

The Formation of Korean-ness and the Advent of the Split-Consciousness: Embracing Multiple Realities in Yeom Sangseop's *Mansejeon*

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1. Introduction

In his essay titled "Resistance and Despair" (Jeohanggwa jeolmang), Kim Chul discusses the 2004 KBS1 history documentary, "The Arirang of Kamikaze Pilot Tak Gyeonghyeon."¹ The documentary depicts lieutenant Tak and several other Korean Kamikaze pilots before their final, fateful mission. The narrator tells the viewer that the last will of one of the pilots had been recently discovered. The will was in the form of an LP record left for his parents. Three things happen on the recording: the pilot wishes his parents health and longevity, he loudly proclaims his loyalty to the Emperor, and he sings the Korean folk song *Arirang*. The program traces the path of several other Korean Kamikaze pilots as they all congregate in a Tokyo bar shortly before the final flight where they sing *Arirang* and then make the toast "Let's all meet in the Yasakuni Shrine!" After their deaths, they were enshrined in the Yasakuni Shrine along with 21,000 other Koreans who qualified for inclusion by fighting with distinction for the Japanese Empire.

The documentary attempted to portray these men not as collaborators but as rural Korean youth who were just trying to provide a better life for their families. Kim Chul problematizes the contents of this documentary as follows:

In this way, their experiences create serious rifts in the dominant discourse in Korean society regarding pro-Japanese collaboration, i.e., nationalist discourse. Put another way, there is no way to explain these more than twenty-thousand deaths using the perceptions and attitudes produced by the nationalism that has controlled the socialization process in Korea for a century ... All nationalisms are necessarily those of the victim. However, these men's deaths cannot help but create confusion in the nationalism of victimhood. They are simultaneously "perpetrators" and "victims," "pro-Japanese collaborators" and "fellow Koreans," persons who must be "excoriated" and also "returned." In the instant that their existences and deaths are spoken about from the perspective of the "nation" (or the ethno-body), the "nation" falls into an unsolvable self-contradiction and state of confusion. And the response of Korean society to this confusion, as it has always been when confronted with embarrassing and complicated issues, is silence.²

¹ Kim Chul. 2009. *Shikminjirul angoseo* (Embracing the Colony). Doseo chulpan.

² Kim Chul. Ibid.

It appears that these young men were apparently able to seamlessly accommodate two outwardly incompatible realities simultaneously without any sign of contradiction. It was natural that Lieutenant Tak should apologize to his parents and wish them long life as is the duty of a filial Korean son. It was also natural that, as an officer in the Japanese Air Force, he should wish to die a glorious death for the Emperor and be honored in the Yasakuni Shrine. It would not have seemed incongruous to sing *Arirang* in Korean and then shout “Let’s meet in the Yasakuni Shrine” in Japanese. The ability to accommodate these disparate realities is made possible by employing something that I will term the “split-consciousness” and which is the main theme of this paper.

Academic treatment of Korean responses to colonial control have generally fallen into two categories: a postcolonial nationalist approach that focuses on the binaries of collaboration vs. resistance and the approach based on the portmanteau of colonial modernity which acknowledges that colonization was a form of modernization (what Walter Minglo called the “darker side of modernity”³). Nayoung Aimee Kwon defines the postcolonial nationalist treatment of colonial era Korean literature as the demand that it “represent authentic ‘colonial reality’ which narrowly meant either unequivocal resistance to colonial power or the sufferings of the colonized under colonial exploitation.”⁴ Kwon here (and elsewhere in her book) suggests that this binary approach to understanding colonial era literature (and the colonial experience from the subject position in general) has reached the limits of what it is able to reveal about “colonial reality” and perhaps is, in fact, obscuring that reality.

