

Time of Capital, Time of a Nation: Changes in Korean Intellectual Media in the 1960s-1970s

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the relationship between the form of knowledge and the time consciousness that have been reified through Changjak-gwa bipyeong, a quarterly literary magazine that has been published continuously since its first issue in 1966. Changjak-gwa bipyeong adopted a form of historical writing that attempted to recover the colonialist perception of history, advancing the theory of internal development as its main theme. This paper calls its historical consciousness “time of a nation”—a consciousness that meaningful capitalist development or modernization must be initiated by a nation not by a ruling political power or specific class. In the 1970s, the key writers of Changjak-gwa bipyeong took a stand against the trend that supported the urban- and elites-centered literature and advanced the “theory of peasant literature” (nongmin munhangnon) and contributed to forming the framework of “the people and the intellectual.” The intellectual movements led by Changjak-gwa bipyeong in this period highlighted critics and historians with adequate historical consciousness as the most awakened citizens and, thus, emphasized the need for persistent critical writing as a vital practice for intellectuals.

Keywords: time of capital, time of a nation, *Changjak-gwa bipyeong* (*Changbi*), *Cheongmaek*, Paik Nak-chung, theory of internal development, Kim Yong-Sup, Silhak, capitalism, Korean division system, South Korea

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The Leitmotif of the Time of Capital

In the 1960s and 1970s, literary criticism, which revolved around the notion of the temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) of the here and now, and historical writing expounding the so-called internal development theory,¹ held that Korea had the capacity to modernize on its own in the transition period of the nineteenth into the twentieth century. At this time, through the commitment of various academic communities of Korean studies, which were established by colleges and intellectual journals such as *Sasangye* (World of Thought), *Cheongmaek* (Blue Mountains), and *Changjak-gwa bipyeong* (Creation and Criticism; hereafter *Changbi*), knowledge about Korean history and culture was taking shape and being fleshed out. The intellectual journal *Changbi* took this approach. Focusing on the encounter of literary criticism and historical studies in *Changbi*, this paper attempts to outline how intellectuals' empirical cognition (*emirische Erkenntnis*) and inter-contextualization of Korean society in the 1960s-1970s led to the recent debates over colonial modernity.

As is widely agreed, a specific social relationship derived from capitalism drastically expanded and was generalized in Korean society under Park Chung-hee's regime. In this sense, economic development rose to its highest point thus far in Korean modern history (B. Kim 2005, 1); capitalism was finally accepted as a regulatory power to supervise and control society, history, and livelihoods of the individuals. After that, state-initiated modernization quickly polarized Korean society into urban and rural. Social and individual experiences and changes during this time were understood within the framework of such capitalist terms as growth, bankruptcy, collapse, or backwardness. In particular, it seemed that the term "capital" itself, which sym-

1. For a review on the term "internal development theory" from its emergence to the recent studies, see Y. Lee (2011). For the recent criticism from the colonial modernists and de-colonialists against the internal development theory, see C. Park (2007). For a perspective that sees the development of the Korean historical studies leading to the populism-based history studies as a historical movement and Korean transformation of Marxism-based history studies, see J. Kim (2010).

bolized money as an index of macro-economy, became an independent and dominant facet that determined the change and orientation of society. TV news broadcast in the 1960s and 1970s that featured President Park Chung-hee showing prosperity through such economic indices as GDP, GNP or export volumes bears this out. The notion that the larger the indices, the richer the individual enthralled the public as well as the ruling class, and worked as such a powerful norm as to bring about the rapid economic development called the “Miracle on the Hangang River.” I call this period, when these symbols of capitalist experiences and perception became the leitmotif of the history and livelihood of a state, a nation, and an individual, the “time of capital.” According to this concept, the 1960s-1970s in Korea can be considered as the time period when the “time of capital” began to be recognized as a leitmotif with regard to the community of the here and now and its history. However, the question to ask is whether the leitmotif was used to tame dissention or to justify dissonance. By comprehending how the leitmotif was used in the “time of capital,” it becomes possible to imagine and create another consciousness of time.

