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Divergent Narratives: Collective Memory and Japan as an Other in Taiwan and South Korea

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Divergent Narratives: Collective Memory and Japan as an Other in Taiwan and South Korea

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Introduction

The relationships between Japan and its neighbors have been complex and dynamic over the past century. While Japan shares close economic ties with many countries in the region, its historical and political relations with some of these states have been fraught with tension. This project aims to investigate a puzzling phenomenon concerning this. More precisely, this text will discuss the distinct forms of othering employed in Taiwan and South Korea regarding Japan. Although these states share a similar history of Japanese colonial rule, the Taiwanese public is often recognized to have more positive perceptions of Imperial Japan in comparison to the South Korean public (Lin, 2022, p. 2; Liou, 2019, p. 171). Through an analysis of South Korean short stories, this project aims to contribute to our understanding of why perceptions of Japan differ between Taiwan and South Korea. To investigate this question, this paper will first discuss the historical background and why these two cases would be expected to have similar memories of Imperial Japan. Following this, a brief discussion will explain why the use of literature is appropriate to establish conclusions concerning international relations. Once that is done, discussion will turn to the empirical gaps that exist in the literature on this topic. The literature concerning nationalism and othering will then be reviewed to establish the theoretical foundations for this study. Having done that, the methodology for this study will be presented. A chapter of this text will then focus on describing the findings regarding Taiwanese literature and its influence on building a specific image of Japan in Taiwan. Lastly, this study will present its analysis of South Korean literature and discuss the perceptions of Japan created by this literature. To begin, then, the history of Japanese colonial rule over Korea and Taiwan will be briefly discussed.

The term Imperial Japan refers to a period spanning from the Meiji Restoration in 1868 until shortly after the Second World War (WWII) (Paine, 2017, p. 8). Throughout this period, Japan sought to expand its territory and establish colonies (Walker, 2015, p. 201). Some of the territories that Japan acquired during this period were the Korean peninsula and the island of Taiwan. Japan ruled Taiwan from 1895 to 1945 (Lin, 2022, p. 1). Korea, on the other hand, only officially became a colony in 1910, a status which lasted until the end of WWII (Hechter, 2013, p. 81). However, Hechter discusses that Imperial Japan had already significantly interfered in the affairs of Korea, including proclaiming Korea a Japanese protectorate five years before it formally became a colony. Japan pursued similar colonial policies in these territories. For instance, in both

colonies, Japan pursued policies of assimilation, known as *dōka*, aiming to instill the values of the Japanese nation into the local populations (Ching, 2001; Henry, 2014, p. 2). Japan also engaged in modernizing the economic and infrastructural conditions in both colonies (Liao & Wang, 2006, p. 4; Park, 2014, p. 58). During WWII, Japan mobilized considerable segments of the Taiwanese and Korean populations to aid its war efforts (Ching, 2001; Palmer, 2013, p. 139).

Responses toward Japanese Imperial rule were also similar across both territories. In Korea, as discussed by Palmer (2013), there were initially significant levels of resistance to Japanese rule, best exemplified in the “March First Movement” (p. 16) which involved a variety of nationalist activities. Nationalist actions against Japanese rule over Korea eventually mellowed and came to be channeled through colonial institutions (Chae, 2010, pp. 416-417). In Taiwan, a similar dynamic developed. From 1895 until around 1915, there was a considerable level of armed resistance against the Japanese (Katz, 2005, p. 54). Like in Korea, over time, the intensity of Taiwanese resistance against colonial authorities decreased, and nationalist discourse became rooted in official colonial institutions (Hechter, 2013, p. 78). This is not to say that nationalist discourse disappeared in either Korea or Taiwan, but simply that it became less radical throughout the colonial periods of these two territories.

Based on this information, it appears that Taiwan and Korea experienced similar colonial periods under Japan. Although it may be expected for memories of the colonial period to be similar in both states, investigating this topic further reveals that this is not the case. In Taiwan, memories of Japanese rule seem to be nostalgic (Lin, 2022, p. 2). For instance, in 2007, ex-President of Taiwan Lee Teng-hui visited the Yasukuni shrine in Japan, which houses the remains of Imperial Japanese soldiers (Ching, 2019, p. 80). Diplomatically, although Japan does not officially maintain relations with Taiwan, both states engage in close cooperation (Liff, 2022, pp. 1066-1067). This stands in contrast to South Korean memories of Japanese rule, which are marked by issues such as war-time comfort women and forced labor (Kwon, 2019, pp. 10-11; Sîntionean, 2020, pp. 54-55). As explained by Sîntionean, these issues continue to hinder the possibility of fully cooperative relations between Japan and South Korea. This difference between South Korea and Taiwan concerning memories of Japanese rule represents a puzzle. More concretely, this situation leads to the following research question: “Why is Japan established as a fellow other in Taiwan but an antagonistic other in South Korea?”

