

Dual Language, Dubbed Cinema: Concentrating on *Homeless Angels*

Yi Youngjae

(Ph.D Candidate / The University of Tokyo)

ghostratjp@yahoo.co.jp

1. Two Censorship Systems, Japanese Governor-General and Minister –Films of Colonial Korea in 1941

What position could Colonial Korean cinema claim in the period of "unification of Japan and Colonial Korea" (内鮮一体、*naisenittai*)? It is Ch'oe In-gyu who gave a positive and consistent answer to this question. Ch'oe In-gyu¹ received a great deal of attention from both Japan(*naichi*) and Chōsen(*gaichi*), leaping to the status of a model filmmaker of the Colonial Korean cinema in the times of *naisenittai*. His film *Tuition Fee* (1940) describes the path to subjecthood in the Japanese Empire through taken by boys who are enlightened by their Japanese teacher. His revolutionary work *Homeless Angels* (1941), which was completed the next year, immediately received a *Recommendation by the Press Section of the Chōsen Army* and the praise of Colonial Korean and Japanese film critics, one of whom said that "*Tuition Fee* and *Homeless Angels* come first when speaking of *Chōsen* films".² After being recommended by the Press Section of Chōsen Army,

¹ Ch'oe In-gyu 1911-?, was born in Yeongbyeon, Pyeongan Buk-do, North Korea. He left the Pyeongyang high primary school in mid-course in 1924, and then shot a series of collaboration films after about 1937. He made *Hurrah for Liberty* from a scenario by Jeon Chang-geun in 1946, which is well known as the first of the independence movies, after national liberation in 1945, and he became a typical filmmaker in the liberation period (1945-1950) with *Sinless Criminal* (1948) and *Seasonal Fish Market* (1949). During the Korean War, he was kidnapped and taken to North Korea.

² It is well expressed in 黒田省三「朝鮮映画雑感—「授業料」「家なき天使」の姿に来るもの」『映画評論』1941.7, pp.47-48. 飯田心美「家なき天使」『映画評論』1941. 3, pp.86-87. The criticism and articles published in those days in Japan, about <Homeless Angels> are as follows: 野口久光、「半島映画とその近況」、『スタア』1940. 11.15., 飯田心美「家なき天使」『映画評論』1941. 3., 鈴木勇吉「家なき天使」『映画旬報』1941.11., 中岡孝正「家なき天使」『日本芸術』1941. 12 and so on.

Homeless Angels passed the censorship by the Secret Service and was designated as a Film Recommended by Monbusho (The Japanese Government's Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture).³ The film, which describes the enlightenment of a group of street children by a pastor who dreams of Japanization, got an unexpected reception when it was brought to the *naichi*. Not only were nearly 200 meters in 35 sections removed from the original film after a severe inspection, but also only the *Kokugo* (Japanese) -dubbed⁴ edition was allowed for viewing by the public.⁵ The original edition with subtitles finally was never opened to the general public, and that means the national identity of the pastor as an enlightening leader becomes vague. In the end, no clear reason was given for the cancellation of the recommendation. What does such a series of cases mean? This article examines the process of the film's censorship and the reasons for it, and the issues of memory over the case. The issue of memory and the case will, of course, be linked to the issues of discontinuance and continuance between the colonial and the post-colonial periods.

The question posed in this study is as follows: to what extent can a man of the empire be defined as a subject of enlightenment (that is, the imperial hierarchy which comes to be exposed by the way that censorship is practiced); what is the effect of re-masculinization⁶ attempted by the male elites in the colonial field and of *naisenittai*, on the post-colonial period (that is, on the range of

³ 『昭和 17 年映画年鑑』 日本映画雑誌協会、p.7-1.

⁴ In those days, Japanese language was called 'kokugo (national language)' in all of official statements. In this article, Japanese means 'kokugo' and kokugo also means Japanese. Japanese and kokugo were used together according to the context.

⁵ *Homeless Angels*, which is the first Chosen film recommended by Monbusho (the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports), was inspected three times in Japan (two times for the Korean edition, one time for the Japanese edition). It was really something unexpected for the film to be re-examined in Japan. After passing the first censorship on July 17, the importer, Donghwa Co. gave a preview on September 20 and promoted it as the first Chosen film recommended by the Ministry, which was something rare for a Chosen film. But, it is at this very time that the Secret Service applied for the re-inspection of the film. By the re-inspection on September 22, a total 218 meters of the film, including the last scene, were removed, and the original edition, judged as a "movie unsuitable for the public," was actually prohibited from being shown. Instead of the original, the revised edition with Japanese dubbing was permitted for screening from October 2 to October 6, passing the re-inspection. The Secret Service and Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports did not make any comment on it.

⁶ The re-masculinization of this study is understood by connecting to the joint war of colonies. Under the 15-year war time, including the Manchurian Incident, the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War, the demasculinized subjects of the colony who confronted the nation, 'Japan,' obtained a mechanism for re-masculinization through 'collaboration' in the war (by being a soldier) and through the discovery of modern rationality, as pursued eagerly for years, in the advanced national defense system.

citizenship rights). The Genkainada(玄海灘), the area dividing *naichi* and *gaichi*, will be defined as the limit of re-masculinization, in other words, the limit of the control of men in the colony. Considering from another point, the object of this study is to find out the spatial and hierarchical frame which stipulates the possibilities and impossibilities of the national subject in Colonial Korea.

2. Post-Impacts of *Homeless Angels*, New but disturbed System of Colonial Korean Cinema

Immediately after the screening of *Homeless Angels* in Japan, the film was introduced briefly at a symposium on Chōsen film held by the Japanese film magazine *Eiga Junpo*, and then released. As history shows, the censorship of *Homeless Angels* had a significant influence on discussions of the future direction of Chōsen films. This film was a result of a collaboration among the prominent figures in the Chōsen film industry of that time. Ch'oe In-gyu, the director, was being spotlighted, in a critical aspect as well as a profitable aspect, both in colonial Korea and Japan by the film *Tuition Fee*, which was the first movie exempt from the censorship charge of the Japanese Government-General of Korea, being cooperated with a screen writer, Yagi Yasutarou, and Yi Chang-yong as a producer, was a typical model who led the *Chōsen* film industry of those days, understating the stream of the new system a lot more quickly than any others. In addition to that, Nishikame Motosada, an employee of the Publication Division of Japanese Government-General of Korea, who wrote the scenario of this film, planned the cinematization of *Tuition Fee*.⁷ As the last important figure, it was Im Hwa, one of the greatest literary critics in those times, who arranged the lines of Korean (*Chōsen-go*) in the film. Im Hwa, a core theorist of KAPF (Korea Artista Proleta Federatio), was deeply engaged in the cinema-related activities of KAPF as an actor and dramatist,

⁷ It seems that Nishikame Motosada, who used to work with Naruse Mikio at the beginning of 1950, entered film circles from the time that he worked for the Japanese Government General as a scenario writer. *Homeless Angels* is the first film written under his own name.

and at that time he was writing his *Chōsen Cinema*, the first general history of Colonial Korean cinema, as a non-regular member of Goryeon Film Company. Considering those situations, *Homeless Angels* can be considered the film that showed the direction *Chōsen* Film would take, the result of practical deliberation about the naichi(Japan) market. It was natural that Yi Chang-yong asked for a clear explanation of the reason for the cancellation of Monbusho's recommendation.

