Hyuk-ju's expectations for the mainland literary world and his literary philosophy. In his essay On Translation Issues, etc. 2: Reject Sentimental Novels Jang Hyuk-ju remarked on the ban of Bungei Shuto (문예수도): "Had it been published under a Japanese name, it would never have been banned." The crucial point to note here is the shift in Jang Hyuk-ju's internal consciousness regarding the issue of censorship.

As previously noted, Jang Hyuk-ju had hitherto perceived censorship as stemming from his works wearing the guise of professional literature, and sought to escape this by altering his creative methodology. That is, Jang Hyuk-ju recognized that the censorship of his works prior to *The Man Who Was Divided* (분기한 자) originated from his 'creative methodology'. However, despite changing his creative methodology, when the media carrying his work was banned by the censorship authorities, Jang Hyuk-ju realized that the problem of censorship was not solely due to his dialectical materialism-based creative method. Interestingly, he stated that the reason was not the content of the work, which dealt with criticism of Imperial Japan's policies, but rather that it was not published under a "Japanese name." This suggests that Jang Hyuk-ju believed that if he had been an 'indigenous person' rather than a colonial intellectual, his work would have been released normally.

As mentioned earlier, Jang Hyuk-ju chose the mainland literary scene rather than Joseon as the arena for his creative work because he expected to be able to publish literature expressing his own thoughts relatively freely there. However, such activity was fundamentally blocked due to his identity as a writer from a colony. Jang Hyuk-ju came to recognize that the situation where he was stripped of his subjectivity and could only exist as an object was not due to a lack of originality as a writer or because Joseon was culturally or artistically inferior to Japan. Rather, it stemmed from the sharply defined, hierarchical, discriminatory structure between ‘nations’ forged and controlled by the imperial-colonial system.

Sensing the ‘impossibility’ stemming from the rigid hierarchy of the imperial-colonial system, Jang Hyuk-ju realized that novels set in ‘foreign lands’ like Joseon – works by non-native ethnic groups – could never escape their position as peripheral literature serving the development of Japanese (core) literature and national policy. What mainlanders desired from colonial intellectual writers could not align with Jang Hyuk-ju’s aspirations. What writers from the colonial power sought to see were aspects of Joseon's landscape or culture that mainlanders could not easily observe or reproduce, or the ethnic anguish generated within the colony itself – not appeals from colonized subjects regarding imperialist policies. After this incident, Jang Hyuk-ju declared he was not “the kind of figure (like what the mainlanders hoped for) possessing the spirit of an oppressed Korean national,” and vowed to create works henceforth solely “to become a writer as Jang Hyuk-ju, an individual.” This declaration can be seen as the desire of a colonial intellectual to restore his subjectivity by representing not the ‘Joseon’ demanded by others, but the ‘Joseon’ he himself had captured.

Amidst a climate where novels critical of Imperial Japan were casually banned, and where Joseon literature was valued solely as a means and tool for the growth of Japanese literature, Jang Hyuk-ju finally realized that 'the problem of discrimination between nations ultimately extended to the very mode of existence as a literary figure and the conditions of literary production.' This demonstrates that the hierarchy and discrimination between nations, as sensed by Jang Hyuk-ju within the imperial-colonial system, was not confined to the geographical dimension of colonial master-colony. It extended into the cultural dimension, including literature. In other words, the literary activities of colonial Korean writers at that time could not possess

intrinsic value; they could only find meaning when fulfilling a role within national literature, including Japanese literature.

Novels critical of Imperial Japan were casually banned, and in a situation where Korean literature could only be recognized as having value as a means and tool for the growth of Japanese literature, Jang Hyuk-ju finally realized that ‘the issue of discrimination between nations ultimately extended to the very mode of existence as a literary figure and the conditions of literary production.’ This demonstrates that the hierarchy and discrimination between nations Jang Hyuk-ju sensed within the imperial-colonial system was not confined to the geographical dimension of colonial master-colony, but extended to the cultural dimension, including literature. In other words, the literary activities of colonial Korean writers at that time could not possess intrinsic value; they could only find meaning when fulfilling a role within national literature, including Japanese literature.