Here, I recollect Paik Nak-chung’s postscript in vol. 10 of *Changbi* published in 1968; in it, he wrote that economic growth did not always result in an expansion of a culture that lays a foundation for democracy (Paik 1968), which simply meant that the expected outcome for the “time of capital” had not been realized. The “modernization of the fatherland” project initiated by Park Chung-hee’s regime should have been boosted by the overturning of the April 19 Revolution. The time of democracy was retreating. Another democratic revolution would not be possible without changing the index of time to measure social reform.

This paper is an attempt to trace the genealogy of the Korean humanities communities, which have been committed to creating an alternative time consciousness to replace the “time of capital.” The colonial modernization theory and the colonial exploitation theory—two sources of current controversy among the Korean academic circles of the humanities and social sciences—took root in the 1960s-

1970s. Moreover, the debates over social formation that started in the mid-1980s and ended by the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialism, the more recent debates over '87 Regime Theory versus '97 Regime Theory, and the discourse on the modern temporality—which could be perceived only when capitalism is associated with community—also have their roots in the 1960s-1970s.

A common thread runs through these discourses: they all intend to reproduce the deterritorialized movement of capital in the form of space-community experience. Advocates of the '97 Regime Theory maintain that the 1997 financial crisis in Korea has been the most critical influence in the subsequent changes in Korean society, whereas the advocates of the '87 Regime Theory view the year of 1987, when the democracy movement came to fruition, as more significant in shaping the historical and social landscape. The reason for this is because capital is expressed in terms of an inauthentic form of globalization; while democracy, which can be symbolized by the square, is the cardinal agenda of a nation-state with a clear boundary. The major writers of *Changbi* support the '87 Regime Theory and insist that, for an advanced understanding of the '87 Regime, there must be an understanding of the relationship between the '87 Regime and the Korean division system (J. Kim 2009; Paik 2009). Paik Nak-chung put forward the theory of the division system and has argued that since the hostile South and North states have developed differently, the democracy movement deployed in the South in 1987 and the subsequent changes in Korean society must be understood in conjunction with the Korean division system. This approach calls for attention to be directed not to the dynamics working on the South-North relationship, but to South Korea itself, which was affected by such dynamics. Paik Nak-chung stressed the importance of South Korea as a capitalist society in his “theory of citizen literature” (*simin munhangnon*) published in 1969 (Paik 1969), as he mentioned the April 19 Revolution was limited to South Korea and its urban areas. The historical process and the effect of the division and the experience of colonization and decolonization as the historical origin of the division, could

be analyzed only when the identity of South Korea is clearly recognized as a capitalist society. Here, a “nation” is understood as a modern subject that has the common history of colonization and division beyond the category of post-history. In addition, the nation emerges as a subject that has a will to control and plan the “time of capital” as well as an object influenced by it. In this way, the “time of a nation” is developed as a new leitmotif in history. In summary, through the encounter between historical writing on the theory of internal development and literary criticism, the writers of *Changbi* integrated the subject of history with that of criticism, and then created the “time of a nation” into a leitmotif that would replace the “time of capital.”

Post-April 19 Revolution: Structural Changes in Intellectual Journals and *Changbi*

Lee Gyeong-ran has elaborated on the contribution of *Sasanggye* and *Changbi* to popularizing historical studies and discourses in the 1950s and 1960s (G. Lee 2010). According to her, the members of the Korean Historical Association (Yeoksa Hakhoe), established after the Korean War, participated in the writing and editing of *Sasanggye* in the 1950s. They presented a democratic theory and a modernization theory, drawing upon the modernization model or the democratic model from the West. In order to overcome colonialism-based historical studies as well as construct Korean historical studies independently either from the academia of Western history or Oriental history, scholars established the Association for Korean Historical Studies (Hanguksa Yeonguhoe) in 1967. They advanced their own historical discourse on the theory of “internal development” and “perception of history in the age of division,” which could then be communicated to the public elite, including the scholars of other disciplines, through *Changbi*.

Despite the voluminous research, historians have tended to assume that the theory of internal development has been part of an intrinsic process in the interpretation of Korean history. On the con-

trary, the study of Lee Gyeong-ran puts emphasis on the role of media, —as an institutional and personal foundation— in the formation, propagation, and effects of historical consciousness, built on the methodologies of socioeconomic history. There is, however, a question that remains to be explored: why did Korean historians, who had striven to find the seeds of capitalism or spontaneous efforts for modernization in Korean society in the transitional period from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, resort to *Changbi*, a literary magazine? To answer the question, we need to break down the 1960s, the age of the post-April 19 Revolution, into several small periods and focus on the dominant type of knowledge and changes in media during each period.