“We must consider a policy for future productions, so we would like you to state clearly the opinion of the Naimushō(Home Ministry) about the issue of *Homeless Angels*, from various points of view. That will be very helpful for us to decide our future policies.”⁸

It was not the view of only Yi Chang-yong himself. In his review of *Homeless Angels*, which appeared in the same issue, Japanese film critic Suzuki Yukichi also mentioned the unfairness of not giving any reason for the cancellation. “This case will cast a dark shadow over the future of Chōsen film, which is now about to make a new start in a novel and sound direction,” he said, “I request a clear explanation not only for the sake of Chōsen film but also for the sake of ‘our film world,’ which includes Chōsen film.”⁹

In the censorship authority's handling of the film, anyone must see something unfair. So, why did such an issue arise? Why could the censorship authority not state a clear reason for the situation?

The entire situation occurred while the colonial Korean cinema was re-organized completely into Japanese cinema. That re-organization was not, of course, conducted unilaterally. The colonial Korean film industry had to make the pie grow to cope with the rapidly increasing the cost of production since the introduction of the talkie film in the mid-1930s. Under such circumstances, the demand for ‘industrialization’ requiring a technology enhancement and a consistent system, and

⁸ Yi Chang-yong, “To Establish New System of Chosen Film (symposium)”, *Eiga Junpo*, November 1, 1941, p.16

⁹ Suzuki Yukichi, *Eiga Junpo*, 11 November 1941, p.30

the demand for ‘entry into markets other than Colonial Korea’s’¹⁰ was a significant factor in the optimistic anticipation of an intimate connection between Chōsen and Japanese film. From the viewpoint of the colonial Korean film industry, it simply did not mean collaboration with the war and the colonial government. On a very practical level, the integration into Japanese cinema was considered to secure advanced technology and capital, and a broader market on the Japanese mainland (as well as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, including Manchuria).¹¹

The actual condition could not, however, be judged so optimistically. From the 1940s, the colonial Korean film industry degraded into a market for Japanese film, under the direct control of the Japanese capital, and it had to face that the prospect that even the category of ‘Chōsen film’ might disappear. Under these circumstances, the people in the colonial Korean film industry clung to their optimistic hopes on the one hand and, on the other hand, tried to carry on negotiations with the Government General and to find a way out of the difficulties. It is Yi Chang-yong, a producer of *Homeless Angels*, was a typical figure in that negotiation. A former cinematographer in Na Woon -gyu Productions in the early 1930s, he entered into the production and planning of films, founding a film distributing agency in the mid-1930s. Even under the new system, he developed the capacity of his Goryeo Film Company in a short time and was already planning to establish a large-scale film integration company in 1940 while maintaining a close relationship to the Japanese Government General.¹²

¹⁰ “How to Promote the Enhancement of Our Movies,” *Dong-A Daily Newspaper*, January 1939

¹¹ Regarding demand in the colonial Korean film industry and the Japanese movie policy response to that demand Since the talkie film era,, see Yi Jun-sik , “Film Policy during the Japanese Fascism Period and Trend of Film Industry,” *History of National Movement Study Society*, 2003.

¹² In the December 1940 issue of *Samcheolli*, there was an article about the foundation of a film company with a capitalization of two million Korean won by Yi Chang-yong, along with a Jungchuwon councilor Han Sang-ryong, Kawakita Nagamasa of Tokyo Donghwa, Negisi Minoru of Manchurian Film Co., broadcasting stations and financial cooperative association and others related to films. Such a plan fell apart completely with the foundation of the integrated firm ‘Chosen Film Co., Ltd.’ an incorporated body, under the direct control of the Government General, in 1942. Yi Young-il said of the situation, “it was really a great pleasure for Chosen Film Co., Ltd. (Choi Nam-ju) and Goryeo Film Association (Yi Chang-yong) to withdraw from the company, since they opposing the integration” Yi Young-il, *General History of Korean Films*, Sodo Publication, 2004 (first edition, 1969), 1998. However, considering the situation of those days, the withdrawal of the Chosen Film Co., Ltd. and the Goryeo Film Association, which were among the biggest entities in colonial Korea until before the integration, this actually means that two representative companies in Chosen were pushed out in the leadership struggle over the films made in colonial Korea.

The path of Yi Chang-yong clearly shows the dilemma of the colonial Korean film industry. The connection to the Japanese film industry offers a possibility for colonial Korean cinema to make rapid progress, yet the film industry cannot help questioning the value of its own existence, from the very moment such a connection starts. If the Colonial Korean cinema were one sub-division of Japanese cinema, would the category composed of the Japanese cinema and Colonial Korean cinema be maintained? At the symposium, Yi Chang-yong said that the Chōsen film industry was very eager to invite several technicians from Japan, yet they were taking strict precautions against inviting directors and scenario writers from the naichi, citing the ‘peculiarity of Chōsen films.’ The term ‘peculiarity’ is a troublesome one. The word (which itself shows the ideology of assimilation connoting swaying) is a term that ensures a material hierarchy within a relationship of dominating and dominated in the ideology of assimilation from the very beginning of absorption (e.g. the peculiar circumstance of Chōsen) It also becomes a basis for integrating the colonized according to that ideology and, at the moment of the integration, to support *Chōsenjin* which is existing as a substance. The following statement can be considered a clear demonstration of the term’s ambilaterality.

Another symposium was held for discussing the ‘Peculiarity of Chōsen Films’, by *Eiga Junpou* again two years later, and there Suzuki Shozo, of the Movie Censorship Part of Government General, said:

“I think the Chōsen Film Company was founded by the peculiar circumstance of Chōsen. Even though saying the peculiarity can be thought as a contradiction, on the ground where *naisenittai* is being insisted upon, such a path is very natural indeed when reviewing the situation.”¹³

Once such peculiarity is recognized, there can be the possibility of another issue. That is, the peculiarity cannot but be understood for the colonial Korean, with its different culture and life, but

¹³ Suzuki Shozo “Peculiarity of Chōsen Films(symposium)” *Eiga Junpo*, July 11, 1943, p.10

at the same moment the issue of the leadership in the film industry may arise. The thought arises that someone who is well acquainted with colonial Korea, in other words, a colonial Korean, should become the subject of the creation of films. The case of censorship over *Homeless Angels* is directly linked to this thought. It does not mean only how a single film is produced, but is related to an unstated psychological war between the governing body and the colonized male elites.

Until this film was discovered in 2004, *Homeless Angels*, Ch'oe In-gyu's third film, was considered his greatest work, along with the earlier *Tuition Fee*, for its literary realism, so peculiar to this director.¹⁴ This is similar to the evaluation in the colonial period: for example, the following reviews are included in the collection, *The Film Critics: Homeless Angel*, published by Donghwa:

“Watching *Homeless Angels*, I am made to think about the issue of realism from several points of view. (. . .) even now the light of an electric car on the Jongno of Keijō (Seoul) seems to be blazing before my eyes. Such a rare experience is made possible by the excellence of this movie.”