Jang Hyuk-ju completely relocated to Japan in 1936 and continued various activities through his writing aimed at abolishing ethnic discrimination. In Japan, Jang Hyuk-ju turned his attention to the harsh realities of Zainichi Koreans (Koreans residing in Japan) that he could observe within his own sphere of life. He wrote reportage articles like *Visiting a Korean Settlement* to inform mainland Japanese readers about the exploitation faced by Koreans in Japan – discrimination by mainlanders and the seizure of their tenant farms. However, despite fighting “to the point of being bloodied in 1934” to avoid hearing “that truly tiresome talk about being a Korean writer, or having a handicap, or being soft,” and despite completely revising his creative methodology, the mainland literary world persistently demanded that Jang Hyuk-ju write “the typical type of colonial subject.” In this process, the “sense of exposure to danger felt by the subject when the possibility of speech is preemptively excluded” became deeply ingrained in Jang Hyuk-ju. This situation, where ‘even while speaking, one is regarded as not speaking’, gradually distorted Jang Hyuk-ju’s conviction that his literary value and significance lay in ‘broadly informing and appealing to the world about the miserable lives of the people’. This situation gradually distorts Jang Hyuk-ju’s conviction that his literary value and significance lay in ‘broadly informing the world about the miserable lives of the people and appealing to them’.

Not only in daily life but also within the literary world, the overwhelming discrimination and powerlessness stemming from the

hierarchy imposed by ‘ethnicity’ caused Jang Hyuk-ju to experience “a sensation of his own self shattering into pieces”, leading him to doubt his own viability. In this passive situation where all agency is castrated, Jang Hyuk-ju's mission takes the form of yearning solely for the existence of the writer as an ‘individual’. That is, his project to abolish the discrimination inflicted upon the Korean people begins to be permeated by a ‘desire to overcome a limited and closed status and construct a new self’ as the colonial period draws to a close. This ultimately represents a “new movement” emerging among the colonized, occurring “amidst the suspension of ‘individuality,’ where words are not recognized as words, and the violence one sought to evade is sensed as one's own problem.”

### **3. True “Unity of Japan and Korea” Policy as a Method for Transcending Ethnic Boundaries**

It is a well-known fact that after his departure to Japan, Jang Hyuk-ju abruptly changed his stance following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937. He published novels urging Koreans to voluntarily participate in the war and wrote articles cooperating with Imperial Japan's Greater East Asia ideology. Moreover, he not only encouraged the Korean people to participate in the war but also published fiercely critical writings targeting the entire Korean community, including the Korean literary world. While this led to Jang Hyuk-ju being labeled a pro-Japanese writer who surrendered to Japanese imperialism, this chapter aims to examine the internal logic behind this series of actions.

One thing to consider is that if we were to fully assimilate, then naturally becoming an undistorted people would be possible – according to the argument presented earlier. This assimilation must be considered in connection with the current Japanese Governor-General of Korea's Naisen-Ittai movement. “Inseon Ilche” literally means binding Japanese and Koreans completely as one, implying that no distinction should exist between the two. (Omitted) After the military government (I believe this term is forgivable) took over what had been treated as a colony, a kind of conscience began to sprout. That is, idealistic politics commenced. I will discuss this in detail later, but regarding the governance of Korea, I do not hesitate to acknowledge the progressive nature of military government, fearing the revival of party politics. Do

not call me a fascist for saying this. Rather, I am appealing to Governor-General Minami for true internal unity. I merely wish to ask questions – such as how fervently he is pursuing this, or whether he is using it merely as a transitional measure for a certain period – and to confront the Governor-General with everything that is not yet internally unified.<sup>4</sup> (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 1939: 297.)