Surprisingly, the literary critic Kim Jaeyeong suggests that there is a faction in “our literary community” that has taken the position that there is a pervasive tendency to (intentionally) forget or misremember pro-Japanese literature. He laments the fact that there are literary prizes named for Korean writers that engaged in pro-Japanese activities and he names the Kim Dongin Prize, the Palbong (Kim Gijin) Prize, and the Midang (Seo Jeongju) Prize as examples. Kim says,

What is surprising is that in spite of some criticism (for their pro-Japanese activities), these prizes continue to be established and the fact that they are not considered more of a problem shows just how numb the sense of literary history has become.⁵

In contrast to this, Kim Chul poses the question “...through what experiences and process or method did those inhabiting the Korean peninsula after the turn of the Twentieth Century become aware for the first in history of being a member of a modern nation state?” Kim refers to an episode during the Korean war in which Kim Kirin is meeting with a South Korean commander and blithely passing on advice he heard about counter-insurgency tactics against communist guerillas from a Japanese officer on a trip to Namgyeong in 1944 along with Yi Gwangsu to represent “Joseon

³ Requoted from Nayoung Aimee Kwon. (2015) *Intimate Empire: Collaboration & Colonial Modernity in Korea & Japan*. Duke University Press, Durham & London. Pg. 9.

⁴ Nayoung Aimee Kwon. (2015) *Intimate Empire: Collaboration & Colonial Modernity in Korea & Japan*. Duke University Press, Durham & London. Pg. 192.

⁵ Kim Jaekyeong. (2004). *Hyeoblyeokgwa jeohang* (Collaboration and Resistance). Seomyeong chulpan. Pgg 46-7.

writers” in a writer’s conference supporting the war. Kim Chul states that this blitheness does not emanate from a lack of moral conscience but from something much more fundamental:

It comes from his first experience of the modern nation–state, of being called a citizen of a nation–state. And it is obvious that this nation–state was Japan. He is unable to distinguish between the experience of that state of which he was first called a citizen and that of the other state, “the Republic of Korea,” and in fact there was no need for him to do so. In all of his memoirs he frequently used such imprecations as “Jap bastards,” but because the internalization of the first experience was so deeply ingrained in him it was natural that he should so easily recall it in his encounters with the new nation–state.⁶

And here is the irony: Koreans gained both their understanding of the concept of “civilization and enlightenment” and their notion of *minjok* roughly at the same time and from the same source. From the first concept they achieved a sense of modernity and from the second the marker “Korean–ness.” However, the mid–wife mediating the birth of both was Japan. An even greater irony is that both the notions of citizenship in a modern nation–state (or empire) and equal membership in an ethnic identity were formed contemporaneously. Put another way, those people inhabiting the Korean peninsula in the 1910s and 1920s became Japanese citizens and Koreans at the same time.

This is why it was not at all incongruous for someone like Yi Gwangsu to simultaneously espouse the virtues and necessity of “civilization and enlightenment” on the one hand and draft the declaration of Korean independence read by students in Tokyo on the occasion of the March First uprising on the other. Shin Gi–wook explains the nature of Yi’s nationalism and its relationship to Western modernity as follows:

Korean nationalists of the 1920s did not generally appreciate or respect their traditions and culture. On the contrary, they criticized their own historical heritage, especially the Confucian heritage as backward and sought to reconstruct Korean nationality based largely on modern liberal Western thought. The best–known example was Yi Kwangsu’s “Minjok kaejoron” (A Theory of National Reconstruction). Yi acquired a “modern” education in Japan and returned to Korea right after the March First movement... In theory, Yi attempted to offer a blueprint for the Korean nationalist movement.⁷

Other nationalists like Shin Chaeho attempted to construct a Korean national identity based on an unbroken ethnic line tracing back to *Tangun*, whom he posited as the actual progenitor of the Korean bloodline. In his *Doksa sillon*, Shin identifies the Korean *minjok* by blood and territory, positing an unbroken *jokbo* or lineage stretching back to *Tangun* and, in irredentist fashion, extending ancestral territory to include all of Manchuria. Shin was doing this to counter a possible monopoly on the

⁶ Kim, Chul & Shin, Hyeonggi. 2001. *Munhak sokui pasijum* (Fascism in Literature). Sangim.

