

## Literary Reception of a Historical Fact and the Matter of the State and Nation - The Wanpaoshan Incident and Literary Response of Korean, Chinese and Japanese Writers\*

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### Abstract

The Wanpaoshan Incident that took place in 1931 and the tragic Anti-Chinese Riots that ensued in Korea had great repercussions in the three countries of East Asia. Writers in Korea, China and Japan fictionalized these events concurrently or a few years after the incident. In the other of publication, the novelette *Manpozan* (October 1931) by Ito Einosuke, a Japanese writer, the novel *Wanpaoshan* (March 1933) by Li Huiying of China, the novelette "Farmer" (July 1939) by Yi T'ae-Chun of Korea, novella *Rice Plant* (1941) by An Su-Kil of Korea and the novel *Reclamation* (1943) by Chang Hyök-Chu of Korea were major examples. This article, using four novels – Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan*, Li Huiying's *Wanpaoshan*, Yi T'ae-Chun's "Farmer", and An Su-Kil's *Rice Plant* – as main texts, analyzed the ways in which writers from Korea, Japan and China fictionalized the Wanpaoshan Incident. The four novels dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident were all written from different perspectives and thus the emphases were different as well. The writers responded differently, and we will show how the writer's national identity, ideology, and the existence of experience and its depth were articulated in the fictionalization process of a literary work.

Key words: Wanpaoshan Incident, Ito Einosuke, Li Huiying, Yi T'ae-Chun, An Su-Kil

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## 1. Introduction

The Wanpaoshan (*Manposan* in Korean) Incident of 1931 involved a conflict over water resources between Chinese farmers who were living in the northeastern part of China and Korean farmers who had migrated there. This kind of conflict was quite common in Manchuria at that time.<sup>1)</sup> However, this commonplace water-related conflict escalated into tensions across the entire Northeast Asia due to the intervention of the Japanese Empire, which was scheming a territorial invasion of the Manchu-Mongolian region. The Wanpaoshan Incident, which was initially merely one of the many intermittent water-related conflicts between Korean and Chinese farmers, became well-known because it eventually led to the Anti-Chinese Riots – the indiscriminate killing and violence that erupted in Pyöngyang and other places in Korea against the Chinese people living in Korea. The Wanpaoshan Incident and the ensuing tragic Anti-Chinese Riots showed dramatically how blind nationalism can be abused by imperialism.<sup>2)</sup>

Academic analyses up to now on the Wanpaoshan Incident, which had huge repercussions in the three countries of East Asia, were mainly about the incident being a part of the Japanese Empire's plan to invade the continent, the different reports on it by the main newspapers within Korea, and the differing perspectives between the Communist Party of China and Kuomintang. As such, there were huge discrepancies between the perspectives of Korea, China and Japan.<sup>3)</sup> Writers in the three countries reacted quite sensitively and wrote novels based on the incident. In terms of the order of publication, the novelette *Manpozan* (October 1931) by Ito Einesuke, a Japanese writer, the novel *Wanpaoshan* (March 1933) by Li Huiying of China, the novelette "Farmer" (July 1939) by Yi T'ae-Chun of Korea, novella *Rice Plant* (1941) by An Su-Kil of Korea and the novel *Reclamation* (1943) by Chang Hyök-Chu of Korea were major examples.

1) Kim Chae-Yong, "Introduction" in *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea's Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yökrak Publishers, 2010), 5.

2) Ibid.

3) Chang Yöng-Wu, "The Uprising on Manbo Mountain and The Responses from The Korean and Japanese Novels" in *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea's Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yökrak Publishers, 2010), 221.

Research into the Wanpaoshan Incident and its relationship with novels that were written on the incident have already made some progress in Korea, Japan and China, the achievements of which have accumulated quite substantially. However, relatively, there have not been sufficient amount of detailed research on the literary response of writers in the three countries to this historical event. In particular, due the difficulty understanding the original *Wanpaoshan* by Li Huiying, research has been somewhat limited.

Therefore, this paper seeks to complement the achievements of existing research by looking into the literary response on the Wanpaoshan Incident by writers in the three countries, using Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan*, Li Huiying's *Wanpaoshan*, Yi T'ae-Chun's "Farmer" and An Su-Kil's *Rice Plant* as main texts. These four stories dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident were all written from different perspectives and thus have different focuses. We seek to look at the differing literary response of the writers, and how the writer's national identity and ideology, and whether or not he or she had experience and if so the depth thereof, were articulated in the creative process of a literary work. Furthermore, in light of the fact that Yi T'ae-Chun and An Su-Kil, both from Korea (colonized Chosŏn), showed completely different literary response, we will look into where that difference came from.

## 2. National identity: Identity as Nationals of Korea, China, Japan and Manchukuo

The four writers - Ito Einosuke, Li Huiying, Yi T'ae-Chun and An Su-Kil – all have different national identities. Just as their literary response to the one and the same Wanpaoshan Incident differ, national identity played an important part in the development of their novels.

The first writer among the literary communities of Korea, Japan and China to novelize the Wanpaoshan Incident was Ito Einosuke, a Japanese proletarian writer. He started off as a critic and then, with his joining of the Worker-Farmer Artists League in 1928, started his career in the field of proletarian literature and started

to publish novels. At the time, Ito Einosuke wrote of himself, “After writing series of novels about miners such as *The Invisible Mine*, *A Page of the Mountain* and *Riot*, for two years, I continuously read and looked for documents related to colonialism. And then I wrote four or five novels on colonialism in Taiwan, Manchuria and Korea.”<sup>4)</sup> It shows his great interest in colonialism. Thus, just three months after the Wanpaoshan Incident, he published the novelette, *Manpozan*, which actually did not come as a surprise.

Ito Einosuke’s *Manpozan* was based on the story of a Korean-born migrant farmer Cho P’an-Se and his family, who had his land and house taken away by the landlord as a collateral and was forced to cross the border into Manchuria. Centering on the Cho family, it portrayed the difficulties faced by Korean farmers who were scapegoated twice within the dynamics of Japan, Korea and China.

When the water canal construction was stopped, migrant farmers from Korea went to the Japanese Consulate and the Korean Residents Group to ask them to rescind the measure, however, neither side were willing to resolve the issue. They had no choice but to restart the construction, at which native Chinese farmers, who were supplied with arms by Chinese officials, attacked the Korean farmers. However, the Japanese police only stood guard in a superficial way while the Japanese Consulate did nothing and didn’t send any additional police.

According to research up to now, the Wanpaoshan Incident was the result of a deliberate and organized conspiracy of the Japanese Empire in its ambition to invade Manchuria and Mongolia, and the Japanese police also intervened proactively. However, there was no such expression in *Manpozan* of Ito Einosuke, and in addition, Japan was portrayed as being passive or simply a bystander. Such significant camouflaging of the organized involvement of Japan was a manifestation of the national identity and imperialist perspective of Ito Einosuke as a Japanese.<sup>5)</sup>

Li Huiying’s first novel, *Wanpaoshan*, which also dealt with the Wanpaoshan

4) Ito Einosuke, 1939, Literary Readme Biograph, *Writer’s Notes*, KINSEIDO Publishing, p.188. Yu Su-Chōng, “*Manpozan*, Farmers Literature and Literature on Manchuria”, *Manchurian Studies* Vol. 11 (2011): 127.