The above quotation is part of the critique *An Appeal to Korean Intellectuals* (조선 지식인에게 호소함) widely regarded as best illustrating Jang Hyuk-ju's pro-Japanese stance. In this essay, Jang Hyuk-ju argues that the “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) movement promoted by Imperial Japan at the time represented an ‘ideal politics’ where ‘a kind of conscience began to sprout,’ aiming to move beyond treating Joseon solely as a ‘colony.’ He also expresses hope that this movement could finally lead to the realization of ‘true’ “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체). While mindful that following Imperial Japan's military politics could risk making him appear fascist, Jang Hyuk-ju appeals to Joseon intellectuals that it could become a progressive policy. This attitude reveals a shift in his consciousness regarding the nation and Imperial Japan between the pre-war Jang

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<sup>4</sup> 한 가지 고려해야 할 점은, 만약 우리가 완전히 동화된다면 앞서 제시된 논리에 따르면 왜곡되지 않은 민족으로 자연스럽게 거듭나는 것이 가능하다는 점이다. 이러한 동화는 현 조선 총독부가 추진하고 있는 내선일체 운동과 연관 지어 생각하지 않을 수 없다. ‘내선일체 (內鮮一體)’란 문자 그대로 일본인과 조선인을 완전히 하나로 묶는다는 뜻으로, 양자 사이에 어떠한 구별도 존재해서는 안 된다는 의미를 내포하고 있다. (중략) 식민지로 취급되어 왔던 지역을 군부 정치 (이 표현은 용서될 수 있으리라 생각한다) 가 장악한 이후, 일종의 양심이 싹트기 시작했다. 즉, 이상주의적 정치가 개시된 것이다. 이에 대해서는 뒤에서 자세히 논하겠지만, 조선 통치에 관해서만큼은 정당 정치의 부활을 경계하는 의미에서 군부 정치의 진보성을 인정하는 데 주저하지 않는다. 이 말로 나를 파시스트라 부르지는 말아 달라. 오히려 나는 총독 미나미에게 진정한 내적 통일을 요구하고자 하는 것이다. 내가 바라는 것은 단지 질문을 던지는 일이다. 그가 이 정책을 얼마나 진지하게 추진하고 있는지, 혹은 일정 기간을 위한 과도적 조치로만 활용하고 있는 것은 아닌지, 그리고 아직도 내적으로 통합되지 못한 모든 문제를 총독 앞에 직시하게 하고 싶은 것이다. (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 1939: 297)

Hyuk-ju, who questioned and sought to transcend the empire's totalitarian ideology, and the post-war Jang Hyuk-ju. So what does this seemingly contradictory and even fractured shift in Jang Hyuk-ju signify? What does this gap, this fissure, revealed by a late colonial-era Korean writer in Japan, truly mean? And where does this behavior originate? Might Jang Hyuk-ju's own anguish about the times and his internal tensions be concealed within the amplitude of this change?

To examine this, the key points to note in the above text are his assertion that the 'inner and outer as one' policy implemented simultaneously with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War was an ideal policy, despite his own concern about being perceived as a fascist, and the passage revealing what he means by the 'true inner and outer as one' that he appropriates. First, his remarks reveal that Jang Hyuk-ju had previously acknowledged the ideology of Imperial Japan stemmed from fascism and agreed with its inherent contradictions and violence. For Jang Hyuk-ju, who had directly experienced colonial intellectuals being co-opted as tools solely for the development of mainstream literature, this reality likely struck him on an even more tangible level. However, Jang Hyuk-ju suddenly intuited that some 'conscience' was sprouting within Japan, and that this could ultimately lead to the 'ideal politics' he yearned for. The reason he defended "Unity of Japan and Korea" and expected it to become an ideal policy, even at the cost of enduring criticism and condemnation from Koreans, was precisely because of the slogan that it meant placing no 'discrimination' between Korea and Japan.