“I have long heard that *Homeless Angels* is one of masterpieces of Peninsula film, better than *Tuition Fee*. But, now I understand that this a correct evaluation, watching this film. It is an excellent work, and at least the finest among nearly 10 Peninsula films I have watched.”¹⁵

The Dictionary of Korean Filmmakers, which was published in 2004, says of the style of Ch'oe In-gyu, “he is a scenarist who understands cinema from a technical aspect much more than any other. At the beginning, he showed a tendency toward critical realism reflecting society, but later this was converted into a lyrical realism accepting nature broadly.”¹⁶

¹⁴ As a typical instance, refer to Yi Young-il, *General History of Korean Films*, Sodo Publication, 2004 (First Edition 1969), P. 202 and Hyeon-Mok Yoo, *History of Korean Film Development*, Hanjin Publication, 1980, P. 213

¹⁵ Oda Sakunosuke, “Depiction of Homeless Angel,” Murakami Tadahisa, “See *Homeless Angel*,” 1941

¹⁶ *The Dictionary of Korean Filmmakers*, which was planned by Guild of Korea Filmmakers and published by Kookhak Community Corporation, includes enormous amounts of information such as profiles, and lists of works, of all the directors from 1919 to 2000. Yi Chang-dong, who was a Minister of Culture and Tourism at the time of the publication said in the congratulatory message for the publication that this publication is a ‘revolutionary event which opens a new phase in the history of Korean films.’ The book is an important basic source for reviewing the history of the Korean film, especially, movies prior to the 1950s, which are rarely databased. Considering the position of this book, the statement

It is interesting to find similarities in the evaluations of *Homeless Angels* from the colonial and post-colonial periods, allowing for the situation in which the film could be viewed. Aside from the recommendation by Monbusho, the movie had already been recommended by the Press Section of Chōsen Army. If this means that there was no problem at least with the contents of the movie, then the consistency in critical evaluation in the post-colonial period is confusing.¹⁷

And Ch'oe In-gyu made a clear statement regarding his intention in producing *Homeless Angels* in *10-years: My Movies and My Writing*, which appeared in *Samcheolli* in 1948.

“Why are only colonial Korea’s streets full of beggars? It was my true intention to protest this to Japanese politicians through the movie. The film won an award from the Governor General and the Minister in Tokyo, but by strange Japanese intrigue, the Minister’s award was withdrawn unprecedentedly and at the same time, approximately two hundred meters were removed from the original in the re-inspection.”¹⁸

Of course, this can be viewed as an excuse, inevitable in the days of 1948. In that case, it is simple. Such a statement simply becomes an error of recognition, that is, a lie, made by someone who only thought of self-justification immediately after the liberation period. I, however, do not think the statement, which has continually been quoted in the history of the Korean film, is such a lie. It is possible that actually Ch'oe In-gyu describes the desperate situation of street children as a

above about Ch'oe In-gyu can be considered the official attitude in the history of the Korean film.

¹⁷ Even though the recommendation by Monbusho was withdrawn, it is said that the related Japanese authorities had said ‘it would be allowed in Chōsen only’. [“To Establish A New System of Chōsen Film(symposium)”] The root of those evaluations is, of course, related to several factors regarding the personal life of Ch'oe In-gyu. Even though he was the most typical cooperative film director, such as *Love and Fealty*, which describes a boy applying to become a kamikaze pilot, and which was made as a joint production with the Japanese filmmaker Imai Tadasi, he was also the director of *Hurrah for Liberty*(1946) which was the first liberation film and he had a chance to make an active comment in cooperation with the United States Information Service. Also, the leaders of Korean films in 1950s and 1960s, Hong Seong-gi, Sin Sang-ok, and Jeong Chang-hwa, are all his disciples and learned dramaturgy from him during the liberation period.

¹⁸ Kim Jong-won, et al., *The Dictionary of Korean Filmmakers*, Kookhak Community Corporation, 2004, 626 op. cit. It is quite interesting to see the quotation, in this book which shows a model assessment for Ch'oe In-gyu in the Korean film history, from the opinions of Ch'oe In-gyu at the time of 1948. On the same space, he said that the production of *Sons of Sun* and *Love and Fealty*, which were for promoting volunteering of boys for the air force service, was an inevitable thing by the ‘forced requisition’ of the Japanese Army and that it was necessary for cultivating the future of our film persons. Such an excuse which may appear impudent can be understandable to him who was sensitive to the technique of movies and had made a brisk work activity in 1940s. The comment is rather something honest in showing the unconsciousness of the colonial Korean film industry obsessed with an advanced technology.

protest to Japanese politicians, and he may think of the award from the Japanese politician as a natural evaluation for that description (he really got angry about the withdrawal of the ‘Minister award’). The point where a question is raised is whether he thought this sincerely. And it is a very key point that may explain two things: the ‘happening’ over the film occurring in 1941 and the kind of the fallacies of memory that permeate the history of the Korean film. Was the fundamental conflict, arising in the negotiation between the governing body and the colonized male elites, already included in the movie? As far as the colonized male elite, a subject of the conflict, is in charge of the subject of enlightenment, this film will share the symbol of the men, identical to that of the world described by Korean film in the post-colonial period.

3. Was the Chōsengo a Real Problem? – Mechanism of Separation

Homeless Angels starts from the scene of Jongno, the center of Keijō(Seoul) . When night falls in Jongno under the mingled electric lines, it is already a grand, neon-sign city. Myeon-ja and Yong-gil, sister and brother, have to give money to their vicious foster father Gwon by selling flowers. That night, Yong-gil runs away, after being beaten by the father. Staying through the night on the street, Yong-Gil is found by a pastor, Bang Seong-min, the next day and comes to stay at his home. The house is already crowded with the children of the gutter. Maria, the pastor’s wife and mother of his two children, feels dissatisfaction with such a husband. Pastor Bang plans to set up accommodations for those street children and asks Maria’s brother, a doctor, to lend his country house. The house is a place of memory where Maria’s brother lived with a German woman, Goethe, immediately after returning from study in Germany. With the brother-in-law’s consent, Pastor Bang goes to the suburb with the children and his family in spite of his wife’s objections. In the place named *Hyanglinwon*, he teaches the boys diligence, sincerity, and the value of labor and regulations.

In the meantime, Myeong-ja is saved by the Maria's brother and is working as a probationer nurse in the hospital. One day, Yong-gil falls into water, stopping two boys from running away. Maria's brother comes to the place to save Yong-gil, and Myeong-ja and Yong-gil finally meet again. This case is reported in a newspaper, so donations come in to the home from a many places. On the other hand, this also calls in the gang led by Gwon, who are looking for the donations. At the critical moment when the Gwon's gang attacks the home, the bridge breaks down and the fallen villains are moved by the medical treatment they receive. Under the flag raised by Pastor Bang, all recite the Oath of Imperial Subjects.