In developing a response to this question, this study will focus on the use of literature as a tool of collective memory building. Specifically, post-war literature from Taiwan and South Korea will be considered. Before justifying the use of literature, the concept of collective memory should be briefly outlined. Collective memory is largely based on the idea that social groups both hold interpretations of the past and engage in the process of remembering (Bachleitner, 2021, pp. 1-2). Collective memories are akin to frames of reference shared between the members of a collective, which individuals may access to interpret events (Doolan, 2021, pp. 15-17). Doolan adds that collective memories are not constant, instead they may be contested and shift over time. Literature plays an important part concerning a group's collective memory. Irimia (2017, p. 6) explains this dynamic by claiming that literature has a role in both building and holding cultural images of the world. In essence, literature can be understood as one of the vehicles in which collective memories are stored and constructed, something which is also discussed by Zaharchenko (2016, p. 14). If one considers social facts as important in international relations, then it is simple to highlight the significance of collective memory. Langenbacher and Shain (2010, p. 19), for instance, discuss how collective memories can be used to assign blame for past atrocities, to shape state identities, and to guide state policy choices. Insofar as literature influences collective memories and collective memories subsequently influence state behavior, the importance of literature in international relations can be presumed.

Before continuing with the next section, it is relevant to provide a clarification concerning the terms Korea and South Korea. During the Japanese colonial period, Korea was a single entity in which authors operated (Deacon, 2023, p. 11). However, after Japan's surrender in WWII, Korea was divided into a northern Soviet occupation zone and a southern American occupation zone (Barry, 2012, p. 37). This paved the way to the formal division of the peninsula into North and South Korea in 1948 (Foley, 2003, pp. 29-30). Only after the division of Korea can South Korean authors be discussed. This should be considered for later discussions of Korean and South Korean literature.

Literature on South Korean and Taiwanese Memories of Japanese Colonialism

Having introduced the topic, a brief literature review can now be carried out. Although much has been written on this puzzle, many authors have only carried out their analyses concerning Taiwan

and have used South Korea purely for introductory purposes. For instance, Ching (2019, pp. 80-82) mentions the different perceptions of Imperial Japan across Taiwan and South Korea, but then only discusses literature by Taiwanese authors in explaining these differences. Similarly, Lin (2022, p. 2) mentions the negative perceptions of the colonial period in South Korea solely to introduce his discussion about Taiwan. Liou's (2019, p. 171) study also differentiates Taiwan from South Korea in perceptions of Imperial Japan. Like the other authors, Liou does not consider South Korea much further and goes on to focus purely on Taiwan. While these studies are insightful, a comparative design would make their claims about Taiwan's uniqueness more robust. By avoiding a comparative design, these authors may be simplifying the collective memories of the colonial period in South Korea. This is an issue this study will attempt to overcome by including both states and analyzing South Korean literature.

Another gap is that, unlike Taiwan, little has been written about the use of literature in influencing memories of Imperial Japan in South Korea. Taiwanese Nativist literature (*hsiang-t'u*) has been studied extensively in terms of how it was used to re-evaluate memories of Imperial Japan in Taiwan towards the end of KMT rule (Lin, 2022, p. 6; Hsiao, 2021, p. 156; Tang, 2007, p. 69). In comparison to this, few studies focus on South Korean literature as a tool of memory building. For instance, in a chapter on South Korean literature's portrayals of colonial rule, Hughes (2012, pp. 165-166) largely centers his analysis on a single South Korean author. In her book on the construction of memories in South Korea, Lee's (2022, pp. 83-85) discussion of literature that deals with the colonial period is similarly carried out in a limited manner. Therefore, through the analysis of South Korean literature, this study may also contribute to an understudied topic.

Constructivism

Following that literature review, the theory of constructivism should be quickly outlined. Constructivism is the main International Relations (IR) perspective utilized in this study, and thus it would be useful to summarize its main ideas. One of the principal aspects of constructivist literature is its strong emphasis on the flexibility of the world we exist in. Alexander Wendt's (1992) assertion that "anarchy is what states make of it" (p. 395) serves as one of the prime illustrations of this argument. Wendt's claim suggests that the institution of self-help and the broader focus on power dynamics—which realists often present as natural consequences of

anarchy at the international level—can be altered and new institutions can be developed. Discursive power is also often emphasized in constructivist thought. Constructivists assert that we can not only change systems and structures through actions, but also through the frames and understandings we promote concerning said structures (Onuf, 2013, p. 4). These two main points are summarized succinctly by McCourt (2022, p. 4) who claims that constructivism is essentially about how ideas, as opposed to purely material considerations, can shape human interactions, and thus alter the political, social, and economic structures that are currently in place. The nature of this study is closely linked to constructivist thought, which should be taken into consideration for the rest of this text.