5) Chang Yōng-Wu, “The Uprising on Manbo Mountain and The Responses from The Korean and Japanese Novels” in *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea’s Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yōkrak Publishers, 2010), 229.

Incident, was written between March and May 1932, and published in March 1933 by the Shanghai Hufeng Press. The publication of the novel *Wanpaoshan* by Li Huiying, which came two years after that of Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan*, opened the era of anti-Japan novels in the history of China's contemporary literature.

In this novel, Chief Inspector Nagakawa of the Japanese Police, thought that the area near Wanpaoshan would be appropriate for developing rice paddies and went there several times to investigate. The Japanese Consul, Shu Choshun, agreed with the Chief Inspector, bribed the Chinese Hak Yǒng-Dōk and started to develop the areas around Wanpaoshan into rice paddies. The Japanese conspired to use the names of Korean farmers to forcefully occupy the fields of Chinese farmers, instigate a conflict between the Chinese and Korean farmers and thereby take control over the Wanpaoshan area. Through a young character by the name of Li Kyōng Pyōng, Li Huiying showed that the Wanpaoshan Incident was a conspiracy of the Japanese Empire, which was planning an invasion of Manchuria and Mongolia.

Furthermore, Li Huiying, in *Wanpaoshan*, described how the Japanese Empire had been proactively involved in developing rice paddies in the Wanpaoshan area. In order to restart the water canal construction of the Korean farmers, the Japanese Consulate, in the beginning, sent four armed police officers, and then in order to defend against the attacks by Chinese farmers, sent another thirty officers. On 2nd July, the day the incident took place, the Consulate sent another 200 police and tried to surround and suppress the Chinese farmers. Such story is in sharp contrast with Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan*, in which the Japanese Empire was not actively involved in the development of the Wanpaoshan region.

Moreover, in *Wanpaoshan* of Li Huiying, the farmers' defense army, led by Ma Po-San, exchanged fire with the police who had come to stop the destruction. The farmers, who had expected the police, were not surprised and retreated to the village. In the end, several police officers were been killed and the rice paddy development project of the Wanpaoshan region was stopped due to the farmers' resistance.

However, according to historical records and existing research, there were no casualties during the incident, and the destroyed water canal was repaired and

opened for operation. Li Huiying, during the process of converting the historical Wanpaoshan Incident into a work of literature, made changes and articulated the story in such a way that the Chinese farmers were portrayed as being calm and brave. It is not too difficult to assume that Li Huiying, a Chinese writer, had attempted to show the resistance against the Japanese and the commitment to gain victory over them.

Unlike Japan and China, writers in Korea started to pay attention to the Wanpaoshan Incident only in 1939, eight years after the incident. Around this time, a Korean writer, Yi T'ae-Chun, took the incident up as a subject matter and published a novelette, "Farmer". In regard to this story, Yim Hwa has said that, emotions of sorrow and grief, which had existed continuously in Yi T'ae-Chun's work, reached a peak in "Farmer".<sup>6)</sup> In this story, sorrow and grief were expressed during the hardships endured by the Korean migrant farmers.

When Ch'ang-Kwon first came to Manchuria, the endless rising terrain seemed like a new world. However, the endless terrain foreshadowed the fact that they would not be welcomed by the indigenous people and that the settling down of migrants would only be very difficult. When the Korean farmers were digging a ditch for a reservoir, the indigenous farmers tried to stop them saying that their lands would be inundated. Then Ch'ang-Kwon's grandfather died from the cold while armed soldiers harassed the farmers to prevent them from digging the ditch. They swore and used violence. Such scenes were all testimony to the hardships endured by the Korean farmers who had migrated to Manchuria.

Yi T'ae-Chun had already portrayed very realistically the hardships of Korean farmers who had come to Manchuria in his "Record of Traveling to Migrants' Villages", which he wrote in 1938 after having visited various parts of Manchuria including Jiangjiawopeng, the place where the Wanpaoshan Incident had taken place, before he wrote the "Farmer".

(1) Even if we were to pay for it, we worked with all our sweat and tears to dig

6) Lee Hyun-Jeong, "Reimagining the Nation in Manchuria: The Representation of Peasant Collectivity in Chinese and Korean Discourses on the Wanpaoshan Incident (1930)," *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 - The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea's Modern Literature*, edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yökrak Publishers, 2010), 83.

that 20-ri long ditch...<sup>7)</sup>

(2) Tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, I will be back home, where there are beautiful mountains and rivers, which once had been named Koryō because of the high mountains and scenic beauty. I don't have the heart to look back at those who will be left behind in the barren fields.<sup>8)</sup>

Pak's comment in excerpt (1) is a direct expression of the difficulties endured by the Korean farmers in the process of settling in Manchuria. As in (2), Yi T'ae-Chun said that he did not have the heart to look back at the Korean migrant farmers because he would be going back home where mountains are high and the surroundings beautiful whereas they would be unable to do so. Yi felt sorry that they had to stay in the unfamiliar land of Manchuria and bear the hardships. He was indirectly testifying to the hardships of the Korean farmers.

Yi T'ae-Chun was not only interested in the difficulties faced by the farmers but also in their strong determination to settle down in Manchuria. Hwang Chae-Sim, who was arrested by the police in relation to the water canal, came back after nine days and made an encouraging statement to the Korean migrants. He said, "All the resources we had were put into this barren land and the ditch,"<sup>9)</sup> so they had no choice but to live and die here. "Being beaten is better than being dead,"<sup>10)</sup> so "Farmers continued to dig even whilst hearing the sounds of gunshots of soldiers."<sup>11)</sup> As such, "Farmer" expressed quite lucidly how the Korean migrant farmers were strong and determined to build a water canal, settle down and pioneer a new life there.

The central narrative in *Rice Plant* by An Su-Kil, which was also about the Wanpaoshan Incident, consisted of two conflicts – one faced by the first generation of migrant farmers who became at odds with Chinese farmers in the process

7) Yi T'ae-Chun, "Record of Traveling to Migrants' Villages," *Colonialism and Culture Series 6 – Experience of Manchuria by Writers Near the End of Japanese Colonialism*, (Seoul: Yōkrak Publishers, 2010), 138.

8) Yi T'ae-Chun, "Record of Traveling to Migrants' Villages," 140.

9) Yi T'ae-Chun, "Farmer," 202.

10) Yi T'ae-Chun, "Farmer," 204.