⁷ Shin Gi–wook. (2006). *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Geneology, Politics, and Legacy*. Stanford University Press. Pg. 46.

construction of identity by Japanese architects of colonial strategy. For instance, in trying to dictate aspects of the Korean identity, Japan would form the Committee for Compiling Korean History in 1922 and, thereafter compile thirty-seven volumes of Korean history. As stated above, these two identities—Korean (particularistic) and imperial citizen (pan-Asian)—were being formed simultaneously, and while Shin Chae-ho's brand of ethnic nationalism was designed to be antagonistic to the identity of modern citizen, the Japanese authorities had constructed a narrative designed to reduce (or erase) the incompatibility between the two, including research to demonstrate that the two peoples shared a common ethnic root. Henry Em summarizes this process as follows:

The proliferation of discourse on Korean identity which emanated from both the Korean nationalist movement and the Japanese colonial state, stemmed from the *necessity* to “nationalize.” ... Imperialist rivalry over Korea and eventual colonization by Japan intervened in Korea's nation-building process, and the process of nationalizing Koreans was, in a sense, taken over by the Japanese colonial state. Starting with the restoration of Sokkuram, it was the Japanese colonial state that went on to establish controls over print capitalism as well as national systems of schooling, transportation, and communication that produced colonial *Chosenjin* (Koreans). The transformation of Japanese peasants into Japanese (*kokumin*) had begun several decades earlier... By the time of Korea's annexation, the Japanese state had accumulated substantial experience with the technologies of both nation-building and colonization, including the production of national consciousness.⁸

In a sense, then, it was a clever stratagem for the Japanese architects of colonial identity to allow room for a “Korean” identity (*Chosenjin*) to co-exist with that of the citizen of the empire (*kukmin*), and what emerged in many was a hybridized consciousness that itself developed strategies to accommodate these two outwardly disparate identities.

It is my assertion that one of these strategies was what I will call the split-consciousness.

2. The split-consciousness in *Mansejeon*

Much scholarship on *Mansejeon*⁹, especially that of the nationalist bent, repeats a similar view: the protagonist Yi In-hwa is caught in an identity no-man's-land. In spite of his Japanese cultural and linguistic fluency he cannot become Japanese due to colonial racism and discrimination; at the same time, he is not a proper Korean

⁸ Em, Henry H., 2013. *The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea*. Duke University Press, pg. 103.

⁹ This work was first serialized in *Shinsaeghwal* (New Life) under the name *Myoji* (Grave Yard) from July to September 1922. The serialization was interrupted due to the closure of the paper. The full text was serialized in 1924 between April and June, 1 in the *Shindae Daily* under the new title *Mansejeon*.

either due to his lack of will to resist Japan. No Yeon Suk 's analysis is typical of this view:

He (Yi Inhwa) is not what the Japanese would call a Korean, nor what the Koreans would call a Japanese. And this middle ground that the narrator did not realize he occupies during his time in Japan, can be confirmed once again by the countless “contemptuous stares” that rain down upon him from those right in front of him.¹⁰

Yi Inhwa is fully acculturated to Japanese life and is indistinguishable from the Japanese. He begins the story with no apparent nationalist feelings. Once an awareness of the reality of Japanese discrimination sets in, Inhwa's psyche goes through a complicated process of re-orientation. He chooses to construct two contradictory, but at the same time, compatible, consciousnesses.

Inhwa's awakening begins when he is harassed by Korean and Japanese police detectives at the dock before his ship departs for Korea and peaks when he overhears Japanese in a communal hot bath speaking of exploiting Korean laborers. In the wake of his anger at the overheard conversation and his tears of humiliation at being so harassed by the police for no apparent reason, Inhwa contemplates the relative positions of Koreans and Japanese.