The Nation and Othering

Having briefly summarized the IR perspective utilized by this study, discussion can now turn to some of the principal accounts of the nation. The reason for this is that, as will be explained later, collective memories are strongly linked to discussions of national identity (Lebow, 2006, p. 3). While not a modern understanding, Renan's (2018, p. 261) 19th century definition of the nation is still pertinent today owing to its affinity with various contemporary views of the nation. Renan described the nation as being formed by two elements. First is a historical component, which refers to the shared memories of a group. The other is a contemporary component, which pertains to the willingness of individuals to remain part of a nation. Renan's understanding resonates with Anderson's (2006) interpretation of the nation as an "imagined community" (p. 6). Here, Anderson argued that the nation is a product of imagination because, despite its members not necessarily knowing each other, they envision themselves as belonging to the same group. Anderson, like Renan, emphasizes the significance of an individual's sense of belonging in determining whether a group constitutes a nation. Another author which can be mentioned in this discussion is Ernest Gellner. Even though Gellner (1983, p. 7) recognizes shared culture as important for nationhood, he also underscores the mutual recognition of individuals as members of the same nation as a vital aspect of whether a group of people compose a nation. Thus, like Renan and Anderson, Gellner views the nation as something heavily linked to perceptions.

Scholars of nationalism also frequently address the significance of memory concerning nationhood, which is the other aspect present in Renan's definition. Authors such as Berenskoetter

(2014, pp. 270-274), Lebow (2006, p. 3), and Carvalho and Gemenne (2009, p. 1) all explore the role of memory in shaping national identity. These authors largely argue that collective memories have a significant impact in establishing attitudes toward what is the right trajectory for a nation in the future and what a nation's place is in the present relative to others. Consequently, memory is understood as a crucial element in the discussion of the nation. As was previously discussed, literature can be viewed as a vital component in the realm of memories and can thus be used to understand the behavior of nationalist movements.

As nations are primarily constructed through perceptions, it follows that discursive contestation plays a vital role in shaping their transformation. Numerous scholars have attempted to develop theoretical understandings of the continuous contestation surrounding the nation (Shelef, 2018, pp. 11-17; Hintz, 2018, pp. 17-23). Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, and McDermott (2006, p. 700), for instance, view contestation with respect to how much specific facets of nationalism are embraced by a nation's members. More specifically, they propose that contestation occurs concerning what objectives should be sought by a nation, how limited the scope of the nation should be, how intrinsic the nation's attributes are understood to be, and the role of the nation with regards to other nations. In essence, debates over nationalism are primarily focused on delimiting the bounds of a nation and defining its position vis-à-vis other nations.

While these authors acknowledge the variation in debates over nationalism, they fail to explore the domestic and international factors that contribute to the "othering" of specific communities. This would have been informative as othering can easily be linked to their discussion of contestation over a nation's perceived place relative to others. Furthermore, these conditions would be important to establish for the purposes of this study seeing as othering is a variable in the research question. The omission of such factors seems to be common among authors focusing on the contestation around othering. Berenskoetter (2014, pp. 278-280), for example, discusses how nationalist contestation may transpire, but does not address the environments in which contrasting views of the nation and the other may or may not proliferate. Similarly, Duara (1995, p. 15) highlights the flexibility of nationalist narratives based on othering. However, outside of some general allusions to history as a way of explaining the othering of specific groups during certain periods, Duara does not elaborate much on this. Other authors who discuss othering but exclude significant theorizing on the conditions in which it is more likely to take place and which forms of it are more likely to be adopted include Bucher and Jasper (2017, p. 399), Strömbom

(2014, pp. 175-176), and Kaliber (2019, pp. 371-372). Therefore, the literature on nationalist othering can be perceived to be incomplete.

Structure and Othering

Seeing as there is a literature gap in the writing concerning “othering”, a theoretical response should be developed. Regarding this, the importance of structure should be, at least somewhat, reiterated. The perspectives described above may have become too detached from discussions of power to explain the reasons behind othering and why certain groups are constructed as antagonistic others, while some are constructed as fellow others. Thus, a possible response to this gap in the theory is that, often, groups are othered for the purposes of changing or legitimizing a system. It can be said that this process broadly takes place when a certain exclusive group of people comes into prolonged contact with another. Before delving further into this, it would be useful to highlight the difference between antagonistic and fellow others. As described by Hagström and Isaksson (2019, p. 37), an antagonistic other is one which the self differentiates from based on the other’s perceived defects. Nabers (2017, p. 426) describes this in a comparable way by claiming that an antagonistic other serves as the basis for the bounds of an ideal self. Actors will adopt hostile discourse in relation to the antagonistic other and pursue uncooperative policies when dealing with them. In contrast to this, a fellow other is one which is perceived to be like the self based on the possession of certain commendatory attributes and is thus more favorable to engage with (Hagström & Isaksson, 2019, p. 37).

Two instances of the process of othering should be briefly outlined to aid this study's foundations. First, it can be said that the process of othering should be more likely in periods of colonization. In some cases, a colonizing power may wish to instill within the local population the perception that they belong to the same nation as the occupier, even if they are functionally treated as lesser members. In response, the occupied population may resist attempts at assimilation, constructing the colonial power as an antagonistic other, emphasizing their distinctiveness. This othering aims to delegitimize colonial rule. If the inhabitants consider themselves as belonging to a separate nation, then there is a basis to call for independence. An example of this dynamic occurred in the British West Indies, where the othering of the British ruling class acted as the basis of calls for greater autonomy in the first half of the 20th century (Sewell, 2010, p. 13). Colonial

contexts may also lead to the creation of fellow others. One form of this which is particularly relevant to this study takes place when regimes which were previously unpopular come to be viewed favorably in comparison to the current colonial regime. These groups are constructed as fellow others while the current colonial power is depicted as an antagonistic other, returning to the previous discussion on legitimacy. Although Hong Kong is not necessarily a Chinese colony, the perception of Imperial Britain as a fellow other has been used to establish the People's Republic of China (PRC) as an antagonistic other by many in Hong Kong (Lowe & Tsang, 2018, p. 564). Othering within colonial contexts therefore suggests the illegitimacy of the current system and provides the foundations for a post-colonial system's validity.