11) Ibid.

settling down in Manchuria, and the other between the farmers and the Chinese authorities around the issue of building a school.<sup>12)</sup>

When the first generation of Korean migrant farmers came to Manchuria, the Chinese indigenous farmers in the area were very wary of the Koreans and despised them. The indigenous farmers believed that their lives were being threatened from very near by the migrant farmers, eventually leading to a tragic event in which the Chinese attacked the homes of Korean farmers in the middle of the night, injuring many and leading to the death of Ik-Su. The Korean farmers had to tackle not only the indigenous people but also nature. Many children died from various illnesses while others suffered from frost bite. As such, life in Manchuria for the new Korean migrant farmers was full of adversities and difficulties, which no one knew about although the circumstances could be confirmed through “letters or from stories of people traveling back and forth between over there and here. We could see it in Hong Tök-Ho and in the wrinkled face of Father, and my widowed sister-in-law was a living evidence.”<sup>13)</sup>

In this regard, An Su-Kil’s *Rice Plant* was similar to Yi T’ae-Chun’s “Farmer” in that they both dealt with the arduous, difficult and sweat-and-tears process of the Korean migrant farmers trying to settle in Manchuria.

It is said to be like betting on one’s dream.

(...)

“If we win the bet then maybe we’ll be able to go visit our home... Or else, we’ll remain this way forever, and die and be buried in the fields of the Chinese...

This was their only hope. Their sadness as well.<sup>14)</sup>

The excerpt above shows the fondness the Korean farmers in Manchuria had of their homeland Korea. Similarly, in Yi T’ae-Chun’s “Farmer”, Ch’ang-Kwon’s

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12) Chang Yöng-Wu, “‘Farmer’ and the Uprising on the Manbo Mountain” in *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea’s Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yökrak Publishers, 2010), 55.

13) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 285.

14) Yi T’ae-Chun, “Record of Traveling to Migrants’ Villages,” 139



grandfather told his daughter-in-law and grandson in their train to Manchuria, that should he die, he would like his body to be sent unconditionally back to Korea. His determination lay not in settling down in Manchuria for good, but in simply developing the region.

On the other hand, An Su-Kil was a Korean writer like Yi T'ae-Chun. However, he had spent his childhood in Manchuria and school years in Korea and Japan. He later returned to Manchuria, where he wrote while working as a teacher and a reporter.

In *Northern Plain*, a compilation of An Su-Kil's work including the *Rice Plant*, Yōm Sang-Sōp wrote in the preface, "An Su-Kil is the representative writer among those who emphasized the existence and establishment of ethnic Korean literature as a form of 'ethnic minority literature' – a sub category of popular literature of Manchukuo."<sup>15</sup> An Su-Kil himself contributed three articles under the theme of "New Proposals for Establishing Korean Literature in Manchuria", a series consisting of "(1) In Manchuria, There Existed Korean Literature Even During the Early Days", "(2) Development of Korean Literature in Jiandao and Its Current Status", and "(3) Details on How to Establish a Literary Community and Energetic Activities of Writers". He thus proactively called for "Re-establishment of Korean Literature in Manchuria". This shows that An thought himself to be a Korean writer in Manchukuo.<sup>16</sup> In other words, he had acknowledged himself to be a citizen of Manchukuo.

In this sense, An Su-Kil had been attentive to the difficulties faced by the Korean migrant farmers as a Korean-born writer and citizen of Manchukuo, and was aware that they wanted to settle down in Manchuria. In regard to the question of "How should a Korean farmer sustain life in Manchuria," An was one step ahead of Yi T'ae-Chun.

(1) The men were not satisfied with merely cultivating the land. Of course, it was a way for them to live a better life.

15) Li Hae-Yōng, "Korean-Born Writer of Manchukuo An Su-Kil and 'Cooperation and Reconciliation in the Nation'", *Korean Language and Literature* (2015), 396.

16) Li Hae-Yōng, *Ibid.*

However, living a better life meant not only that they themselves had to live well, but that their children's generation also must be encouraged and left with a future.<sup>17)</sup>

(2) Manchuria, whose skies will be fair and clear. Manchuria, whose land and air will be pristine. The second Eungpongri, which would have been developed during the past ten years. A place where father, mother, sister-in-law, friends of father and brother, and my siblings are living. Let's go there to run around and shout at our will, and to live and work together with our parents and brothers. They had used hoes to cultivate the land. I will go there and teach the children, foster them, make them strong and shine. That is the way to pay back the people from our home village who had worked hard at the fields for the past decade.<sup>18)</sup>

The Koreans wanted to go beyond just sustaining a life to fostering future generations, by building a school and leading a stable life. They wanted not just a water canal to be built but also a school, so that future generations can get educated and continue to live in Manchuria. Just as Manchuria was the second home to An Su-Kil, Maeponggun was the second Eungpongri, or the second home village for Korean migrant farmers who had developed the area for the past ten years. This part showed the strong determination of the Korean migrant farmers not just to survive but also to sustain a life and settle down in Manchuria generation after generation.

### 3. Ideology or No Ideology: Socialism, Nationalism and Survivalism

These four novels that dealt with the Wanpaoshan Incident differ depending on the ideology of the writer.

Ito Einosuke was known in Japan as a writer who "walked along the path of

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17) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 293.

18) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 296-297.

orthodox proletarian realism”<sup>19)</sup>, and at the time *Manpozan* was published, Uno Koji<sup>20)</sup> highly praised the work. According to Koji, Ito Einosuke’s *Manpozan* was worthy of praise because it realistically portrayed the suffering and poverty of the Koreans who had migrated to Manchuria. They fought with nature, were persecuted by the Chinese, oppressed by the Japanese, threatened by Chinese soldiers and lived under the threat of starvation and death. Furthermore, *Manpozan* not only reported on the event itself but also analyzed the reasons as to why Korean farmers were being persecuted in China.<sup>21)</sup>

Korean farmers had migrated to Manchuria because of the Japanese, who then manipulated the Korean farmers to gain control over land in Manchuria. In the meantime, the Japanese ignored all the difficulties and persecution suffered by the Koreans. In fact, when Chinese soldiers harassed Korean farmers, the Japanese, under the pretext of “protecting its citizens”<sup>22)</sup> could drive the Communist Party out. Also, the Kuomintang could also arrest Korean farmers under allegations of them being communists, drive them out or put them in prison. Ito Einosuke’s portrayal of Korean migrant farmers were unbiased in the sense that the Koreans were seen not just as colonized people but farmers who wanted a place to settle down, and that they were portrayed as being doubly scapegoated and caught in the complex and subtle political confrontation between Japan and China.<sup>23)</sup>

Nevertheless, in *Manpozan*, Ito Einosuke exaggerated the persecution of Korean farmers by the Chinese. Cho P’an-Se’s family, even before they arrived in Wanpaoshan, were chased out by Chinese officials twice, and he received a gunshot wound at that time – the scar of which he had to live with. Cho was arrested by Chinese officials whilst the water canal was being constructed, during which his wife, Pae Chŏng-Hwa was horribly gang-raped by Chinese soldiers.<sup>24)</sup>

19) Chang Yŏng-Wu, “The Uprising on Manbo Mountain and The Responses from The Korean and Japanese Novels,” 222. Requoted from O Hwang-Sŏn, “A Study on Ito Einosuke’s *Manpozan*,” *Korean Association of Japanology* 38(1997): 237~240.