“A man becomes conscious of his fate when encountering someone above or below him in status... The happiness and elation that results from a proud, joyful recognition of one's superiority, however, is far exceeded by the unhappiness, pain, and dejection that arises from the humiliating awareness of one's inferiority.”¹¹

Here we see the first of bifurcation of Inhwa's consciousness being manifested: that of a sense of racial inferiority to the Japanese co-existing with a sense of class superiority over these same men.

“When I encountered them (“a pack of hungry ghosts from the lower classes”), I always behaved extremely courteously and tried to keep my distance. There was more reason for this than their racial superiority as Japanese. Even if I thought of them as simply laborers or proletarians, I still did not want to mingle with them... In truth, when I met a member of the proletariat face to face, my nostrils flared a bit.”¹²

So, Inhwa simultaneously feels a sense of inferiority to the Japanese due to being Korean while at the same time feeling superior to them by virtue of his status as a wealthy member of the upper, educated bourgeois class. Carter Eckert has discussed how the elite in Korea had in the Joseon dynasty identified themselves

¹⁰ No Yeonsuk, “Yeom Sang Seopui Mansejeon yeongu” (A Study on Yeom Sangseop's Mansejeon). *Hanguk munhwa*, 382.

¹¹ Yeom Sangseop, *Mansejeon*, (Before the Uprising). Munhakgwa jiseongsa, 43.

¹² Yeom Sangseop, 45.

more closely with Chinese culture than they did with Koreans of the lower classes citing the *sadae* policy of “serving the great.”

Despite the growth of nationalism after 1876, the traditional Korean elite’s disposition to find its identity within the framework of an initially alien culture seems to have carried over to some extent into the colonial period, with Japan replacing China as Korea’s “elder brother.”¹³

Eckert makes the point that Koreans before the nineteenth century had no strong feelings of loyalty toward the abstract idea of a Korean nation or for fellow inhabitants of the peninsula.¹⁴ He describes as “class over nation” the tendency of the Korean bourgeoisie to identify with and gravitate toward members of their own class (whether they be Korean or Japanese) as more natural and compelling than interest in nationalist issues.¹⁵

Upon his return to Korea, Yi Inhwa carries out a continuous parallel critique of Korea and Japan that is dialectic in nature: every criticism of Japan is immediately followed by a critique of Korea and/or Koreans. Yi is in a constant state of dialectic flux between criticism of Japan followed by criticism of Joseon (Korea) and praise for Japan followed by sympathy for Joseon. He can, however, find no synthesis. Inwha, while drinking with some Japanese bar hostesses, tells the reader that when Japanese first come to Korea they are quite docile but the longer they stay the more arrogant they become. This appears a critique of Japanese arrogance, but then Yi gives a long list of reasons why “foreigners” come to act this way toward Koreans that includes Korean laziness, drunkenness, indolence, and ignorance. In commenting on the disappearance of Korean-style houses and the encroachment of Japanese style buildings Yi repeats this pattern of dialectic criticism. While lamenting the fact that families are losing the land it took their ancestors hundreds or thousands of years to develop through painful sacrifice and hard work as they are being “driven” to the outskirts of the city or deeper into the countryside, he rounds the critique back on Koreans saying, “...they never even entertain the thought that this might be because of some power or their own lack of steadfastness, self-restraint, and perseverance.”¹⁶

This same pattern plays out several more times, notably during his encounter with a Korean hat salesman on a train and during his time spent at home in Seoul. The story ends with Yi writing a letter to his love interest Shizuko in Japan wherein he says that he feels he is in the midst of a public cemetery surrounded by lifeless, ghost-like Koreans. He adds that he has resolved to take responsibility for his own salvation by going into the unknown and finding the path that is right for him. In this way, he denounces any historical or blood allegiance, or obligation to Korea. At the same time he is not privileging Japan. What sort of process, then, is taking place in Yi Inhwa’s consciousness?