The second context within which this process of othering as a form of legitimizing structures can be discussed is that of foreign policy between states in the international system. In this context, othering is once again used to change or legitimize an existing system or relationship. More specifically, the othering of particular nations can be used at the international level to drive certain state policies. Antagonistic othering can provide the basis for certain confrontational, or at least uncooperative, policies towards certain states. Thus, in shifting to these less-friendly policies, the process of antagonistic othering can be used as a driver of change. Once these policies are in place, othering can be understood as a way of delegitimizing alternative and more friendly forms of the relationship. Diez (2004, p. 329) discusses this dynamic of antagonistic othering with respect to discussions of Turkish admission into the European Union (EU). He explains that the construction of Turkey as an antagonistic non-European other has been used by EU members to justify Turkey's exclusion. In contrast to this, the creation of fellow others will demand pursuing more friendly and cooperative state policies. Establishing fellow others will drive change if state policies are considered not cooperative enough and delegitimize alternative relationships where uncompromising or hostile policies are sought. This form of othering can also be found throughout history, including with regards to the Japanese nation in the PRC until the early 1980s (He, 2007, pp. 46-47).

Both contexts can be discussed concerning Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. As was discussed in earlier, both Taiwan and South Korea were Japanese colonies for similar lengths of time and seemed to have experienced similar colonial policies. Thus, the process of othering in colonial contexts should apply to these two states and should be considered for the purposes of analysis. The second context of othering at the international level can also be discussed concerning

South Korean-Japanese relations and Taiwanese-Japanese relations seeing as both states have engaged in considerable diplomatic actions with their previous colonial master. Both contexts in which othering takes place must be considered in the subsequent discussion of these two states' colonial and post-war literature.

Research Design

Having established this study's theoretical foundations, the research design may now be presented. In terms of case selection, this study utilizes a small-N most similar systems design (MSSD) strategy of case selection. Concretely, the two cases of Taiwan and South Korea are analyzed and compared in this text. Although these cases have various historical, societal, and demographic differences between them, they are treated as most similar in this study. The reason for this is that, as discussed in the introduction, these two states experienced similar colonial histories under the Japanese Empire. Therefore, it would be expected that memories of the Japanese colonial period are similar across the two cases. However, it seems that this is not true. Taiwan seems to have much more positive perceptions of the colonial period and of Japan itself in comparison to South Korea. As these are two similar cases that vary on the dependent variable, they are appropriate to select based on the logic of MSSD.

For the purposes of this study, the data used are translated short stories from South Korea. Concretely, the translated short stories provided in 6 anthologies were used as data (Chung, 2010a; Pak, 1999; Hwang, 2010; Suh, 1998; Pihl, Fulton & Fulton, 2007; Korean National Commission for Unesco [KNCU], 1994). The stories in these anthologies were written by various prominent South Korean authors between 1945 and 2004. The anthologies are principally hosted in the Leiden University Library; however, one anthology was obtained through another online source. The chosen anthologies were selected to represent the work of a variety of important South Korean authors and a diverse range of time following Japanese withdrawal from Korea. This should allow the study to make more robust claims concerning the collective memories of Imperial Japan in South Korea following WWII in comparison to focusing on a single author or a single decade. Some of the selected anthologies included stories which were written during Japanese rule, in which case such stories were not considered for the analysis. The reason why the analysis centers on South Korean literature as opposed to also including Taiwanese literature is that, as was

previously discussed, the research gap on the topic of this research mainly exists concerning South Korean literature. The memory of Japanese rule in Taiwanese literature is still discussed, but this is done purely through the work of other authors.

In analyzing the short stories, the concept of the othering is investigated through the depictions of Japan, Japanese colonial rule, and Japanese characters. The concept of othering cannot be easily measured quantitatively. Instead, perspectives on Japan and the Japanese included in the various texts are determined by the researcher in a qualitative manner. The specific method that is utilized is qualitative content analysis, which is appropriate to determine the various possible depictions of Japan in South Korean literature. Inductive coding was used in this study to not restrict the analysis to pre-selected categories that may not be the most appropriate. The coding scheme for this study can be seen in the table below:

Table 1

Coding Scheme

Theme	Subcategory	Description
Japan as an antagonistic other.	Directly.	This involves situations where Japan and/or the Japanese are directly portrayed in a negative manner.
	Through comparison with other states.	This involves situations where Japan and/or the Japanese are portrayed in a negative manner with reference to a non-Japanese other.
	Through discussions of collaborators and Korean resistance to Japanese rule.	This involves situations where collaborators and those who assimilate to the Japanese are depicted negatively. This also includes situations where resistance to the Japanese is depicted positively.
Japan as a neutral other.		This may include situations where Japan and Japanese characters are mentioned

		briefly or in passing without any additional connotations.
Japan as a fellow other.	Sympathy for the Japanese.	This may involve situations where Japanese characters are portrayed as suffering unfairly, or Korean characters being portrayed negatively for certain retributive actions against the Japanese.
Othering of other states.	As antagonistic others.	This may include situations where states other than Japan are portrayed as antagonistic others.
	As fellow others.	This may include situations where states other than Japan are portrayed as fellow others.