20) Uno Koji (宇野浩二), the Japanese novelist, debuted in 1919 in Japan with *In the Storehouse*. He then consecutively wrote renowned works, *Dreaming Room*, *View With an Old Tree* and others, and was highly praised as a “Ghost of Literature”.

21) Yu Su-Chŏng, “*Manpozan*, Farmers Literature and Literature on Manchuria,” 132.

22) Yu Su-Chŏng, “*Manpozan*, Farmers Literature and Literature on Manchuria,” 133.

23) No Sang-Rae, “Reading the Wanpaoshan Incident Though the Spectrum of Diverse Novels,” 401.

24) Kim Ho-Wung, “Comparison of Novels Dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident from Three East Asian

The Chinese landlord, who did not want to displease the officials, went to Cho's house in the middle of the night and forced the wife to leave.

In addition, although some parts of the paddies and the fields could indeed become flooded, Chinese officials exaggerated and stimulated the Chinese farmers that during the rainy season, all paddies and fields along the shore would become submerged in a flood. So the Chinese farmers, who felt the Koreans to be a threat, shot and attacked the Korean farmers who were crossing the plain. The Korean farmers, in the eyes of the Chinese farmers, should be chased away. They were considered competitors trying to gain control over land.<sup>25)</sup> As such, Korean farmers were despised and persecuted not only by the Chinese officials and landlords but also by the Chinese farmers. The suffering of the Korean farmers who had come to Manchuria was well articulated in their conflict and confrontation with the Chinese.

In fact, from the winter of 1930 until spring of 1931, the northeastern region of Japan, which was Ito Einosuke's home, experienced an exceptionally bad harvest. Japanese farmers, who were already in heavy debt as a result of the economic depression of 1930, were hit once again. Ito Einosuke turned his eyes toward the rural villages and farmers suffering from starvation. However, although both Korean and Chinese farmers were all a part of the proletarian class, oppressed by the Japanese Empire, Chinese officials and landlords, and should be in solidarity with one another, Ito Einosuke concentrated only on the difficulties of Korean farmers, while binding Chinese farmers and officials as a single group that was in conflict and confrontation with the Koreans. It seemed that although Ito Einosuke was a proletarian writer, he did not elevate the story to the level of proletarian international solidarity, but instead manifested his imperialist perspective bound by the national identity imposed by the Japanese Empire.

Li Huiying debuted in January 1932 with her short story, "The Final Lesson", which was about the anti-Japanese movement, published in the leftist journal *Beidou*, whose editor was Ding Ling, the noted writer affiliated to the Communist

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Countries – Focusing on An Su-Kil's Novel, *Rice Plant*," *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea's Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yökrak Publishers, 2010), 195.

25) Kim Ho-Wung, *Ibid.*, 195.

Party. The year after, Li joined the League of Left-Wing Writers. Ding Ling, who read the work, asked Li to write a novel based on the anti-Japanese struggles in China's northeastern region. Ding Ling later played a considerable role in the writing and revising process of the work. In other words, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Li Huiying's *Wanpaoshan* was a form of academic writing with a specific purpose.

Among East Asian novels dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident, Li Huiying's *Wanpaoshan* was evaluated to be a work whose structure is closest to the development of the actual event<sup>26)</sup> and was said to fully reflect the writer's class consciousness.

In the novel, Chief Inspector Nagakawa of the Japanese Police, Hak Yōng-Tōk, Chinese officials, Chinese landlords and Korean overseers form one side, and Chinese farmers including Maposan and Korean farmers another, showing a structure of clear class confrontation. This is a deep contrast from Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan*, which focused on national contradictions between China and Korea and did not differentiate the class between Chinese officials and farmers. Furthermore, Li Huiying also revealed the process of the attitude of Chinese farmers towards Koreans changing. In the beginning, Chinese farmers were wary and suspicious of Korean farmers, but later, Koreans were pitied and then considered as people they should form solidarity with. The writer propagandized through the character Kim Pok, a Korean independence fighter, that Korean farmers and Chinese farmers must form a united front in order to win both the class struggle and the struggle against the Japanese.

The national contradiction between Korean and Chinese farmers were overcome through class contradiction, and the oppressed classes, by forging a broad united front, were able to transition to a joint anti-Japan struggle by both Chinese and Korean farmers. As Mao Dun, the well-known Chinese writer of the time, had consistently pointed out that, "The writer borrowed the lips of a Korean called Kim to show the suffering of Koreans and the brutality of the Japanese, as a form of a political propaganda. She also wrote that, in regard to the oppressed Korean

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26) Kim Ch'ang-Ho, "Historical Facts and Literary Transformations: Reading Lu Huiying's *Wanpaoshan*," *Journal of Manchurian Studies* 11( 2011): 74.

farmers, farmers of the Wanpaoshan started to feel class-based compassion, enough for them to finally form one united front. Through the efforts of the writer, class consciousness overcame national consciousness.”<sup>27)</sup>

This kind of set-up was not surprising, considering that Li Huiying was a member of a group of left-wing writers. The Communist Party’s position on the concrete reasons behind the Wanpaoshan Incident was that Japan was trying to occupy Manchuria as well as advance toward the USSR while the Kuomintang was showing surrenderism and had the policy of settling Koreans in Manchuria.<sup>28)</sup> It criticized that Japanese imperialism had instigated nationalistic emotions in order to destroy the solidarity between China and Korea.<sup>29)</sup>

In the novel, the reason why Hak Yōng-Tōk rented barren land in the Wanpaoshan region only to rent it out to Korean farmers again was because the Japanese Empire sought to occupy the northeastern region and use it as a basis to attack USSR. Furthermore, Kim Pok’s father, when talking about his son, explained how Korean communists resisting violence of the Japanese were persecuted. This scene and the propaganda on the solidarity between farmers of China and Korea were all in line with the Communist Party’s understanding of the Wanpaoshan Incident at the time.

Li Huiying’s *Wanpaoshan* showed clear patriotism, exposed the atrocities of the Japanese Empire and called upon the farmers of both China and Korea to rise up and jointly resist the common enemy, Japan. The book was based on strong political beliefs, and showed a clear class-based position and evident characteristics as a left-wing literature.

In the case of “Farmer”, as mentioned above, Yi T’ae-Chun, in describing the clashes between the Korean migrant farmers and Chinese indigenous farmers, portrayed the various hardships endured by the Korean farmers in Manchuria as

27) Dongfang Weiming(Mao Dun), *Literature* Volume 1, issue 2, July 1933. Re-cited from Kim Ho-Wung, “Comparison of Novels Dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident from Three East Asian Countries – Focusing on An Su-Kil’s Novel, *Rice Plant*,” 197.