As the Sino-Japanese War intensified, Imperial Japan established a wartime total mobilization system. Consequently, the 'colony' of Korea underwent a shift in its geographical status, becoming a forward logistics base for the continental campaign. As is well known, the purpose of the total mobilization system was to mobilize Korea's material and human resources as war supplies. Therefore, the restructuring of the system had to become a practical and realistic policy. Alongside this spatial reorganization emerged the question of how to voluntarily draw out the internal motivation of 'Koreans' to transform them into 'model individuals' who would submit to the empire.

This was because, above all else, complete mental control had to be the foundation for swiftly and efficiently mobilizing peacetime Koreans into wartime war materials. To successfully achieve this,

Imperial Japan devised the concept of “Unity of Japan and Korea”, grounded in the “fundamental principle of unifying and equalizing the people of the home islands and Korea,” and premised on the absolute elimination of “any discriminatory attitude based on trivial reasons” in addressing this issue. As the practical and material demands of total war promoted the necessity for colonial subjects' cooperation and participation, discourse and concrete policies could no longer simply discriminate against Koreans and other colonial subjects, excluding them from the national community.

As seen in the assimilation policy based on “Unity of Japan and Korea” within the total war system, Imperial Japan, at least superficially, erased the boundaries of hierarchy and discrimination between Koreans and Japanese to achieve unconditional victory in the war. As space was reorganized and Koreans and Japanese were positioned as equals, Korea, at least superficially, ceased to be merely a colony or periphery of the empire. Rather, Korea, as a logistical base, was assigned an indispensable role crucial to the development and victory of the imperial center, Japan. Jang Hyuk-ju found hope in the discourses and policies emerging from this rapid spatial reorganization. Particularly, the empire's “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) policy, which sought to resolve ethnic issues through writing, was understood by Jang Hyuk-ju – who realized this path was blocked by the imperial-colonial hierarchy – as the basis for finally collapsing that structure and abolishing ethnic discrimination. Therefore, for him, actions cooperative with the system were not sudden or abrupt occurrences in the late colonial period, but rather emerged at a specific point where his previously planned projects intersected with the particular logical mechanisms “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) policy’.

Since victory in war and the efficient conduct of war were the primary objectives, the assimilation policy was particularly forcefully implemented within the military. The more Korean troops were deployed in the Imperial Army, the more Japan fervently supported the Korean volunteer soldier system to prove the sincerity of its ‘elimination of discrimination’. To highlight the positive aspects of this system, the volunteers themselves were educated to think of themselves as ‘true guardians of freedom, equality, and anti-imperialism’. Furthermore, the Governor-General’s Office submitted reports demonstrating that while military training for Koreans did indeed begin

later than for Japanese nationals, once trained, Koreans could perform duties just as well as Japanese nationals without distinction. This served to strengthen the rationale for the volunteer soldier system. The fact that most of Jang Hyuk-ju's novels promoting collaboration with the regime in the late colonial period took the narrative of Korean volunteer soldiers as their basic framework can also be interpreted within this context. Within this context, we will examine his short story *Pilgrimage* (순례).

Therefore, special guidance becomes necessary – whether it be correcting one's view of loyalty and filial piety or becoming accustomed to life in the mainland. Carving each word of Instructor Kadagiri's speech into my heart, I contemplated the process by which someone raised with a different view of life and death and in a different environment could be transformed into an imperial subject. “Those raised in the mainland must have it easier in that regard, right?” he asked. “Of course it's different. They're like mainland soldiers. But those raised in Joseon share the same blood, so after just three months of training, they become like mainland soldiers. I'll show you this gradually...”<sup>5</sup> (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2003: 173.)