Although this study is largely focused on memories of Imperial Japan in the post-war era, a factor that must be controlled for is perceptions of Imperial Japan in Taiwanese and Korean literature during the colonial period. It may be the case that Taiwanese literature during the colonial period already had a positive outlook concerning Japan and thus placed Japan closer to the self than Korean literature at the time. If this was the case, then there would have to be an alternative explanation beyond post-war memory building to explain current differences in Taiwanese and South Korean memories of this period. Therefore, a brief discussion concerning the othering of Japan in colonial Taiwanese and Korean literature must be included.

The results of the analysis of South Korean literature will be displayed narratively and the discussion on the portrayal of Japan will be supported by information from some of the analyzed texts. Having discussed the research design of this study, discussion will now turn to the literature on Taiwanese written works during the colonial period and in the post-war era and the image of Japan in these texts.

Taiwanese Literature and Othering of Japan

To begin, I discuss the findings concerning Taiwanese literature during Japanese rule. Regarding this, it should be said that the perception of Japan in Taiwanese literature from the colonial period is far from uniform. On one hand, broad elements of anti-colonial sentiment can be found. The debates between Old and New Literature authors during the inter-war period can be discussed concerning this. As described by Liao and Wang (2006, pp. 192-193), this was a literary debate which involved authors who wished to continue using classical Chinese writing conventions, or Old Literature, and authors who wished to incorporate more vernacular forms of writing, or New Literature. Liao and Wang (2006, pp. 206-207) mention that although both sides debated one another extensively concerning each other's complicity in Japanese colonial rule, both camps nevertheless sought to establish and preserve a distinct non-Japanese identity. Hsiao (2000, pp. 45-46) outlines the overall role of Taiwanese writers in countering colonial assimilation during the inter-war period succinctly. He argues that the efforts of writers in establishing a new vernacular script using Chinese characters and the development of Nativist literature not only aided the development of a Taiwanese identity but also tied this identity to mainland China. Thus, it can be said that literature during this period played a role in establishing Japan as an antagonistic other.

However, this conclusion would be incomplete. As Yee (2001, p. 92) suggests, works from the inter-war period often present mixed views rather than being unequivocally anti-colonial. She claims, for instance, that many inter-war texts display a resentment for Taiwan's relative poverty while also including aspirations to come closer to the ever-advancing center that Japan represented. Japan was thus viewed as both a force that was preventing Taiwan from advancing but also as having the potential to aid Taiwan's development. Taiwanese perceptions of Japan also shifted toward the end of WWII as Japan introduced the policy of *kōminka* (Ching, 2001). Ching describes *kōminka* as a set of policies aiming to transform the local population of Taiwan into authentic Imperial subjects which involved enforcing the use of Japanese, replacing local names with Japanese names, and recruiting locals to support Japan's war effort. This led to an increase of Japanese nationalism in Taiwanese society which resulted in a surge of pro-Imperial literature by Taiwanese authors, even from those who were previously critical of the colonial regime (Chen, 2007, p. 30). Consequently, the othering of Japan in colonial Taiwanese literature cannot be designated as either establishing Japan as an antagonistic other or as a fellow other. Rather, more

ambiguous forms of othering existed in this period and there were shifts of this over time. When discussing Korean literature from the colonial period, it is important to determine whether a similar dynamic is found.

Having outlined the othering of Japan in Taiwanese literature from the Imperial period, findings from the post-war era can now be discussed. Regarding this, it is crucial to mention that the analysis of colonial era literature was one of the main activities carried out by Taiwanese Nativist authors during the latter half of the KMT dictatorship (Lin, 2022, p. 6). In the 1970s, as explained by Hsiau (2021, p. 71), colonial era literature was interpreted by Taiwanese writers as belonging to wider discussions of Chinese nationalism and the resistance of the Chinese people to Japanese Imperialism. Thus, Japan was firmly established as an antagonistic other. China was not just perceived as a fellow other but viewed as the self. Taiwanese identity, although recognized as a regional identity, was not viewed as a distinct national identity.

This dynamic began to change in the early 1980s when pro-democratic challenges to KMT authority, including events such as the Kaohsiung Incident and the pro-democracy Dangwai movement, led to anti-dictatorship discourse being adopted by many authors (Hsiau, 2021, pp. 109-110). As Hsiau explains, the general shift to an anti-KMT spirit in Taiwanese authors contributed to a process of de-Sinification where Taiwanese experiences were separated from broad discussions of Chinese experiences. Thus, the Chinese nation gradually became an other separate from the Taiwanese self.