Contemporary Korean literary criticism generally reads this dual consciousness as a lack of comprehension of the nature of colonial reality. Seo Jaegil writes that Yi

¹³ Eckert, Carter J. *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press. 227.

¹⁴ Eckert, *ibid*, 226.

¹⁵ Eckert, *ibid*, 243.

¹⁶ Yeom Sangseop, *ibid*, 77.

Inhwa displays “a contradictory and split-consciousness.” After disembarking in Busan from the ship that brought him from Japan, Yi is wandering the streets looking for a Korean restaurant. This leads into a long rumination on how much Korea has changed that includes the lines “My town now has quite a number of two-story houses and even a few western style ones. In the summer *tatami* is more convenient, and more hygienic, too.’ But who are these two-story houses and this hygiene for?” Seo analyzes this passage as follows:

...we can see in the query ‘who are these two-story houses and this hygiene for?’ a critical instinct on the part of Yi Inhwa toward colonial modernization. However, he immediately diagnoses this reality as resulting from ‘Koreans not realizing there is a certain force behind this or not possessing steadfastness, self-restraint, or perseverance...’ thus displaying a sense of contradiction and split-consciousness... The cause here of the wretched lives of the Korean people is the exploitation policy of Japan (‘forced out by some power’), but Yi also ascribes it to the lack of steadfastness, self-restraint, and perseverance of Koreans. After posing the critique “who are these two-story houses and this hygiene for,” no further scrutiny or investigation of the nature of colonial modernity follows, thus stopping at an ahistorical sketch of the problem of Korean-ness.¹⁷

So, according to Seo, Yi Inhwa’s contradictory attitude and split-consciousness derive from him essentially viewing Korea through an internalized Japanese lens. Seo is levelling the ubiquitous nationalist critique at colonial and post-liberation writers who were ambiguous about Japanese actions and intentions and/or did not fully support Korean victimhood. In fact, as mentioned above, Yi Inhwa’s internal conflicts are triggered more by how he is forced to confront his notions of class status than of ethnic identity. To be sure, he is discomfited by the open talk of exploiting the “yobos” he overhears (by virtue of his ability to pass for Japanese) in the ship’s bath. However, his discomfiture derives in large part from the idea that he might be perceived as a “yobo” himself. It is worth noting that the “yobo” moniker in the story is exclusively applied to Koreans of the working class and not the bourgeoisie of which Yi is a member. Once again, this is nothing new. In fact, this was the attitude of the Yangban in locating their own identity in the elite culture of China while eschewing all contact with the lower classes. In describing how class was a much more compelling identity marker than nation to the colonial Korean bourgeoisie, Carter Eckert cites the case of Choi Malli, the highest-ranking academician in the College of Assembled Worthies (Jiphyeonjeon) in his impassioned attack on a proposal to translate a Chinese rhyming dictionary into *hangul*.

Although from ancient times customs and local usages have differed with the Nine Isles, there has never been a case of one of them separately making a script based on the local speech. Only types like the Mongols, Tanguts, Jureen, Japanese, and Tibetans have their own graphs. But these are matters of the barbarians and not worth talking about. It has been traditionally said,

¹⁷ Seo Jaegil. 2002. <Mansejeon>ui talshikminjuujeok ilgirul wuihan shiron (A Postcolonial Reading of *Mansejeon*) Seomyeong.

‘Change the barbarians using Chinese ways’; we have never heard of changing toward barbarousness. Through the succession of the ages, China has always regarded our country as having bequeathed the customs of Kija, but in matters of culture, literary and material, and in ritual and music, we have rather taken after China. To now separately make the vulgar script is to discard China and identify ourselves with the barbarians. This is what is called “throwing away the fragrance of storax and choosing the bullet of the preying (sic) mantis.” This is certainly a matter of great implication for our civilization.¹⁸

For many Koreans of the time,¹⁹ and certainly in the case of Yi Inhwa, questions of class or status took precedence over questions of a collective national (or ethnic) identity. In fact, this was the subject of the classic work on the psychology of the colonized upper class by the writer Jeon Gwang Yeong titled “Ggeobbiddan Li” (Kapitan Li).