The quotation is a scene from Jang Hyuk-ju's short story *Pilgrimage* (순례), serialized in 1943. This work is a novel Jang Hyuk-ju wrote after concluding that ‘the only way for Koreans to become Japanese subjects is through military training,’ (based on his experience when he was specially admitted to the volunteer soldier training camp in Gyeong-seong in April 1943. The work centers on the story of Iwamoto, a Korean from the mainland who harbors doubts about the “inner and outer as one” policy, ultimately realizing that military training is the direct path to imperial subjectification. As previously mentioned, Imperial Japan deliberately sought to bridge the lingering

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<sup>5</sup> 그러므로 충효관을 바로잡는 것이든, 내지의 생활에 익숙해지는 것이든 특별한 지도가 필요해진다. 가다기리 교관의 말 한마디 한마디를 가슴에 새기며, 나는 삶과 죽음에 대한 관점이 다르고 전혀 다른 환경에서 자란 사람이 어떻게 황국 신민으로 변화해 가는지를 곰곰이 생각했다. “그런 점에서는 내지에서 자란 사람들은 더 수월하겠지요?” 하고 그가 물었다. “물론 다르지. 그들은 내지 병사들이니까. 하지만 조선에서 자란 이들도 같은 피를 나누고 있으니, 단 석 달의 훈련만 거치면 내지 병사들과 같아진다. 그 과정을 내가 차차 보여 주지...” (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2003: 173.)

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gap between Koreans and mainlanders to invigorate the Korean volunteer soldier system. They argued that military training for Koreans was not significantly behind that of mainlanders, even suggesting that enlisted Koreans would see substantial improvements in education, Japanese language proficiency, and mental fortitude. Similarly, the quoted text argues that while Koreans, who grew up slightly later or in different environments than mainlanders, may have flawed concepts of loyalty and filial piety or views on life and death, they are fundamentally ‘the same as mainland soldiers.’ Therefore, despite the short timeframe of ‘three months,’ they could become like mainland soldiers.

As if comforting Iwamoto, who seemed to be breathing a little easier,

I asked, “Didn’t you know about the volunteer soldier system back then?”

“I knew about it, but for us living in the interior, it was still difficult to volunteer at that time.”

“If you’d known you could volunteer, that feeling would have disappeared, wouldn’t it?”

“Yes, it did. I was truly happy. But there was still one thing I couldn’t bring myself to do.”

“What was that?”

“I always wondered if Korea and Japan had truly been one since ancient times.”

“Of course they were one. Don’t you know that history?”<sup>6</sup>

(Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2003: 219.)

The above quote depicts the moment when Iwamoto, who had

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<sup>6</sup> 조금 숨이 가벼워진 듯한 이와모토를 달래듯이 나는 물었다./ “그때는 지원병 제도에 대해 몰랐나?”/ “알고 있었지만, 우리 같은 조선인들은 자원입대가 쉽지 않았습니다.”/ “자원할 수 있다는 걸 알았으니 그런 감정은 사라졌겠지?”/ “네 사라졌습니다. 정말로 기쁩니다. 하지만 그래도 차마 할 수 없는 게 하나

doubted the concept of “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) comes to understand the meaning of that following the implementation of the Korean volunteer soldier system. As seen in this scene, “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) as one was only possible after the total war system, when the Korean volunteer soldier system became feasible – that is, when discrimination between Japanese and Koreans vanished and they truly stood on equal footing. Furthermore, in the work, the drill instructor tells those who deny the “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) principle, “Just come to this training camp once,” and “Seeing the reality, everyone will be amazed.” He also asserts that “implementing conscription is absolutely necessary, also in terms of accelerating Korea's imperialization.”

One year before the serialization of *Pilgrimage* (순례) began in 1942, Governor-General Minami-Jiro (미나미 지로) declared, “Korea is not a colony.” Furthermore, in response to criticism from Furukawa Kanehide, Chief of the Security Division at the Governor-General's Police Bureau, who argued that military training and the volunteer soldier system were dangerous and should be discontinued, Minami retorted: “The relationship between Japan and Korea has been splendidly proven to be of the same origin and ancestry, both anthropologically and linguistically, as well as in the humanities.” (Minami Jiro, 미나미 지로 1942: 10)

He argued that Japan was a nation that had “transcended” the concept of a nation formed by merging numerous diverse ethnic groups into a single entity. For Jang Hyuk-ju, who sought to achieve ‘true internal unity’ linked to Minami's movement while hoping it did not involve using Korea as a transitional means, Minami Jiro's argument served as a crucial internal justification for completing his project of abolishing ethnic discrimination.