The narrative in *Homeless Angels* appears to be the best response that can be made in the days of 1941.¹⁹ The movie theater was 'a place of education approved by the nation,'²⁰ and the weak small people=children are the 'general' audience as well as the greatest audience the movie has to consider (The year 1941 is also the year that the term elementary school is changed from 'shogakko'--small school--to 'kokuminngakko'--national school). Such a movie that describes the cultivation of even street children, who are beyond the control of homes and schools, into 'loyal Imperial subjects' could not be thought of as a film with problems.²¹

¹⁹ For reference, the censorship criteria stipulated in Articles 28 and 29 of Joseon Film Act is as follows: 第二十八条 一、皇室ノ尊厳ヲ冒瀆シ又ハ帝国ノ威信ヲ損スル処アルモノ 二、政治上、教育上、軍事上、外交上、経済上其ノ他帝国ノ利益ヲ害スル処アルモノ 三、国民文化ニ対シ誤解ヲ生セシムル処アルモノ 四、朝鮮統治上支障ヲ来スル処アルモノ 五、制作技術者シク拙劣ナルモノ 六、其ノ他輸出ニ適セサルモノ 第二十九条 一、皇室ノ尊厳ヲ冒瀆シ又ハ帝国ノ威信ヲ損スル処アルモノ 二、朝憲紊乱ノ思想ヲ鼓吹スル処アルモノ 三、政治上、教育上、軍事上、外交上、経済上其ノ他公益上支障ヲ来スル処アルモノ 四、善良ナル風俗ヲ紊リ国民道義ヲ頹廢セシムル処アルモノ 五、朝鮮統治上支障ヲ来スル処アルモノ 六、制作技術者シク拙劣ナルモノ 七、其ノ他国民文化ノ進展ヲ阻害スル処アルモノ The fact *Homeless Angels* passed the inspection of the Government General and recommended by the Press Section of Chosen Army means that the movie satisfies all the inspection criteria, and at the same time it follows sincerely the demands of the Government General as much as it becomes promoted by them.

²⁰ 樺山愛輔「宣伝の根本問題」『文芸春秋』1938.1

²¹ After finding the film, this movie was first screened in the 「Excavation Film Festival」 of Korean Federation of Film Archives and viewed again in the 2006 Busan Film Festival. And in Japan, it was screened in the special section of Zainichi (which means Korean residents in Japan) movies with a title of 'What living in Japan means' in the Yamagata Film Festival. The following article written in Kawasaki Kenko shows well the confusion felt by the discrepancy between the actual viewing of the movie and the description in the existing film history 「「外地」の映画ネットワーク—1930—40年における朝鮮・満州国・中国占領地域を中心に」『帝国日本の学知』第4巻. She is pointing out in the article that the happening over *Homeless Angels* arising in the inland is to show the 'limitation' toward other cultures in the 'Empire' the film policies had embraced. p. 252

Returning again to the symposium by *Eiga Junpo*, the film critic Hazumi Tsuneo says the fundamental reason for the withdrawal of the recommendation is eventually because it is a 'Chōsen film.' What does such a statement mean? "What does the saying, 'because it is a Chōsen film,' mean? Does it mean the technology is poor?" Hazumi guesses the reason for the censorship and the existence of the Chōsen film the authority wants as follows:

"It means the film with the Chōsen (Korean) spoken is not welcome. The film spoken in Kokugo (Japanese) is allowed even if it is a Chōsen film. There can be various reasons for this and that, but it is the fundamental reason. Don't use Chōsen, and speak in Kokugo. It is thought that if that policy is set out, it can be observed by us."²²

According to him, the reason for the treatment of the film was that the intention of censorship was not unified. In other words, it means that if the principle on which censorship was conducted were clearly stated, for example, that only Kokugo should be spoken without Chōsen, then the situation would not have arisen.

Such a reason appears to be persuasive when considering the ideological burden on Korean at that time. Since the third Chōsen Education Ordinance, which specified the complete use of Japanese for education in common schools, was enforced in 1938, Korean was not an official language anymore and there was a prevalent awareness of a crisis for Korean, in Colonial Korean cultural society. *Kokuminbungaku* (Imperial Literature), a culture magazine organized by Ch'oe Chaesō, which was the only one left after the merger and abolition of magazines, was completely converted to Japanese from the May/June 1942 issue. And all the films produced in colonial Korea after 1943 were in Japanese (at least officially). The cinema, however, has a difficult issue in this case, unlike the case of literature. As a matter of efficiency, in the situation in which only a little more than 0.02% of the population of all colonial Korea were literate in Japanese, the effect of the

²² "To Establish New System of Chosen Film(symposium)" pp.15-16

national policy for film in Japanese was inevitably something insignificant.²³ That dilemma between Kokugo and films was continually apparent after 1943, so any movie needed to be produced in a Kokugo edition as a rule, and in a Korean edition in actuality, to solve such a problem.²⁴

In addition, *Homeless Angels* appears in the year of 1941, when the policy for the complete abolition of Korean was not implemented yet. Yi Chang-yong said, contrary to the opinion by Hazumi, that the Japanese Government-General did not give any guidelines or enforcement regarding the use of Japanese. He insisted that Japanese was used ‘along with’ Korean “so as not to go too far” in the contents of the film. Actually *Homeless Angels* intended to show ‘naturally’ the actual condition of the dual use of languages in Keijō of 1941. And it shows the hierarchy of this world, which is ranked by the use of languages. Gender, ages and classes of the people are divided by Kokugo and Chōsen-go

It is Pastor Bang and Maria’s brother who are able to speak Japanese most fluently in this movie. Japanese and Korean are naturally used between them. For example, “I’m the kind of people sometimes drinking and sometimes making a living by small things” (in Korean, pastor’s brother-in-law) “Maria always worries about that” (in Korean, pastor Bang) “Ha, ha, ha, 今度は矢がここに曲がった. It is you who Maria worries about, not me”(both in Japanese and Korean, pastor’s brother-in-law). Pastor Bang speaks to the children using both Japanese and Korean, and the

²³ Japanese literacy rates are shown below. According to the statistics, after 1938, the people with ‘national language’ literacy increased by nearly two times. About 80% Joseon people were not able to understand still in 1943 if these statistics are accepted.

Literacy	Population	Rate
1923	712,267	4,08
1928	1,290,241	6,91
1938	2,717,807	12,38
1940	3,573,338	15,57
1943	5,722,448	22,15

近藤劔一編『太平洋戦下終末期朝鮮の治政』 Korean Historical Records Publication, 1961, pp. 199–200

²⁴ In the symposium on the Chosen Films, according to *Eiga Junpo*, July 1943, Ikeda Kunio in the Film Censorship Office of Government General told the truth about such a dilemma as follows: “the special case such as a military draft should be enforced completely and swiftly up to the end point with the low level living. For example, we cannot help using *Chosengo* to make those people without national language literacy understand the military draft and how to apply and so on. Considering the efficiency of Chosengo for that reason, pictures of the Kokugo edition (which means films – comment by the quoter) are produced, along with the Chosengo edition for actual use.” *Eiga Junpo*, July 1943. p.13

children speak in Korean. On the other side, in the scene of the children only, they use Korean and short words of Japanese, such as よかった、なに and いやだ. The people who exist furthest from the world of Japanese that Pastor Bang and his brother-in-law speak fluently is the gang led by Gwon, Yong-gil's vicious father. Those illiterate, dirty and cruel people live an existence in which they cannot speak or understand Japanese. None of the women in the film use Japanese, regardless of class. The difference according to the social classes is, of course, set between women characters. For instance, Maria is regarded to have Japanese literacy even though she does not make any comment in that language, while Myeong-ja can speak and understand Korean only. There is only one exception. That is the scene of waitresses in a bar, which is included in the opening part to show the night of a modern but decadent city, Keijō . The women speak and understand Japanese.