The role of Imperial Japan in this othering of China must also be discussed. In general, colonial Japan can be said to have been utilized by authors during this period to aid the creation of China as an antagonistic other. This was largely done through comparisons between Japanese colonial institutions and the KMT government (Tang, 2007, p. 69). As Tang explains, these comparisons would often end with the conclusion that KMT rule over the island was not any different from the oppressive Japanese colonial regime. In making a similar argument, Yee (2001, p. 97) cites a story written in 1984 by Li Qiao in which the protagonist attempts to trick his KMT pursuers by adopting the names of various anti-Japanese colonial figures. This, she explains, directly connects resistance to the KMT to previous anti-colonial sentiment against the Japanese. Japan thus continued to be perceived as an antagonistic other, but with the aim of establishing China as an antagonistic other unlike in the 1970s.

However, the perception of Japan as an antagonistic other evolved alongside the processes of democratization that took place throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s. Concretely, the image of Japan became closer to that of a fellow other. As Liou (2019, pp. 175-177) suggests, the nexus of a strong democracy, multiculturalism, and the rise of the PRC contributed to a more positive yet still complex assessment of Imperial Japan in Taiwanese fiction since the late 1990s. Ching (2019, pp. 85, 94-95) makes a similar argument concerning the *dōsan* generation which experienced Imperial Japan, KMT dictatorship, and Taiwanese democracy. He suggests that democratization allowed them to freely communicate their memories of Japanese colonial rule in contrast to KMT rule, while the rise of the PRC created a sense of anxiety which pressured members of the *dōsan* generation to place Taiwanese identity closer to a fellow Japanese other.

In essence, the re-evaluation of Imperial Japan that took place in Taiwan in the late 20th century can be largely explained by the experiences of KMT authoritarianism. Democratization initially led to comparisons between colonial Japan and the KMT to delegitimize KMT dictatorship over Taiwan, establishing both entities as antagonistic others and rendering the KMT a Chinese other. Eventually, however, anxiety regarding the rise of the PRC prompted Taiwanese authors to place the Taiwanese self closer to Japan through re-evaluating the colonial period as a more positive experience. South Korean authors, not having experienced a quasi-foreign dictatorship in the post-war era or the threat of a much larger neighbor which claims to be part of the same nation, may not have had a reason to re-evaluate their memories of colonial Japan. This will be considered in the subsequent analysis on South Korean literature.

South Korean Literature and Othering of Japan

Before delving into the analysis of South Korean literature's othering of Japan, the existing literature on this topic should be briefly discussed. To begin, findings on colonial-era literature's othering of Japan are outlined. Throughout Korea's colonial period, plenty of literature exists which constructs Japan as an antagonistic other. For instance, Jeong (2022, p. 168) discusses several stories which portray Japan's rule over Korea as a degenerate system which was leading to tremendous human and economic suffering for Koreans. A similar point is raised by Lee (2022, p. 179), who explains that many works from this period included the sexual assault of Korean women by outsiders, largely focusing on the Japanese. Thus, like Taiwanese literature from this

period, elements of anti-colonial sentiment can be found. Such sentiments would portray Japan as exercising illegitimate control over Korea, and lead to the perception of Japan as an antagonistic other.

However, as in Taiwan, Korean literature from this period cannot be described as purely constructing Japan as an antagonistic other. Importantly, during the latter period of Japanese rule, the policy of *kōminka* was also introduced in Korea (Kwon, 2022, p. 249). This, as Poole (2014, pp. 9-10) explains, entailed colonial policies to bring Korea closer to the Japanese center. She adds that Korean authors during this period were forced to make a choice between stopping their writings or producing pro-Japanese texts. This developed similarly to Taiwan. Many authors began producing texts supportive of Imperial Japan, including Yi Gwangsu, a writer who had previously been a vocal opponent of colonial rule (Shin, 2021, p. 357). Chul (2018, p. 52) adds that this period also saw the proliferation of texts with romance between Korean and Japanese characters, which in most stories symbolizes the union between Korea and Japan. Thus, colonial Korean fiction seems to follow a similar dynamic to colonial Taiwanese fiction. The alternative explanation where colonial era Taiwanese authors placed Japan closer to the self than colonial Korean authors does not seem to be true.

As was stated earlier, few studies explore the othering of Japan in South Korean literature. Nevertheless, the findings that exist concerning this can be summarized. Although Hughes (2012) only focuses on a single author, he comes to some relevant findings. In his discussion of Ch'oe In-hun's 1961 story *The Square*, Hughes (2012, p. 169) mentions that the author compares the authoritarian government of South Korea to Japanese colonial rule in order to delegitimize South Korea's dictatorship. This comparison depends on an understanding of Japan as an antagonistic other whose rule was without basis. Glade (2022, pp. 306-307) finds that immediately after WWII, authors such as Yom Sang-sop drew parallels between US military occupation and Japanese colonial rule to delegitimize the basis of American occupation. However, Glade's discussion is limited to a few works in the early post-WWII period. Lee (2022, pp. 83-85) finds that the othering of Japan continued into the latter part of the 20th century, but unfortunately only discusses this in reference to a single book. Although these texts are useful, their discussions of the othering of Japan in the post-war era are relatively limited. Therefore, a more complete analysis is needed. The results of this are discussed below.