Through Minami Jiro's “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) movement, Jang Hyuk-ju received a kind of imperial ‘approval’ for his project. In *Pilgrimage* (순례), he recreates the ‘military government’—an ‘ideal politics’ formed by the internally constructed logic of “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) – and the Korean volunteer soldier system within his work. While Jang Hyuk-ju's

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있습니다.”/ “그게 뭐가?”/ “나는 늘 한국과 일본이 정말 내선일체인지 의문을 가지고 있습니다.”/ “물론 한국과 일본은 같다. 그 역사를 모르고 있는가?” (Jang Hyuk-ju, 장혁주 2003: 219.)

true “Unity of Japan and Korea” grounded in a nationalistic perspective, did not directly align with the empire's “Unity of Japan and Korea.” (내선일체) it was nonetheless reinterpreted by him as a realistic and concrete alternative to the problem of ethnic discrimination. This mirrors how Lee Kwang-su based on his own convictions and political stance, perceived “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) as the ‘final abolition of discrimination.’

As we have seen, from the start of his literary career in 1932 until after the outbreak of the Asia-Pacific War, Jang Hyuk-ju pursued his writing while seeking new methods to resolve the issue of discrimination against the Korean people. This project, aiming to transcend the ethnicity of colonial Koreans, developed its own internal logic within the antagonistic relationship with Imperial Japan's policies, sometimes responding to them and sometimes clashing with them. However, whether driven by an obsession to be recognized for his individual creativity or by the delusion that he was a ‘messiah’ bearing the future of Korea, like ‘Hyeonryong’ in Kim Sa-ryang novel, Jang Hyuk-ju became ensnared by misguided desires.

As the wartime mobilization system was established, ‘Koreans were reborn as Japanese, forming anew, and certain individuals, particularly the Korean elite, were granted unprecedented opportunities’. Jang Hyuk-ju also began using the goal of ‘inner unification’ as an indispensable element for achieving his objectives, enabling him to once again operate as a recognized writer within the mainland literary circle. However, only a minority embraced the empire's ideology to seize these unprecedented opportunities. The ‘exception to the positive aspects of biopolitics’ – that is, the people sacrificed for the empire's fascist and totalitarian ideology – were the general populace.

As Fujitani (후지타니) pointed out, Imperial Japan's equality policies amounted to nothing more than “acting as if they truly believed it.” (Fujitani, Takashi, 후지타니 다카시 2019) Even amidst a proliferation of discourse and policies claiming Koreans and Japanese were equal, Koreans were never guaranteed rights truly equal to those of the Japanese. Even basic rights like health and welfare were not upheld for Koreans who volunteered for the military, and this phenomenon occurred not only within the military but throughout Korea as a whole. For instance, the Empire denied Koreans their basic rights by insisting that the Korean volunteer soldier system and the issue

of Korean suffrage were entirely separate matters. They justified this by claiming that Koreans would be granted rights only after they first became true ‘Japanese’ by pledging complete loyalty to Imperial Japan. This reveals that Koreans were perceived solely as ‘war resources’ at the time.

Ultimately, when intellectual elites like Lee Kwang-su and Jang Hyuk-ju championed the empire’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere ideology to complete their own projects, the residual individuals – those “simultaneously separated within the expanding image of ‘Japan’ – poor men mobilized as forced laborers or poor women coerced into sexual slavery – were once again marginalized.” Even if they lacked the intellectual capacity to deeply reflect on the empire’s “Unity of Japan and Korea” movement or its racist discourses and policies, or if the rapidly changing currents of the era left them no such leisure, Jang Hyuk-ju’s project to abolish ethnic discrimination instead pushed Koreans into the structures of discrimination and oppression that the empire and colony jointly reproduced in an even more dramatic manner.