That disposition of the so-called *Kokugo* and *Chōsen-go* looks quite realistic, as Yi Chang-yong said. It could be natural that Gwon's gang, as the low class in Keijō, and Myeong-ja, having received no education, cannot understand and speak Japanese, Kokugo. And it may be also a natural reflection for the waitresses to use Japanese, as they have men of the middle class as their main customers, are called by a Japanese names and have to satisfy the fantasy that men in the colony have toward the women in *naichi* (Japanese women). By the way, it should be considered that such naturalness itself is intentionally made. There are possible questions concerning this. Myeong-ja cannot speak Japanese, but how can Young-gil understand (even though it is a short sentence) and speak Japanese? And how about the other street children? Considering that the school is a main place for teaching Japanese=Kokugo, those children out of the education system do not have to be good at Japanese. If *Kokugo* is learned by the boys to make a living on the street, then Gwon's gang and Myeong-ja are in the same situation, and should be assumed to have as much capacity as the boys have. Why doesn't the educated woman, Maria, speak any words in Japanese? For what reasons do the Pastor Bang and Maria's brother speak Japanese between the sentences of Korean in one scene?

As if it is to show off the fluency of Japanese speaking, why is the only word in the film Pastor Bang said to Maria, who does not understand his great duty, “Can you go with me not only as a my wife but also a mother to the children? (君も僕の妻としてでなく子供たちの母として一緒に来てくれないか)” Japanese occupies apparently a privileged position in that detailed disposition, decided by gender and class.²⁵ The world is divided and ordered according to the capability of speaking Kokugo. At the bottom level is the wicked gang of Gwon and at a higher level are ‘male’ boys with a possibility of becoming Imperial subjects. And at a much higher level are grown-up male elites with complete understanding of the ‘imperial language,’ and in addition, one is a pastor who heals mental disease and the other is a doctor who treats physical disease. How could they be more suitable for the subject of enlightenment? (It is naturally noted that their Kokugo is something mixed between Chōsen-go, so it cannot be a completely separated Kokugo). Meanwhile, women who ‘do not speak’ Kokugo are a separate figure from the structure in that they are not allowed to reach the level grown-up male elites occupy, the highest level in the hierarchy, at any cost (those male children with a low level of Japanese speaking ability would be the male grown-ups who can speak Kokugo fluently someday). However, it does not mean the women are out of the hierarchical order. They should follow the order delivered by Kokugo, which is a language of regulation, order, great duty and loyalty. The women should be able to listen to what is said even though they themselves cannot speak, so what the world is requesting to them is an ‘ear’, not a ‘mouth’. In a similar way, the subject of enlightenment, in other words, the subject who speaks Kokugo, holds a privilege especially for the men in naichi, considering the relation between naichi (Japan) and gaichi (Chōsen). The Japanese literacy of the colonized is not about order, but about the reproduction of that order and its achievement, so it is limited to an ear to hear. That theory is also applied to the issues of gender. When saying the Japanese of the colony--no, the ‘Kokugo of

²⁵ It is also a language of order and rule, for example, the back of the fried noodle machine which is brought for self-sufficiency of Hyanglinwon says, ‘一 ウドンツクルノヲオボエル事 ニ キレイニ’ in the *Kokugo*.

the empire’--is a medium for laws and orders, the position of subjects is strictly classified by the accessibility to the order and the position in its performance. Although Chōsen film with Kokugo is realized, the basic position of the colonized can not be changed fundamentally. That is because the issue of Kokugo in censorship is not a matter of languages but rather, a matter related to the hierarchy in the empire.

4. The Story of the Ideal of Integration and Separation –The Colonized Subject without the Outside World

The home for the street children, Hyanglinwon, can be considered as a small world that the men of colonized Korea have dreamed of. It functions as a metaphor of the Korean peninsula through the entire film.

This story of Hyanglinwon as an ideal space (an entirely Japanized peninsula) set as a closed and self-sufficient world and populated with Chōsenjin (Korean) only, the outside world erased, hints at the censorship trouble of this film.

Next to the Hyanglinwon, which is made by reconstructing a warehouse, is a mansion of the Western style where Pastor Bang’s family live. Maria, Pastor Bang’s wife, is an ideal type of woman for the male elites of the colony; she sometimes plays the piano in the living room yet does not wear Western-style dresses at all: she understands Kokugo yet does not speak it: always wearing traditional Korean clothe, with her hair up with a chignon, she is never found elsewhere than inside the home. She is sincere in her role as a mother and wife.²⁶ And, Hyanglinwon right next to the

²⁶ In the colonial period, the hatred of the male elites for modern girls is something different. The modern girl male writers describe is a person who injures public morals, is ungrateful and shameless, and above all, lacks a maternal love. That odd hatred is the very expression of split feelings, love and, at the same time, hatred for the educated new women. Most of the intellectual were engaged with ‘traditional women’ in early-marriage, and they suffered from free love or dual marriage with the modern women, and then they ‘left’ those traditional women and chose a second marriage with modern women. It can thus be thought that such a severe hatred for the modern girl can be a shift of their guilty conscience over deserting their wife, traditional women, in some ways.

mansion satisfies the social desire of men in the colony who have continuously felt frustrated under the colonized situation. In this place, Pastor Bang has absolute power because no one else in Hyanglinwon can exceed him. As the only male grown-up of the space, he is the oldest, wisest and most moral. He lives with a passion for humanitarianism, without any self-interest or selfish desire. There is no anger, haste or frustration in him. Such a man, perfect and faultless in morality, is the absolute and only 'goodness' in this world. In the world, he seeks for consent by endless persuasion and understanding, and finally creates a world of order and rule.

The morning of Hyanglinwon starts with a trumpet call by Pastor Bang's young son. The children get up in the common house. On the wall is a bulletin board indicating their position. The children are assigned to rational divisions and each is assigned work to support a self-sufficient life; the completion of this work is the goal of each day. Making fried noodles is their assignment. Cleanliness is above all. It is not an accident the place itself looks like a small barrack. It is not a setting only for emphasizing the image of the 'national policy' film. Rather, this shows an ideal world pursued by the male elites in the colony, represented in the film by Pastor Bang. The world can be summed up by order, rule and cleanliness.