In this story, the protagonist Yi Inguk is a physician having graduated from the medical college of Keijo (Gyeongseong) Imperial University in Seoul. He runs an upscale clinic in Pyeongyang that caters exclusively to patients of the upper class, be they Koreans or Japanese. He speaks Japanese at home with his Korean wife and children and wears a kimono in his tatami matted house. The story depicts how Dr. Yi gravitates toward the elite of whichever hegemon holds power in Korea at the time: first the Japanese, then the Soviets, and finally the Americans. Most Korean scholarship characterized Dr. Li as an aberrant collaborator and opportunist. Both of these characterizations are factually correct, however, as is the case with Yi Inhwa, they miss the crucial link between class and identity that had determined Korean social behavior for centuries. To be sure, there were elite Koreans who sacrificed for the proletariat and for nationalist issues. And yet, this pattern is useful in explaining how and why so many of the Korean bourgeoisie gravitated toward collaboration or accommodation. Well into the colonial period, long-entrenched attitudes among Koreans about class continued to support powerfully discriminatory practices toward members of the lower classes. In an essay on class-based discrimination by Koreans toward *baekcheong*, members of the lowest social class, during the colonial period, Kim Joong-seop points out the following:

In 1922, the year prior to the founding of the Hyeongpyeongsa, for example, *kisaeng* who accompanied *baekcheong*²⁰ on a picnic in Taegu were publicly criticized and then stripped of their guild membership for consorting with *baekcheong*. Clearly the *baekcheong* continued to suffer social discrimination, unlike members of other menial groups such as slaves and craftpersons, against whom discrimination had eased somewhat.²¹

¹⁸ Eckert, *ibid*, 227.

¹⁹ Again, see the chapter titled “Class over Nation” in Eckert’s *The Offspring of Empire*.

²⁰ “The *baekcheong* occupied the lowest rung in traditional Joseon society. A stigmatized minority comparable to the “untouchables” in India or the burakumin in Japan, they were regarded as inferior even by low-status slaves and *kisaeng*.” Kim Joong-seop. 1999. “In Search of Human Rights: The Baekcheong Movement in Colonial Korea,” *Colonial Modernity in Korea*. Edited by Shin Gi-wook & Michael Robinson. Harvard University Press. 312.

²¹ Kim Joong-seop, *ibid*,

This clearly shows that, in addition to the discriminatory nature of the colonial hierarchy, the traditional barriers to the formation of a common Korean identity that might challenge the imperial structure are still firmly in place.

What the split-consciousness allows Yi Inhwa to do is reduce the dissonance created by conflicting sites of identity registration. He is able to compartmentalize the disparate emotional reactions to the various stimuli he receives from the fields of experience he is traversing in the novel. The levels of consciousness are complicated and overlapping. We can divide them by ethnicity, class, and cultural (or civilizational) level. Regarding ethnicity, Yi In Hwa admits that, as a Korean, he is “racially” inferior to the Japanese. But on the very next page, he asserts his class superiority over this particular group of Japanese “laborers or proletarians.” When it comes to Koreans, Yi’s sensibilities, while of course shaped by class, are also informed by his notion of level of culture or civilization, something that is clearly tied to his modern education. He is disdainful of Koreans for their attachment to irrational, pre-modern customs such as the burial rites and the use of a concubine to foster a son. He is also critical of their unscientific backwardness, one of the reasons he cites for foreigners’ increasing contempt for Koreans the longer they reside in Korea. This sense of superiority on his part transcends class, extending even to family members as we can see by the quiet scorn with which he listens to his father’s repudiation of modern western medicine. Yi In Hwa clearly comes from a wealthy family in Korea which gives him class status. In addition, he is a student at the prestigious Waseda University in Tokyo and this increases his status, elevating him above less educated Japanese. Thus class consciousness never leaves him. As Inhwa is on the train for Seoul after visiting his brother in Kimcheon, he shares a silent flirtation with a *kisaeng* in the seat in front of him. The *kisaeng* is attractive and, as she is about to disembark from the train Inhwa is tempted to speak to her but restrains himself with the thought: “It seemed like she wanted ask me something, perhaps about how to find a particular place in Seoul, so I was about to speak to her first but I keep silent out of respect for my college uniform and cap.”²²