#### **4. Between ‘Liberation’ and ‘Defeat’: An Unfinished Project Carried Over**

August 15, 1945. Japan’s sudden defeat and Korea’s liberation – Jang Hyuk-ju wrestles with how to perceive this moment. Driven by a desire to realize true “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) Jang Hyuk-ju aligned himself with the logic that pushed Koreans onto the battlefield and raised his voice in criticism against the entire Korean nation. Consequently, he received threatening letters from the Korean community in Japan and faced criticism from Koreans who had welcomed liberation. In this situation, Jang Hyuk-ju sensed that the conflict between himself and the Koreans could not be resolved and chose the path of naturalization as a “Japanese citizen.” Unlike Zainichi Korean writers like Kim Dal-su and Kim Seok-beom, who sought to maintain their ‘Korean’ identity while residing in Japan, Jang Hyuk-ju began internally carving out a new identity as a ‘Japanese person’ even before his naturalization was approved in 1952.

Much like many Japanese people plunged into a state of “kyodatsu-Post war Nihilism” (쿄다쓰) after the war, Jang Hyuk-ju,

who sought to overcome the grammar of discrimination through the medium of war victory and restore his personal identity, also experienced turmoil. The fact that Japan had lost the war brought him anxiety and disappointment, as it meant his own project – which he had hoped would be fulfilled through the empire's “Unity of Japan and Korea” (내선일체) policy – might end in failure. However, the thoroughly instilled militarist ideology and the totalitarian system built upon it collapsed more easily than anticipated, and the post war space of ‘ashes’ transformed rapidly from a space filled with ‘mere misery, disorientation, cynicism, and anger’ into one brimming with ‘hope, resistance, vision, and above all, dreams’. As John Dower argued, defeat plunged many Japanese into despair and nihilism, yet it was also a period of rapid emergence for ‘national identity and individual values’. (Dower, John, 존 다우어 2009)

As is well known, Japan, having become a ‘defeated nation’ in 1945, came under the rule of the victorious United States. The Americans occupied Japan with what was perceived as a ‘neo-colonialist attitude’. To efficiently and swiftly eradicate the militarism that had long taken root in Japan, they implemented an unprecedented experimental policy: introducing democracy to Japan. The occupying authority's ultimate goal was to transform Japan into a responsible government that posed no threat to world peace and security. To successfully achieve this, the United States endeavored to cultivate the ability among the Japanese people – who had been indoctrinated with militarism and totalitarian ideology until then – to ‘truly and freely express their own will,’ meaning the ‘unrestricted expression of the Japanese people’s will.’ This democratization by the occupying authorities was hailed as a ‘gift from heaven’ and garnered significant sympathy among the Japanese people after defeat.

Interestingly, GHQ’s policies served as a new internal foundation for Jang Hyuk-ju’s project, which had been thwarted by defeat. As mentioned in the preface, Jang Hyuk-ju’s historical orientation served as both the driving force and philosophical foundation for his creative work within the imperial-colonial system. Yet this demonstrates that it could be carried forward and inherited as an individual’s unresolved task and unfinished project, irrespective of the fate of Japanese imperialism. Therefore, to grasp the compositional principles and meaning of Jang Hyuk-ju’s novels, it is necessary to read his post-defeat works in continuity with those published during the

colonial period.

Subsequent research will therefore focus on the post-defeat novels *Ah, Joseon* (아, 조선) and *Mugunghwa* (무궁화), examining in detail how these works relate to Jang Hyuk-ju's colonial-period novels and what internal logic they share. Jang grappled with how to perceive Japan's sudden defeat on August 15, 1945, and Korea's liberation. Jang Hyuk-ju, captivated by the desire to realize true "Unity of Japan and Korea" (내선일체), aligned himself with the logic that drove Koreans onto the battlefield and raised his voice in criticism against the entire Korean nation. Consequently, he received threatening letters from the Korean community in Japan and faced criticism from Koreans who had welcomed liberation. In this situation, Jang Hyuk-ju sensed that the conflict between himself and Koreans could not be resolved and chose the path of naturalization as a 'Japanese citizen.'

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