Such a process does not come smoothly, without any resistance. The small bodies accustomed to intemperance on the street are weak to temptation, and the temptation from the outside is often represented by such sensual material as taffies. Enlightenment by the pastor can be accomplished through the removal of 'the outside'. Il-nam goes out to bring water but on the way he is tempted by a taffy seller. Temptations become stronger in idle moments, for example, during the monsoon season when they are not able to make noodles and their labor is stopped, two children plan to leave the home. Their plan to cross a fully-flooded river in a worn-out boat is impeded by the desperate efforts of Yong-gil. It is interesting to see how the film returns the children to the world of order and rule. That is realized in the name of love and sacrifice. Yong-gil prevents them from

getting on the boat at the risk of his life, and Pastor Bang sends one of them, Young-pal, for his brother-in-law, a doctor, in Keijō , without scolding him. Young-pal accomplishes his duty and Il-nam, who is on the run, returns by himself at the end. Even Gwon's gang will be re-born as 'Imperial Subjects' through the effort of the doctor and pastor. They all become 'influenced,' and the 'influence' is an activity affecting the heart. The result of influence should be expressed by 'behaviors' coming from the bottom of the heart. When saying 'influence,' from the first, requires 'spontaneous' behavior, the last scene of this film, in which that under the Japanese flag fixed by Pastor Bang, all the features recite the 'Oath of Imperial Subjects,' is the very completion of influence.

This final scene looks a bit sudden when considered as part of a narrative process describing guiding of street children by a humanistic passion. Guiding means others are led to the right way. As it sets necessarily a specific target, it may be natural for the target to be reached in the scene that shows the memorization of the 'Oath of Imperial Subjects' in 1941.²⁷ It seems that all characters who gathered in this place at the end of the film symbolize the 20 million people of the peninsula, regardless of gender, class, and age. All sort of people are gathered: men, women, the old and the young. And it is solely Pastor Bang's achievement, as the male elite in the colony, to lead them into Imperial Subjecthood with loyalty and sincerity. But, such a sense of unification without the outside space risks being converted into a metaphor of a nation-state or a homogeneous nation if the 'Oath of Imperial Subjects' is set in parentheses (Actually, that kind of structure, tried by Ch'oe In-gyu, on the subject of enlightenment is consistently observed after 1945, in the post-colonial period). From a different view, the completed point of enlightenment will not be strange although it is completed by other ideals or mottos. The Oath of Imperial Subjects is a target by itself, and at

²⁷ 'Oath of Imperial Subjects' is said to be made by a Chosenjin officer in the Government-General in 1937. observes how the actual material, 'Japan', is made through the process of reimportation of the Japanization to Japan which is begun in Joseon as shown in the Oath of Imperial Subjects. 石田雄 『記憶と忘却の政治学：同化政策・戦争責任・集合的記憶』 明石書店、2000、p. 156。

the same time, it is able to look the moment of the mechanical bonding to declare the completion of that space to the outside. At this moment, the Oath of Imperial Subjects serves definitely as a medium to connect Hyanglinwon to the outside, that is, the peninsula to the niachi(Japan), but also it can appear as a physical connection through a medium, rather than a chemical ‘unification.’ Regardless of the selection of languages, in other words, regardless of the issue of the use of Kokugo, it is opposed with the grammar of typical collaboration such as an expression by Yi Gwang-su, who performs sincerely his service to the imperial hierarchy by setting a Japanese medium, like Gagawa principal.²⁸ Viewed from the empire, there was a risk that, through the use of Korean, this film might raise to the surface the difference existing in the empire. That risk is observed in a more fundamental sense also. In the film, male subjects of colonial Korea approach directly, without the use of any medium, the principle of the imperial subjectivity itself, and they rush for the core of *ikkunbanmin*(一君万民) with no agent or mediator when not considering the use of Korean. It is the task of *kominka* (Japanization) as a motivation of re- masculinization which is able to set a self-sufficient space, that is, the male subject in the colony for enlightenment. However, as soon as such an ideal is achieved, it comes to have a result opposed to the actual hierarchy of Great East Asian subjects, which exist in the spatial boundary of the empire. By considering the actual operation theory for government, in other words, the separation of the governing body and the colonized people, that reproduction of the ‘idealized’ imperial subject’s space, as shown in the Ch’oe In-gyu’s film, is itself indecent. That is because such an unexpected ‘excessive achievement’ gets to exceed the hierarchy in ‘reality’.

All is made possible by the space of Hyanglinwon as an ‘independent’ place separated from the ‘outside’ world. This memorial place where Maria’s brother lived with a German woman is isolated by the river surrounding it, and for the German woman it is also a place where a man of the yellow

²⁸ 香山光郎 (Yi Gwang-su), 「Gagawa Principal (加川校長)」、『国民文学』1943.10、p. 2— 2 1

race in the colony can fall in love with an impossible object of another race. This pre-history of the villa secretly functions even at that moment it is changed into Hyanglinwon. The river seems a specific metaphor that separates the colonized men from the reality of colonial Korea in 1941, where they are inevitably limited as men of the colony.

This river, understood as a metaphor of the Genkainada(玄海灘), is important as a device of isolation and closure. Because although the achievement is expanded to Japan through the ‘Oath of Imperial Subjects,’ the political subject of the peninsula during the process is observed to be a male intellectual of colonial Korea. The colonized man, who is responsible for the enlightenment of Chōsenjin through the use of Chōsen-go and Kokugo, is placed in the privileged position to link the naichi to the gaichi. It means that they ‘know Chōsen better than others,’ and above all, this subject who ‘well knows’ intends to ‘make it known.’ The threat of the film using both Korean and Japanese is observed in other places. As long as Chōsen-go exists, the privileged position to lead into the Japanization of the peninsula and the enlightenment of the peninsula (even though it is something potential) can be taken by the ‘male elite in the colony.’ Actually, those who ‘are able to become a soldier’ now show the request of ‘expansion of the naichi’ – absolute unification- in a specific way, like ventriloquism. Ch’oe In-gyu had already shown a scene of the complete enlightenment of Chōsenjin (children) by Japanese, in the ‘Kokugo’ film, *Tuition Fee. Homeless Angels*, therefore, can be thought of as a sequel to *Tuition Fee*. The male subjects both of Japan and Chōsen have to walk shoulder to shoulder with others toward imperial subjectivity. The authority of the naichi unexpectedly discovered the indecency remained in the cooperative movie in the matter of ‘Chōsen-go’ and ‘space.’ In spite of the ideal of unification, this film premises a specific separation already in the structure of the story. There will be rare examples, such as the film which presents well the ‘indecency’ and the possibility of the colonized subject removing out the outside.

4. The Limit to the Search for a New Father, and the Colonial Subject Posing as a Father

Now Chōsen is only thankful and sacrificing ourselves for you. All is given to the Tenno(Emperor) and entrusted to the Emperor, pledging loyalty—that is everything And to the homeland (Japan) people, as our superiors, respect will be shown. It will not be forgotten how much their forefathers suffered and spilled blood. It will be right attitude for Chōsen to respect, believe, love and follow them as a superior and as an old brother.²⁹

Yi Gwang-su, a father of Korean modern literature as it developed together with the colony, had to suffer from an orphan awareness for his all life. His complex about the orphan is also a lack of awareness that governed the intellectuals in colonized Korea in other ways.³⁰ A father is objected from or is absent to them from the first. Actually, Yi Gwang-su, as an ‘orphan,’ looked continuously for a new father, and the father used to be presented with a detailed name, sometimes as Hukuzawa Yukichi, sometimes as Abe Mubutsu or Tokutomi Soho. The search for a father met with an absolute father. For such a new father, he said, ‘Your majesty is a father and the imperial house is a head family house.’³¹

Japanese is represented as “an old brother or a senior” by Yi who describes himself as an imperial subject subjected to the head family of the Japanese Empire. Instead of the conservative and incompetent fathers of Chōsen, the father who deserted him, the new father is the perfect one for Yi Gwang-su, as a person pursuing social evolution and enlightenment, who starts his literature as a way to express the enlightenment. That is a modern nation, yet it is a world of emotion(情) made by loyalty(義) between the sovereign and the subject and by affection between a father and a

²⁹ 香山光郎, 「事變三周年記念」 聖戰記念文章特輯, 『三千里』, July 1940

³⁰ Actually, Yi Gwang-su is an orphan who lost his parents during the Donghak peasant war. In reference to orphan awareness as an original literary experience of Korean modern literary men including Yi Gwang-su, see Kim Yoon-sik, *Yi Gwang-su and His Days*, Sol Publication (Seoul), 1999 and others.