28) "CPC Manchuria Provincial Committee's Publicity Program on the Wanpaoshan Incident and the Korean Massacre (7<sup>th</sup> July 1931)," Northeast Collection (A8), 225-229. Re-cited from Son Sūng-Hi, "The Wanpaoshan Incident and the Communist Party of China," *Journal of Asian Historical Studies* 83(2003): 128.

29) *Ibid.*, 146.

well as their strong commitment to cultivate the lands there. Yi's national consciousness was clearly manifested.

However, what is interesting is that in Yi T'ae-Chun's "Farmer", the Japanese were not mentioned – only the conflict between the Korean and Chinese farmers.<sup>30)</sup> So, "Farmer" was criticized at that time that "It was a novel proactively in conformity to national policies of the times, and in terms of the novel itself, it was extremely careless and insincere"<sup>31)</sup> and that "It is a part of Japan's literary genre on Manchurian development that was established in line with Japan's invasion of Manchuria."<sup>32)</sup>

However, considering the Japanese Empire's censorship system that existed in 1939 when this novel was published, it would not have been possible to negatively portray the Japanese police or the military or any other security forces maintaining the regime.<sup>33)</sup> In fact, Yi T'ae-Chun, in "Farmer", had intentionally excluded the Japanese to avoid having to say what he did not want to say or to lie – in other words, he wanted to avoid speaking highly of the Japanese Empire. Therefore, it is possible to say that "Farmer" was a work that innately expressed Yi T'ae-Chun's national consciousness.

An Su-Kil, in *Rice Plant*, developed his story on the lives of Korean migrant farmers with the question "How have you lived?" in his mind and tried to find the answers to the question "How are you going to live?"<sup>34)</sup> In short, *Rice Plant* developed its narrative with the issue of survival as its central axis. It established survivalism.

In the novel, Korean farmers thought that, when thinking of rice plants, the conflict with the indigenous people resulting in the death of Ik-Su, seemed like

30) Yi Sang-Kyōng, "Reading Literary Works of Late Japanese Colonialism and Censorship as Seen Through Yi T'ae-Chun's *Farmer* and Chang Hyōk-Chu's *Reclamation*," *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea's Modern Literature* edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yōkrak Publishers, 2010), 125.

31) Kim Ch'ōl, *Ibid.*, 481.

32) Chōng Hye-Yōng, "Manchuria Portrayed in Novels of 1930's," *Korean Language and Literature* 34 (2000), 184. Re-cited from Chang Yōng-Wu, "The Uprising on Manbo Mountain and The Responses from The Korean and Japanese Novels," 230.

33) Yi Sang-Kyōng, *Ibid.*, 116.

34) Kim Kyōng-Cha, "Study on Fictionalization of the Wanpaoshan Incident in Korean, Chinese and Japanese Literature" (MA dissertation, Yanbian University, 2014) 13.

children's play. When they thought about rice plants, which "symbolized the lives of Maepongton residents,"<sup>35)</sup> they were able to endure any kind of sacrifice.

Therefore, establishing and developing farmers' literature was a way of nourishing the minds of the settlers. It was also the source of mental motivation to transform the lands into paddies and thereby build and complete an agricultural Manchuria. Even on such utilitarian level, the expectations and national significance were high.<sup>36)</sup>

In "Preface" of *North Plain*, which included *Rice Plant*, Yŏm Sang-Sŏp referred to the role Koreans played in Manchuria as "transform(ing) the lands into paddies and thereby build(ing) and complet(ing) an agricultural Manchuria," reaffirming the contribution of Koreans in Manchukuo and their position. In Manchuria, fields were turned into paddies by Korean farmers. The achievements were special and could not be done by people of any other nation. He was thus bringing attention to the basis of existence and the eligibility of Koreans in Manchukuo.<sup>37)</sup> In short, Korean migrant farmers could very well survive and live in Manchuria just by transforming the lands into paddies. The reason why Korean farmers were so committed to planting and harvesting rice was to survive in Manchuria and the writer was trying to show how to look for ways to survive.

(1) These people are not here to hurt you. They are sincere and innocent people who have come thinking that our country is a good place to live. I lived a long time where these people come from so I know their kindness well. (...) And what will you do if that traveler is someone who brings good fortune to that house? The people here are the travelers and you are the house owners.<sup>38)</sup>

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35) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 265.

36) Yŏm Sang-Sŏp, "Preface," *An Su-Kil*, edited by Yanbian University Institute of Korean Literature (Paju: Bogosa Books, 2006), 584.

37) Yi Hae-Yŏng, "Establishing Korean Literature in Manchukuo and An Su-Kil," *Journal of Modern Korean Literature* 40 (2013): 305

38) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 275.



(2) The indigenous people came out to watch, children and adults alike. One elderly indigenous villager came and knelt at Ik-Su's grave and dedicated a moment of silence. Wives served rice cake and drinks to the indigenous people. *Chǒns* were given to the children.

Pang Ch'i-Won was also invited. He saw the nong-ak and was quite envious. The indigenous farmers were secretly rejoiced by the skills of the migrants who had made the barren lands fertile and full of rice plants without invading their fields. They watched the nong-ak and thought the way the farmers were enjoying themselves was powerful and interesting.<sup>39)</sup>

In excerpt (1), An Su-Kil was defending the Korean migrant farmers through the character of Pang Ch'i-Won, a Manchurian landlord who was friendly to the Koreans. The Korean migrants were not here to cause harm to the Chinese farmers but were sincere and innocent people who had come thinking that Manchuria was a good place to live. They were there to turn fields into paddies and develop Manchuria. They had brought good fortune. An Su-Kil was using this kind of defense to resolve the conflict between the indigenous villagers and Korean migrant farmers, forming a basis for the two groups to reconcile. In excerpt (2), Chinese farmers were secretly rejoiced by the skills of the Korean migrant farmers "who had made the barren lands fertile and full of rice plants without invading their fields." The Chinese had understood and accepted the Koreans. This scene, where the Korean migrant farmers, in celebrating a good harvest, performed a ritual in front of Ik-Su's grave and then performed nong-ak to commemorate him while the Chinese farmers watched, symbolized the reconciliation between the two peoples. Therefore, it can be said that in *Rice Plant*, the ideas of reconciliation with the indigenous people, understanding of and unbiased perspective towards China, and coexistence with the Chinese were the main themes.<sup>40)</sup>

This is because An Su-Kil viewed 'national cooperation and reconciliation' to

39) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 287.

40) Yi Hae-Yōng, "An Su-Kil's National Consciousness as Shown in His Post-Liberation "Manchurian" Narratives," *Review of Korean Cultural Studies* 50 (2015): 15.

be the way for Korean migrants to settle and survive in Manchukuo. In An Su-Kil's perspective, based on the idea of reciprocity, the way for Korean farmers who had migrated to Manchuria to survive and settle down was to understand the position and circumstances of the Chinese, who were the original masters of Manchuria, and in turn ask for their understanding on the desperate situation of the migrants and seek cooperation.<sup>41)</sup>

#### 4. Experience or No Experience, and Its Depth: Foreigner, Traveler, Migrant and Settler

In relation to Manchuria, Ito Einosuke and Li Huiying were foreigners, Yi T'ae-Chun a traveler and An Su-Kil a migrant and settler. Whether the writer had certain experience or not, and if so, the depth of that experience, led to different results in terms of formation of their stories.

Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan* was a novelette that was written "based on various material" by someone who had never actually been to the location.<sup>42)</sup> However, the circumstances around the Wanpaoshan Incident were made known in Japan through news reports. Ito Einosuke, who was living in Japan at that time, wrote *Manpozan* based on the news reports and articles of magazines.<sup>43)</sup> One reason why Ito Einosuke could not help but be bound within Japanese imperialist perspective was because Ito had not gone to Manchuria to directly experience the event nor done an actual investigation but instead had developed an understanding about the Wanpaoshan Incident based on news reports within Japan.

Nevertheless, although Ito Einosuke had not experienced Manchuria, he was able to experience and witness the severe poor harvest that struck northeast Japan from winter of 1930 to spring 1931 and the extreme poverty of the rural areas that ensued. It seems that Ito Einosuke, who was born in that area and did his

41) Yi Hae-Yöng, "An Su-Kil, a Korean-Born Writer in Manchukuo and 'National Cooperation and Reconciliation'," *Korean Language and Literature* 172 (2015): 411

42) Yu Su-Chöng, "*Manpozan*, Farmers Literature and Literature on Manchuria," 126.

43) Sin Süng-Mo, "Images of Koreans in Manchuria As Portrayed in Japanese Literature During the Colonial Period," *Studies in Korean Literature* 34 (2008): 406

writing there, had also personally undergone difficult times.<sup>44)</sup> Therefore, the tough life of Cho P'an-Se's family – Koreans who appear as the protagonists in *Manpozan* – and that of the writer could have coincided in many ways.<sup>45)</sup> That was probably why in *Manpozan*, the writer was able to describe quite realistically the hardships and suffering endured by the Koreans in Manchuria.

The Chinese writer Li Huiying, just like Ito Einosuke, had never been to the Wanpaoshan area and fictionalized the Wanpaoshan Incident based on documents and material. Because of the Mukden Incident and the First Battle of Shanghai, Li Huiying could not go back home nor attend school. Li Huiying, who sought to resist the enemy with her pen as her weapon, was asked by Ding Ling to write a novel about the anti-Japanese resistance in the northeastern region, which she readily accepted.

Basing herself on news reports on the Anti-Chinese Riots and the Wanpaoshan Incident, she completed her novel, *Wanpaoshan*, in less than three months. However, since she had not directly investigated the location, there was no way for her to know exactly what the social realities were in the northeastern region. In the beginning of the novel, Li Huiying portrayed this area as being a paradise before Hak Yōng-Tōk colluded with the Japanese to come to Wanpaoshan and cultivate the barren lands. The mountains and rivers were beautiful, flowers and trees blossomed, and men and women, young and old, were busy working at their fields... Everywhere, there was energy and life. However, such portrayal did not conform to the social reality of the time, during which the Chinese farmers in the northeast had to suffer oppression by both the Japanese Empire and the Chinese lords and live under hardship and poverty. Therefore, Mao Dun's critique that the novel "did not clearly express the special social circumstances of the northeastern region, which, for a long time, was under military attack and economic invasion of the Japanese Empire" seems justified.

In fact, after *Wanpaoshan* was completed, Li Huiying secretly went back to the northeastern region in July 1933 to do an investigation. She travelled across

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44) Ibid.

45) Sugimori Masaya, "Ito Einosuke's *Manpozan* and Li Huiying's *Wanpaoshan* – Images of Koreans in Japanese and Chinese Literature," *Language and Literature* 15 (1977): 21. Re-cited by Ibid., 406.

Jilin, Changchun, Harbin, Liaoning and Dalian, and then went back to Shanghai at the end of September. Based on what she had seen and heard on her travels, she wrote a series of novels and prose regarding the anti-Japanese resistance. The short story, *Good Harvest*, is one such example.

Rising tenant rent and prices, attack by bandits, destruction of homes and crops due to the war, death threats... In *Good Harvest*, Li Huiying objectively narrated the burden-ridden and unstable lives of farmers in the northeastern region of China. Compared to the novel *Wanpaoshan*, which was written based on newspaper reports without any actual field investigation, *Good Harvest*, because it was based on her actual travels across the northeastern region, expressed deeper understanding of the social realities.

Yi T'ae-Chun had the experience of traveling around Manchuria in 1938 before he wrote "Farmer". He then contributed "Record of Traveling to Migrants' Villages", a record of his travels, to the Chosun Ilbo from 8th to 21st April 1938. The year after, in 1939, the revised version was included in his collection of essays, *A Record in No Particular Order (Musŏrok)*, under the title "Record of Manchurian Travels".

In this essay, he recorded his experience of Jiangjiawopeng, which was the location where the Wanpaoshan Incident had taken place. It also contained his description of the ditch of water that had been dug by Korean farmers. In fact, there were other similarities between "Farmer" and "Record of Traveling to Migrants' Villages" when compared horizontally.

In the beginning,

You would be surprised

That there is so much land! However, whenever you come across people wearing blue and holding tools in every field, who'd look briefly at cars going past without any kind of welcoming expression whatsoever,

You would think, 'Those fields all have owners!'

Inside your tired mind, your parched dream of living there would swirl around

dizzily.<sup>46)</sup>

Narration that is very similar to the above excerpt can be found also in “Farmer”. Also, just as there were descriptions of a Korean family from Kyōngsang Province and of an elderly from Pyōng-an Province, “Farmer” also mentioned that there were old people from Hamkyōng, Kyōngsang and Pyōng-an Provinces, speaking in dialects, when Ch’angkwon’s grandfather passed away. This is not a coincidence. It makes sense to say that the novel “Farmer” was based on the essay “Record of Traveling to Migrants’ Villages”.

People are going. Ch’ang-Kwon also ran in, limping a leg. An old man. He was then shot in his side. It was the old man who was speaking in Kyōngsang provincial dialect when he closed the eyes of Ch’ang-Kwon’s grandfather as he passed away. Ch’ang-Kwon felt as if his heart was being torn apart. He would have felt better if a bullet had come and pierced a hole in his chest. He lifted the body of the old man with his two arms and ran up the hill.

“Ah!”

Ch’ang-Kwon was shocked a second time. It was a scene he had already seen in his dreams for several months. Endlessly, every paddy shone brightly under the dawning sky as if sheets of ice. Ch’ang-Kwon felt his legs buckle under him and sat down still carrying the dead body. However, he stood up again, and supported by his mother and wife. He shouted, fists jabbing the air, without knowing what he was saying. From above, there were people running down, shouting.<sup>47)</sup>

In this scene from the “Farmer”, Ch’ang-Kwon’s helpless cries conspicuously depicted the suffering and hardships of Korean farmers in Manchuria. That the transformation of fields into paddies was successful thanks to the sacrifice of Koreans was truly a heartbreaking historical fact. That was why Ch’ang-Kwon

46) Yi T’ae-Chun, *Record of Traveling to Migrants’ Villages*, 121.