Overall, based on a thorough analysis of various short stories by prominent South Korean authors, it can be said that South Korean literature contributed to the construction of Japan as an antagonistic other. This process was carried out in three principal ways, each of which will be discussed.

To begin, direct negative depictions of Japan and the Japanese are outlined. Concerning this, it is common for the Japanese to be portrayed as cruel in stories that are set in the colonial period. Numerous examples of this can be found in the work of Hwang Sunwon (2010, p. 349), who is described by Fulton and Fulton as one of the most prolific authors in South Korea. In Hwang's (1946/2010, pp. 211, 215) *Bulls* for instance, Japanese constables are shown to routinely beat Korean villagers to the point of permanently injuring them for failing to pay strict grain taxes. This type of depiction is not unique to Hwang. Sunwu Hwi, who is described by Chung (2010b, p. xx) as an influential author who won numerous literary prizes for his short stories, portrays Japanese law enforcement similarly in his 1971 story *The Revelation*. In this story, Sunwu (1971/2010, p. 419) includes a Japanese detective who, wishing to test whether a character was truly deaf, fires his pistol at the character's dog. O Chong-hui (2012, p. 219), who is described by Fulton and Fulton as a prominent writer who enjoys both critical and popular praise, also depicts the Japanese as cruel in her 1983 story *The Monument Intersection*. Concretely, the protagonist mentions the torture that Korean prisoners would suffer under their Japanese guards and discusses the ominous occurrence of Korean prisoners being hooded and taken to train stations late into the night (O, 1983/1998, p. 210). Such descriptions of the needless brutality Koreans suffered under Japanese rule would contribute to contemporary perceptions of Japan as an antagonistic other.

The construction of Japan as an antagonistic other through comparison with other states can also be briefly discussed. This can be found in the work of Pak Wanso (1999), who Chun describes as one of the most admired and popular writers in modern Korean literature. In her (1978/1999) story *Granny Flowers in those Heartless Days*, a village that is occupied by American soldiers during the Korean War prompts a comparison between the Americans, the Russians, and the Japanese. The villagers agree that the Japanese would have undoubtedly treated them in a more ruthless manner than the Americans. A different form of comparison is found in the 1962 story *Kapitan Ri* written by Chon Kwanyong (2007, p. 50), who is described by Pihl as a very influential writer who obtained various literary awards for his work. The protagonist in this story is a collaborator who has worked for the Japanese, the Soviets, and later the Americans, showing

continuity between the various foreign regimes that have been present in the Korean peninsula (Chon, 1962/2007, p. 72). This comparison, unlike Pak's (1978/1999), is used to depict the US as an antagonistic other. Nevertheless, it is based on the understanding that Japan was an illegitimate occupier and thus an antagonistic other.

The last form through which Japan is constructed as an antagonistic other in South Korean literature is through the depiction of collaborators and independence activists. Collaborators are often portrayed as greedy and dishonorable, while resistance to colonial rule is depicted as noble. Yi Mun-yol (1998, p. 11), who is described by Suh as a widely popular author since the late 1970s, includes such discourse in his 1981 story *The Golden Phoenix*. The protagonist of this story, who is a calligrapher, describes feeling shame for not doing as much as his compatriots in fighting for Korea's independence (Yi, 1981/1998, p. 28). Later in the story, the protagonist describes collaborators as traitors who took advantage of devastation wrought by WWII to continue their lavish lifestyles (Yi, 1981/1998, p. 32). Kim Jeong-han, who was one of South Korea's most admired writers in the 20th century, also depicted collaborators as greedy and opportunistic in his 1977 story *Letters from Okinawa* (KNCU, 1994, pp. 25, 42). In this story, collaborators are partly blamed for the issue of war-time comfort women and accused of enriching themselves while the Korean people suffered. Such portrayals demonstrate the widespread view that working with Japan was dishonorable, and may influence subsequent understandings of cooperation with Japan, indirectly constructing Japan as an antagonistic other.

Although it is rare, there are some stories that treat Japan and Japanese characters neutrally or even positively. In Hwang Sunwon's (1945/2010, p. 142) *Booze*, for instance, the protagonist begins to feel sympathy for a Japanese character who had lost everything following the end of WWII, indicating a view of the Japanese not only as enemies but as fellow human beings. Such portrayals would perhaps lead to the construction of Japan as a non-antagonistic other. In stories that are set long after WWII, it is more common to see neutral portrayals of Japan that highlight its economic relevance to Korea. Hwang Sogyong (2007, p. 102), who is described by Fulton and Fulton as one of Korea's most important authors during the 1970s, portrays Japan this way in his 1973 story *A Dream of Good Fortune*. Japan is depicted as a place where Koreans advance their professional careers (Hwang, 1973/2007, p. 119). Such portrayals are not a given, however. As seen in Pak Wanso's (1976/1999) *A Certain Barbarity* Japanese characters are sometimes portrayed as exploiting Koreans economically even in stories set after WWII. Overall, it can be

said that Japan and the Japanese are depicted negatively in South Korean literature, although this is not invariably true. Memories of Japan as an oppressive occupier have persisted in South Korean literature following the end of Japanese rule.