³¹ Yi Gwang-su, “Japanese Culture and Chosen”, *Maeil Newspaper*, April 23, 1941

son, and above all it is something strong.³² Once he receives the new father, he can stand high, overcoming the limitation of the colonized person. “In developing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere, Chōsen becomes a head and a leader. In other words, we will be a master of all East Asia.”³³

Homeless Angels appears to be the aim or the result toward which Yi Gwang-su had walked all through the colonial period. It is to become a father. The male elite, as an active and positive subject with physical and psychological competency, occupies the position of a father in reality. If it is assumed that, in order to become a father he himself must find a new father, then there is no problem with the film, up to that point. The difficulty arises because in the film, *Homeless Angels*, the ‘father’ was represented as only one (Korean). As far as the family state of imperial Japan is composed of the *tenno* (emperor), as the great head of the family, and the subject³⁴ as his *akago* (infant), as an expanded concept of ‘*ie* (家).’ The ‘fathers’ other than such an absolute father should exist as a medium to lead the *akago* to the great head of the family. Or as Yi Gwang-su said, it is natural to ‘respect, believe, love and follow the Japanese as superior and as an older brother.’

This film, however, excludes the Japanese completely. Hyanglinwon, a space physically isolated from the outside, makes it possible. The producers of the movie may not have expected such a sensitive response from the empire. It is certain that the governing person, standing on a base of anxiety, is always more sensitive and careful than the colonized person is. In a sense, the empire

³² For the meaning of affection (情) and how it is linked to the relationship with Japanese emperor, refer to the comment of Yi Gyeong-hun, *A Study on Pro-Japanese Literature by Yi Gwang-su*, Taehak Publication, 1998, p.48. He analyzes the conversion of Yi Gwang-su to Japan, by indicating that to Yi Gwang-su, affection is a modern thing, different from the Confucian relationship, and affection mixes the conservative affection and the father-and-son affection with the emperor, so that he intends to get out of the heartless of Imperialism.

³³ Yi Gwang-su, “Ethics of Modern Times”, *Modern Times*, January 1941

³⁴ The position of subjects toward the ruler of the nation is same as the position of the children toward their parents. In other words, as one nation is a magnification of one family, that a ruler of the nation gives an order to the subject is no different from the fact that parents of the family give orders to the children, out of love. Thus, if our emperor now speaks to the nation as his people, all the subjects have to listen carefully with the love that children have for their strict father and their affectionate mother. 井上哲次郎、『教育勅語衍義』、1899、p. 59. For the theory of the emperor system as a magnification of family, refer to 藤田省三、『天皇制国家の支配原理』(藤田省三著作集 1)、みすず書房、1998

might read clearly the unconsciousness of the men of the colony, as manifested in this movie. It is no wonder that the (un)consciousness of the governor, who has to control dangers, and that of the colonized, who is himself a 'danger,' cannot be the same. Self-censorship that is completely identical to the actual censorship might be impossible.

It is an unconsciousness in which a perfect father can be created only by excluding Japanese. It becomes apparent when we compare this film with two other *naisenittai* films from Chōsen, produced by Japanese directors, *Young Looks* (Toyoda Siro, 1943) and *Suicide Squad of the Watchtower* (Imai Tadasi, 1941), or with Ch'oe In-gyu's *Love and Fealty*, made jointly with Imai Tadashi, which was completed immediately before the end of the war in July 1945. The symbol of a father is applied only to Japanese in all these movies. They are strict but affectionate, and look after and protect their 'subjects' with a consistent justice. They, thereby, have absolute authority. They all are guardians both in reality and in name.

Returning to the main issue the controversy over *Homeless Angels* arise at the point that the film is transferred to Japan from Chōsen. That is, the movie was promoted for screening in Chōsen only. The task of enlightenment that the colonizing authority assigns to the colonized man is successfully completed. Considering the meaning of colonialism as endless chains of hierarchy, the role for enlightenment of the colonized male elites is something to be promoted for the imperial order. In spite of this fact, this movie, which represents the peninsula of the time, could not cross that extreme place, the Genkainada. That is because that the task of enlightenment must be carried by the colonizing party—as physical person and as symbol-- as the mediator for the statement of the empire.

Even though the position and duty of re-masculinized male subjects in the colony were constructed in that limited history and space, effectiveness of this construction did not end with colonization. Rather, in the days after 1945- the point when the outside disappears- their task comes

to have much more impact, and it is the re-masculinized elite subject who performs the work of constructing the post-colonial state.

Once the empire has collapsed and Chōsen is changed into the Republic of Korea, those male elites finally succeed in finding a perfect and faultless leadership for enlightenment. Such a process, ironically, played a decisive role in the post-colonial appraisal of *Homeless Angels* as an auteurial achievement of ‘realism’ brought out from the memory of colonial film. Although this may be a judgement after the fact, the censorship controversy surrounding *Homeless Angels* may in fact be the result of the anticipation, on the part of the male subject of the colony, of the possibility and the threat of their own transformation into subjects of enlightenment for a future post-colonial state.

5. Grammar of the Korean Film History: Method or Value of Realism Theory

Let us go back to the issue of Korean film history remembering Ch’oe In-gyu. The fact that ‘Realism’ is itself a privileged term in describing the history of the Korean film is should be understood in advance. The value of ‘the achievement of realism,’ which is assigned to movies of Korean ‘auteur theory,’ and is organized between such popular movies as ‘Chungmuro films,’ belittled by the Korean elite critics, and European modernist films, adored as the movies of auteur theory, has been an absolute standard in the criticism of the Korean films, combined with a Korean value system, which is representative of a ‘resistant nationalism’³⁵

Korean film historian Yi Young-il said in his work *General History of Korean Films*, which can be thought as the origin of Korean film history studies, “Ch’oe In-gyu presented movies of the Neo-

³⁵ Ju Chang-gyu, who reads the dominant culture discussion in Korea as a Marxism of male nationalism, summarizes the existing views which have governed the discussion of the Korean films in terms of the nation, realism and auteurship in his thesis, in which the subaltern possibilities of the Chungmuro film is sought. Ju Chang-gyu, *A Study on the Cultural Modernity of Chungmuro Films*, doctoral thesis, Chung Ang University, 2004. Among those works that manage to overcome the existing realism systems, there are works by Kim So-young in 1990s. Her efforts to escape the conventional canons of Korean films and to re-organize the sub-divided genres, such as soap-operas, horrors and action, serve as an anti-thesis to the male-oriented realism discussions and suggest a new reading for the ‘history of film’ itself. Kim So-young, *Cinema, Blue Film of Techno-Culture*, Yeolhwadang, 1995/Kim So-young, *Ghosts of Modernity*, People to Sow Seed, 2000.