47) Yi T’ae-Chun, *Farmer*, 207.

would have felt better if he had been shot in the chest since he was filled with anger and sorrow. However, what should be noticed here, is that in “Record of Traveling to Migrants’ Villages”, the writer had said that there were no casualties during the Wanpaoshan Incident. Then why did he, in “Farmer”, distort the image of Chinese farmers by having an old Korean man shot dead and Ch’ang-Kwon, the protagonist, also suffer a gun wound?

The main theme of “Farmer” was the vicissitudes faced by Korean farmers who had migrated and settled in Manchuria. Yi T’ae-Chun, who was living in colonized Korea at the time and had travelled to Manchuria only for the short period, was most likely unable to more realistically and concretely engage in issues that were unfolding in Manchuria at that time and was only able to approach Chinese farmers superficially.<sup>48)</sup> Therefore, in “Farmer”, he had added elements of literary fiction and imagination to augment the hardships of the migrants and to emphasize the difficulties of settling in Manchuria.

Unlike Yi T’ae-Chun, who lived in colonial Korea and travelled to Manchuria only briefly, An Su-Kil, who became the major Korean writer in Manchukuo, migrated to Manchuria in 1924 when he was just 13 years old. Later, he attended the Jiandao Central School, Hamhŭng High School and Seoul Kyōngsin School. He then studied in Japan, but then came back to Manchuria in February 1931 due to family issues. For 14 long years, until just two months before liberation, or June 1945, An Su-Kil spent his youth years debuting in Manchuria and focusing on writing.<sup>49)</sup> Because An Su-Kil had directly witnessed and experienced, for a long time, the life of Korean migrant farmers in Manchuria, he was able to develop a more realistic and objective perspective compared to Ito Einosuke, Li Huiying or Yi T’ae-Chun.

One needs to be cautious, though, of the fact that there is a big difference between “Farmer” and *Rice Plant* in regard to the reason why Korean farmers

48) Lee Hyun-Jeong, “Reimagining the Nation in Manchuria: The Representation of Peasant Collectivity in Chinese and Korean Discourses on the Wanpaoshan Incident (1931),” *Colonialism and Culture Series 13 – The Wanpaoshan Incident and Korea’s Modern Literature*, edited by Kim Chae-Yong (Seoul: Yōkrak Publishers, 2010), 95.

49) Yi Hae-Yōng, “An Su-Kil, a Korean-Born Writer in Manchukuo and ‘National Cooperation and Reconciliation,’” *Korean Language and Literature* 172 (2015): 396.

went to Manchuria.

In “Farmer”, the protagonist, Yu Ch’ang-Kwon was interrogated by a detective on the train leaving Korea and bound for Manchuria. As can be seen in the dialogue between the two, he had a house, fields and land but they all cost 500 won. He had been a tenant farmer but the soil was bad while the rent too high. His wife had worked at a spinning mill but everything she earned was used to pay back debt. It can be deduced that the reason by Yu Ch’ang-Kwon’s family was moving to Manchuria was because they could no longer live in Korea, showing that farmers were poor and lived difficult lives in Korea. However, in *Rice Plant*, Hong Tök-Ho left Korea with the determination that he would earn a fortune and then return home. So, he was migrating to live a better life while Pak Ch’öm-Chi had no choice but to leave his home village and go to Manchuria after having become a laughing stock due to an affair he had with a woman called Hyang-Ok. Both Hong and Pak were not leaving Korea because of poverty and destitution, and they were depicted as though they were enjoying their travels to Manchuria. This part is a stark contrast to Yi T’ae-Chun’s “Farmer”.

The reason why the two works were developed completely different from one another by the two writers was because both Yi T’ae-Chun and An Su-Kil based their stories on their own experience and also because the time of migration were fictionalized differently. Yi T’ae-Chun dealt with the migration of Korean farmers during the 1930’s in his “Farmer”, based on his own experience of having travelled across Manchuria on a train in 1938. That was why the scene where Yu Ch’ang-Kwon is interrogated by a detective on a train was depicted quite realistically, and the surroundings and the passengers on board the train in “Farmer” and “Record of Traveling to Migrants’ Villages” were described in detail. On the other hand, in the beginning of *Rice Plant*, there is a phrase, “It was two summers before the establishment of Manchukuo,” implying that the background of the novel was 1930. It is therefore possible to assume that the time Pak Ch’öm-Chi and his group migrated to Manchuria was the 1920’s, ten years before that. It coincides with the time An Su-Kil went to Manchuria, which was 1924.

Furthermore, An Su-Kil was able to see for himself the changes in Chinese government’s policy toward the Korean immigrants during his life in Manchuria.

*Rice Plant* showed this kind of change and also explained the reasons behind it.

When Pak Ch'öm-Chi and the Korean farmers first came to Manchuria, Mayor Han and Pang Ch'i-Won were friendly and gave them a lot of help. Of course, the reason why Pang Ch'i-Won gave the Korean farmers permission under favorable conditions to turn fields into paddies was not just because he had developed a liking for rice nor from understanding and thanking the Koreans. The fundamental reason was that, even in Manchuria, paddy farming was more lucrative than dry farming, and he wanted to turn the fields into paddies using a technology that the Manchurians did not have while the Koreans did. Furthermore, at the time, the Chinese government wanted to develop the barren and unpopulated lands of Manchuria, thereby strengthening national power, by using the manpower of Korean migrant farmers. But then, in order to protect the villages where many Koreans, who were Japanese citizens at the time, lived in groups, Japan established a Consulate. The Chinese considered Koreans to be puppets of the Japanese Empire and started to drive out the Korean migrants who were already in Manchuria since Chiang Kai-Shek had already succeeded in taking control of the North. In the beginning, the Chinese used moderate methods, but when they did not work, resorted to more forceful methods as long as they didn't cause problems. According to the writer, Korean migrants in Manchuria were merely sacrificial lambs. An Su-Kil, who had lived a long time in Manchuria and had direct contact with Korean migrants in Manchuria, knew all this, which is why he exposed the circumstances through *Rice Plant*, using an analogy.

There was a frog that was wading in the grounds that had formed as a result of nature's one-time mischief. Ch'ang-Su thought maybe this was the fate of the Maebongtun villagers, but he dismissed the thought immediately.

When the sun shines, the water will probably evaporate, and even if it doesn't, it was a puddle that had formed in the place that would be used as a classroom. The carpenters and the plasterers will come and take them out with their hands, or they will be forced out. So, the frogs, even if they are enjoying themselves now, will never be able to enjoy the safety of playing in the paddies or in a pond. It's



just a matter of time before they are driven and chased out.<sup>50)</sup>

Even if the frogs are enjoying themselves now playing in the puddles, the puddles have been formed temporarily due to the mischief of nature, so they can never be as safe as in paddies or a pond. Korean migrants were like these frogs. Manchuria was a just a temporary place of residence and someone else's land, so it would only be a matter of time before they were chased away. In this sense, An Su-Kil had confirmed the Chinese government's policies regarding Manchuria and as well as describing with acute insight the lives of Korean migrant farmers who were living in the periphery.