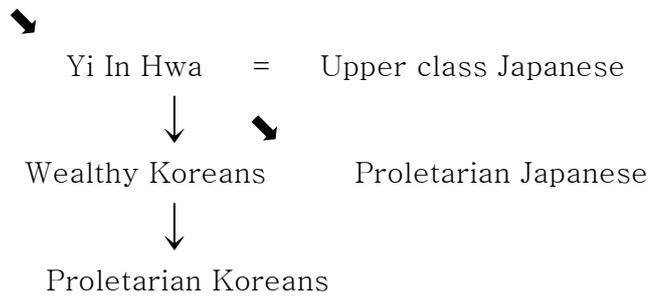
We can depict these layers of consciousness found in the novel as follows:

Ethnicity	Class/status/culture
Japanese	Wealthy, educated Japanese
Korean	Wealthy, educated Koreans
	Upper class, less educated Koreans
	Proletarian Japanese
	Proletarian Koreans

The way these layers of consciousness relate to each other can be schematized as follows:

²² Yeom Sangseop, *ibid*, 126.

Japanese ethnicity



Yi In Hwa admits that he feels “racially” inferior to the Japanese in the ship’s bath while at the same time feeling culturally (in the civilizational sense) superior to them. He also implies that he finds his brother’s and father’s view on topics such as hereditary succession, burial practices, and medicine to be backward in relation to those of the Japanese. He is simultaneously capable of feeling the pain of oppression and the scorn of the oppressor. His ethnic emotions and cultural sensibilities should be at war with each other but in fact are engaged in a fairly balanced dialectic critique of both Japan and Korea. In this sense, it is not as No Yeonsuk has stated, that Yi is neither Korean, nor Japanese, but rather that he is both Korean and Japanese. His split-consciousness makes it possible to accommodate these two disparate selves with a minimum of dissonance.

3. Conclusion

It has been the main thrust of nationalist scholarship to characterize *Mansejeon* as a “nationalist awakening” on the part of the narrator Yi In Hwa by virtue of his tearful reaction to the conversation he hears in the bath of the ship crossing from Japan to Korea. This is certainly part of the story. At the same time, his trip from Busan to Seoul also awakens in him the feeling that Korea is “a graveyard, a graveyard teeming with maggots.”²³ These two “awakenings” result in a dialectic critique of both Japan and Korea that cannot reach a synthesis in a clear condemnation of one or the other. And, in fact, there is no clear need for him to reach such a synthesis. He has internalized a sense of cultural or civilizational superiority from his experiences and education in Japan and this is wedded to the hereditary sense of class superiority that has characterized Korea from the early Joseon dynasty on. The split-consciousness allows him a cognitive space within which these two outwardly incompatible tensions are sublimated. He dislikes the feeling of discrimination but unselfconsciously repeats it.

Yi In Hwa is a complex and complicated figure, one created by the conflux of powerful new and modern realities with deeply rooted native practices. It is my assertion that he is the template for a new type of Korean created in the crucible of colonial modernity, imperialism, and native culture. And the split-consciousness that characterizes his psychological topography will only become stronger as the colonial

²³ Yeom Sangseop, *ibid*, 124.

period deepens and will, perhaps reach its apotheosis in justifications of the Korean War.

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