realism theory, one of the streams of the world film history, through *Homeless Angels*, even before the theory had come to colonial Korea. As it will be indicated for other chances, the realism in its cinematic form should be remembered to be the last line of resistance for authors in the days of cruel militarism. Ch'oe In-gyu took the pulse of the bright realism in the Korean films in spite of the complete darkness of the film industry during the period of Japanese Imperialism and the disordered post-liberation.”³⁶

Yi Young-il who sets Na Woon-gyu's *Arirang* as the beginning of the Korean realism and builds the his film history penetrating the tracing realism from that beginning, has to consider the last stage of the colonial period, as a 'dark period' of Korean film. During that period, Ch'oe In-gyu was the only director who could be considered within auteur theory in terms of the consistency of the object he dealt with (children in the poor class) and the style he employed (location, long-take), in spite of the limitations of those times. Considered from another point, it might be Ch'oe In-gyu, as a typical model of male subjects and substance in film history, who connects the colony into post-colonial state on a place beyond ideologies.

Meanwhile, this matter is related to the meaning of 'realism' as used by Yi Young-il. More specifically, what does realism mean when it is called the 'last line of resistance' for authors in the days of cruel militarism? It is clear that Yi Young-il does not limit the expression of the realism to formal issues only. And when considering that this he wrote this book in 1969, when Park Chung Hee, as a spiritual son of Japanese Imperialism, led the military dictatorship, the 'cruel militarism' is not one that can be converted into the past only.

Yi Young-il is the very person who systemizes the history of Korean cinema according to the value of realism, but to him, realism exists as a minimum negative moral concept. Such a negative

³⁶ Yi Young-il, *General History of Korean Films*, p.202

moral awareness, which is constructed by the so-called “Cruel militarism”- that is, an absolute evil-penetrating the 20th century, is the basis of the cultural ideology of realism.³⁷.

“As I’m not a realist, but a critic, my concern is to overcome realism. But, if I who study and teach Korean film history, break out the frame of realism in Korean cinema – which is something dissatisfying and doubtful--then Korean cinema comes to lose its foundation and future. Not because of the fact that realism is the only object to be adored, but because of the fact that the blood, sweat, grief, affection and physical pain and joy of Korean film people are all combined in realism, it should be inevitably supported.”

The realism that Yi Young-il means at this time is a mental attitude and a fortress for building a minimal ethics, beyond style and trend. It is, thus, something to be protected inevitably in the blotted Korean contemporary history and at the same time, it cannot but be changed into another thing suitable for the day when Korean society will have other ‘social experiences.’ In that meaning, in case he says that the concern is ‘how to overcome realism’, it can be said as, in his thesis, how the Korean society can go further into another social experience, and in other words, it can be related to the intention of social revolution. When the other party appears as an absolute evil, the way to overcome that evil is to expose it. To rescue the method--realism-- and to ensure the consistency of the history of the Korean cinema and its methodological level, he cannot help evaluating the movies of Ch’oe In-gyu as an achievement of realism. In addition, the structure of Ch’oe In-gyu’s stories in which street children become imperial subjects by clearly identifying and overcoming their

³⁷ Alain Badiou says the moral matters of our days are constructed by evil, and the construction of ethics based on that ‘evil’ is presented by him as a moral basis for World War II and for the period after the war. He criticizes the fact that the moral consciousness of the Nazis and the anti-Nazis is identical at their roots as depending on the reproduction of evil. Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil (Wo Es War)*, translated by Peter Hallward, Verso Books, 2002. The issue of the foundation of goodness through the reproduction of evil can be understood by the ethics of reproduction, that is, the ethical foundation of realism.

weaknesses, is identical to the core theory of modernization of the government of Park Chung Hee, in which novel village • nation • history is anticipated by “sweeping away the old customs.” The thought that a goodness (actually it is a goodness relative to evil) is pursued by cleaning up the evils inside the Chosenjin=Koreans is the very unconsciousness of a (post) colonized people that links the colony to the post-colonization.³⁸

However, it is sure that realism has become a dogma in describing the history of the Korean cinema since the days of Yi Young-il. In this dogma, *Homeless Angels* is evaluated as a movie that complains about “the painful lives suffered by the colonial Korean public, through a method of images³⁹, in which the sensitive and rhythmical tempos of Ch’oe In-gyu are well balanced”.⁴⁰ This is the very moment that a ‘method’ is converted into a ‘value’. That is because that rhetoric, about the suffered public and ethics at the moment of the realism represented, is a grammar for summarizing the history of Korean film. The word of realism immediately brings about the issue of values and the ‘ethics’ organized by the denials.

So, is the comment on the continuance of the post-colonial state toward the colonized films just a product of misunderstanding? No. Yu Hyôn-mok, a typical director of Korean cinema, aligned with the author theory of the 1960s, who evaluates this film as an ‘educational film’, completed *Study Tour* (1969), a children’s movie, in the year when a book about Yi Young-il was being written. In this film, the poor boys and girls and their uneducated parents are enlightened by a devoted teacher, who comes from Seoul, and the children promise to be ‘children of the novel country’ in a school tour to Seoul where rapid economic development is being achieved. The year 1969, when

³⁸ We are, of course, able to advance such awareness into the more fundamental level. Paradoxically speaking, the realism which intends to build the ‘minimum line of resistance’ by disclosing the evil, called Modernism, might not be far from the general ideology of the Korean modern history, considering that it is based on ‘the relative ethics built by evil’ and that only current negatives are used as a basis for political planning.

³⁹ Kim Su-nam, *A Study on Korean Scenario Writers*, Yeni, 1995, p.155

⁴⁰ It is Yu Hyôn-mok, as a typical director leading the 1960s’ movies, who makes such an evaluation. He is considered a director of the author-theory based on realism, and his 1961 film, *Accidental Firing*, is considered one of the greatest Korean movies in the style of realism after *Arirang*. His works as summarized by nationalism, enlightenment, anticommunism and Christianity, can be a model example as well, combined with the Korean elite film discussion, Yu Hyôn-mok, *History of Korean Film Development*, Hanjin Publication, 1980, p. 213

this movie was produced, is the point when the results of the first Economic Development Plan as started in 1962, were being shown off. At this moment, the task of enlightenment for leading people toward imperial subjectivity is transferred seamlessly into the task of national enlightenment. The history of the Korean film writes the history—that is, continuity- continually, but it eliminates the ‘purpose’ and ‘context’ (of the empire or the national state) for implementing that task, and instead chooses a manner that foregrounds subject and method. By combining the nation and realism, the movies of the dark period under the control of Japanese Imperialism can be included in the history of the films of the Republic of Korea as a ‘nation-state.’ That is because the two subjects who carried out Imperial subjection and Modernization are actually completely the ‘same’ persons, in a biological aspect and in terms of a ‘method’ to construct an ideology.