An Su-Kil, because he had lived as a migrant in Manchuria for a long time, had a realistic and objective perspective not just on Korean migrant farmers but also on Chinese landowners and officials. Thus, he was able to articulate a more complex and interlayered relationship than Ito Einosuke and Yi T'ae-Chun, who had emphasized only the national conflict between the Chinese and Koreans, and Li Huiying, who called for solidarity between Chinese and Korean farmers.

In *Rice Plant*, Korean farmers, thanks to Pang Ch'i-Won's help, were able to move and cultivate farms, showing An Su-Kil's unbiased perspective toward Chinese landlords. The writer's depiction of Mayor So, an ardent anti-Japanese, who newly came into office, was also quite unbiased.

Mayor So, an elite who had graduated from a university in Beijing and had studied political science at a university in Japan, was wary of the Koreans for being puppets of the Japanese, and in order to prevent the Japanese from using Koreans to establish a consulate and expanding their power, he ordered the construction of the school that the Maepongton Korean farmers were building to be stopped. He also told the Koreans to leave Maepongton, which they had developed with sweat and tears, and go back to Korea, as well as exerting all sorts of pressure on them by, for example, instigating a fight with the indigenous farmers and setting the school on fire. However, with regard to Mayor So, who was filled with such antagonistic nationalism, An Su-Kil tried to be as unbiased

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50) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 303.

as he could and said he was understandable from the perspective of the Chinese<sup>51</sup>), saying, “Mayor Han and Mayor Yang bought their positions with money. They, if given money, will let those who deserve to die live. If someone close asks them for a favor, they will listen however difficult it may be. Compared to those kinds of politicians, Mayor So is faithful to national policies and he’s a conscientious politician. He became mayor because he fulfilled the criteria. Of course, this is all from the Chinese perspective.”<sup>52</sup>)

As argued above, out of the novels of three countries that dealt with the Wanpaoshan Incident, *Rice Plant* was the one that had most realistically portrayed the subtle political dynamics between Korea, China and Japan<sup>53</sup>) as well as the actual lives of the Korean migrant farmers who were living at the periphery. An Su-Kil, who had lived a long time in Manchuria, had an objective stance in regard to the immigrant policy changes, lives of Korean migrant farmers, relationship between the Korean and Chinese farmers, and even in regard to Chinese landowners and officials. Such aspect is in stark contrast to Ito Einosuke, Li Huiying and Yi T’ae-Chun.

## 5. Conclusion

This article, using four novels – Ito Einosuke’s *Manpozan*, Li Huiying’s *Wanpaoshan*, Yi T’ae-Chun’s “Farmer”, and An Su-Kil’s *Rice Plant* – as main texts, analyzed the ways in which writers from Korea, Japan and China fictionalized the Wanpaoshan Incident. The writers showed huge differences in the way they responded to the incident, and we showed how the writer’s national identity, ideology, and the existence of experience and its depth were articulated in the fictionalization process of a literary work.

In terms of national identity, Ito Einosuke’s novel emphasized the contradiction

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51) An Su-Kil, *Rice Plant*, 305.

52) Yi Hae-Yöng, “An Su-Kil, a Korean-Born Writer in Manchukuo and ‘National Cooperation and Reconciliation,’” 407.

53) Kim Ho-Wung, “Comparison of Novels Dealing with the Wanpaoshan Incident from Three East Asian Countries – Focusing on An Su-Kil’s Novel, *Rice Plant*,” 214.

between the people of China and Korea, while substantially hiding the organized involvement of the Japanese. As a Japanese writer, he could not but show his imperialistic perspective. Li Huiying, a Chinese writer, in her novel *Wanpaoshan*, directly depicted the ambitions of the Japanese Empire in plotting a territorial invasion, at the same time, portraying the Chinese farmers as calm and brave. They were also quite determined to resist and gain victory over the Japanese Empire. Yi T'ae-Chun, as a Korean writer, focused on the history of suffering endured by the Korean farmers who had migrated to Manchuria in the novel "Farmer", while An Su-Kil, a Korean like Yi T'ae-Chun, but having debuted in Manchuria and established himself as the leading Korean-born writer in Manchukuo, manifested his national identity as a Manchurian. Through *Rice Plant*, An showed the strong determination of Korean migrant farmers to settle down in Manchuria.

Seen through the lens of ideology, Ito Einosuke, a Japanese proletarian writer, had an unbiased perspective and insight into the doubly difficult lives of Korean migrant farmers stuck between Japan and China, which he depicted realistically. However, he focused only on the suffering of Korean farmers, while grouping Chinese farmers and officials together and then setting up the two sides to be conflicting with one another. He showed limitations in the sense that he did not show proletarian international solidarity but rather his imperialist perspective. Li Huiying, a member of a left-wing writers group, fictionalized the national contradiction between Korean and Chinese farmers transitioning into a class conflict, and the united front between broad oppressed classes transitioning into a joint anti-Japan struggle by the peasant class. In the meantime, highly aware of the censorship imposed by Japan, Yi T'ae-Chun intentionally left out Japan in "Farmer", showing his national consciousness. In *Rice Plant*, An Su-Kil asked the question, "How have you lived?" and tried to find the answers to the question "How are you going to live?" through the lives of the Korean migrant farmers, and the major theme that could be found across his entire work was survivalism of the Korean migrant farmers in Manchuria.

In terms of whether or not the writer had experience and if so, at what depth, Ito Einosuke, who had never been to Wanpaoshan region relied on news reports and magazine articles to write *Manpozan*. The reason why even though he had

not experienced Manchuria but was nonetheless able to realistically depict the difficulties and suffering of Koreans in Manchuria in *Manpozan* was because in the beginning of 1930's, there was extensive poor harvest in the northeastern region of Japan, which was his home, and he had directly witnessed and experienced rural poverty at the time. The Chinese writer Li Huiying, like Ito Einosuke, had never been to the location of the incident and wrote about the Wanpaoshan Incident based on various materials. Since Li could not have known the social reality of the northeastern region at the time, Mao Dun's sharp criticism that the novel "did not clearly express the special social circumstances of the northeastern region, which, for a long time, was under military attack and economic invasion of the Japanese empire" seems justified. Yi T'ae-Chun, who was living in colonial Korea and had traveled to Manchuria only for a short period, articulated as his central theme in "Farmer" the history of Korean farmers settling down in Manchuria. Unlike Yi T'ae-Chun, An Su-Kil had spent his childhood in Manchuria and had, for a long time, witnessed and deeply experienced the lives of Korean migrant farmers. Thus, he was able to see the changes in the immigration policies in Manchuria and the lives of Korean migrant farmers, and was able to develop an unbiased perspective and deep understanding toward Chinese landowners and officials.

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