Subsequently, such memories appear to have led to the construction of Japan as an antagonistic other. The perception of Japan as an antagonistic other is evidenced by the apparent illegitimacy of cooperative policies toward Japan in South Korea, which is the dynamic that can be expected following antagonistic othering in foreign policy contexts as explained in the section on structure and othering. Numerous examples of this illegitimacy can be found throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. For instance, the prospect of establishing formal relations with Japan in 1965 led to significant public unrest in South Korea which only diminished after the Park Chung Hee dictatorship declared a state of martial law (Delury, 2015, p. 452). In the 1970s and 1980s, although the South Korean government sought increased cooperation with Japan, the public remained firmly against cooperation, with many citing Japan's past wrongs against Korea as justification for this enmity (Jo, 2022, pp. 782-783). Later in 2005, president Roh Moo-hyun's attempt to improve relations with Japan was heavily criticized by the South Korean public, with the prospect of Japan's remilitarization igniting fears of renewed Japanese encroachment in Korea (Sheen, 2006, p. 122). More recently in 2019, a trade dispute between Japan and South Korea led to considerable popular support for a boycott on Japanese goods, showing the legitimacy of hostile policies toward Japan (Deacon, 2022, pp. 800-801). Furthermore, as Deacon discusses, much of the South Korean discourse around this trade dispute was grounded in narratives of Japanese aggression against Korea in various historical eras.

In essence, the dynamic around the antagonistic othering of Japan in South Korea can be described as follows. South Korean literature, when depicting Japanese colonial rule over Korea, has consistently portrayed the Japanese as cruel oppressors that abused the Korean people. As individual South Koreans have read books and short stories set in the colonial period, the perception of the Japanese colonial authorities as tyrannical was initially embraced and later consistently reinforced as part of South Korean society's collective memory. This memory, as discussed in the paragraph above, inevitably comes to mind for many South Koreans when evaluating Japan in the post-WWII era. It can be said that the collective memory of Imperial Japan in South Korea has led to the construction of Japan as an antagonistic other that is inherently

opposed to South Korea's progress, and thus many South Koreans view establishing a more cooperative relationship with Japan as an illegitimate shift in foreign policy.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis discussed above, an answer to the research question of "why is Japan established as a fellow other in Taiwan but an antagonistic other in South Korea?" can be formulated. The difference between Taiwanese and South Korean othering of Japan can be tied to the dynamics of memories concerning Japanese rule in each state. Negative memories of Japanese rule in South Korea persisted following WWII. These memories have influenced South Korean perceptions of Japan throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, leading to the construction of Japan as an antagonistic other with which close cooperation is illegitimate. This captures part of what was discussed in the section on structure and othering, particularly that of foreign policy. Through their role in the process of memory building, South Korean authors seem to have been involved in legitimizing a structure in which Japan remains one of South Korea's main antagonistic others. By contrast, in Taiwan, collective memories of Japanese rule shifted over the course of the 20th century to include more positive perceptions of Imperial rule. This shift can be tied to othering in a colonial context when discussing attempts to delegitimize the KMT-led regime, and to othering in a foreign policy context when discussing Taiwanese fears around the rise of the PRC and attempts to delegitimize integration with China. Ultimately, the need for a fellow other to contrast with the Chinese antagonistic other led Taiwanese authors to produce more positive memories of Imperial Japan, thus contributing to the legitimization of subsequent distancing from China. It can be said that the othering of Japan in both Taiwan and South Korea contributed to legitimizing certain structures in favor of others.

This research represented a contribution to the understudied topic of memory-building in South Korean literature. By analyzing stories from various authors written throughout the period following WWII, as opposed to focusing on a single author or only examining texts written in the immediate post-war era, this study should be able to provide robust conclusions regarding the othering of Japan in South Korean literature. Having said that, there are flaws in this study that detract from its relevance. The principal weakness is the exclusive use of translated texts. Translated texts may not always be completely faithful representations of original texts, which is particularly problematic in a study which requires close examination of portrayals. In addition to

this, translated texts represent a very limited selection of South Korean literature. A possible future study which uses a wider selection of texts in Korean would provide more conclusive evidence of the othering of Japan in South Korean literature. Another weakness that should be made clear is that although this study considers a longer period than some of the other articles on the topic, only a limited number of texts from the 21st century were present in the analysis. The reason for this is due to the difficulty of finding anthologies that include contemporary translated short stories. The inclusion of these would have made the findings of this study more robust and is something a future study might choose to investigate.

Another potential avenue for further research concerns the nature of collective memories in South Korea vis-à-vis Taiwan. As was discussed in the Taiwan chapter, the shift to positive memories of the colonial period seems to have been largely caused by internal and external processes, including resistance to the KMT-led dictatorship and the rise of the PRC. There may also be an underlying reason as to why South Korean authors have chosen to consistently portray the Japanese colonial authorities negatively in their fiction. Determining this would perhaps require an in-depth investigation into South Korea's diplomatic relations with Japan and its internal politics throughout the post-war era.

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