Kim Jeong-in argued that the theory of internal development opened up a new flow of populism-based historical studies that focused on the resurrection of resistant nationalism and a questioning of anticommunism, triggered by the April 19 Revolution. Kim's argument is even more persuasive when taking into account other events that occurred after the April 19 Revolution. In early 1972, *Sipgu segi-ui hanguk sahoe* (Korean Society of the 19th Century)² was published as the outcome of the first joint research carried out by historians exploring internal development. In the publication's preface, Lee Woo-seong, the organizer of the joint research and a master of Silhak (practical learning), defined their identities as "young historians emerging after Korean independence in 1945, particularly after the Korean War" and stated the rationale for their joint research as follows: "with the colonialism-based historical studies and a nihilistic sense of defeat prevalent among the intelligentsia under the agitated and disturbed social atmosphere after the peninsula was divided, we were in urgent and utmost need of a progressive and independent understanding of our history" (W. Lee 1972). Even though they could not write about it, they may have thought that the April 19 Revolution, which opened

2. Kim Yong-Sup, Kim Young-ho, Kang Man-gil, and Jung Seok-Jong joined in the writing. The paper argued that the embryo of capitalism was inherent in the agricultural, crafts, commerce, market, and caste system in the nineteenth century.

up the field for a progressive and independent understanding of history, was eventually aborted due to the Yushin dictatorship in 1972 by the leaders of the May 16 military coup in 1961 and that this meant the regression of history. These historians hoped that the nihilistic vision of the nation could be cast away through a discovery of an alternative approach to history.

President Park Chung-hee, who consolidated his dictatorship and finally established the Yushin regime in October 1972, gradually repressed forums such as *Minjok ilbo*, *Cheongmaek*, and *Sasanggye*, where intellectuals attempted to transfer contemporary issues into an agenda for resistant nationalism. The journals were forced to adapt. Intellectuals had not been called to use historical writing as a vehicle for the resistance movement until the time when their ideas clashed with the modernization movement initiated by the Park administration. It was not until the forums, inspired by the April 19 Revolution, were destroyed by allegations of spying and intellectuals were indicted for their writings that historical writing began its mission as a medium of intellectuals' resistance movement.³ Arriving on the intellectual scene later than *Sasanggye* or *Cheongmaek*, *Changbi* took on the mission and established itself as the emblem of the mission at the same time.

Changbi, self-defined as a literature-centered journal, was first published in 1966 and developed at a time when there was disunity among intellectuals affected by the Park Chung-hee regime. Also, the relevant media was undergoing change. According to Kim Kunwoo, Korean intellectuals were divided into the active participants in the modernization movement initiated by Park's regime and those in academic disciplines secluded from and independent of politics. He

3. *Minjok ilbo* had been founded on February 11, 1961 and ceased publication on May 18, 1961, when the military forces leading the coup imposed censorship of the media and the journal's president, Cho Yong-su, was executed. *Cheongmaek* was founded in 1964 and ceased publication in 1967 as it was accused of being involved with Tonghyeokdang, allegedly the largest spy organization after the Korean War. As a result, the publishers were executed. *Sasanggye*, founded in 1953, was shut down in May 1970 for publishing Kim Ji-ha's poem "Ojeok" (Five Enemies).

pointed out that magazines like *Sasanggye* in which literature was treated on the same footing as politics and economics could not appear anymore. That also meant that the position of literature in Korean society had changed. In Korea, the institutional space for the autonomy of literature was established in the context of “criticism of modernization.” This was true for *Munhak-gwa jiseong* (Literature and Intelligence), which stressed the importance of literary autonomy more than *Changbi* (K. Kim 2003, 130). In other words, while a powerful elite group carried forward the Park administration’s state-initiated modernization and produced an ideology serving to account for it, new intellectuals were allowed to achieve their social aims only in the arena of writing. The authority of the latter was permitted only through criticism or critique of modernization because nothing else remained but criticism or critique for Korea’s intellectuals.

Changbi responded to this situation by turning studies on history into a stepping stone for the intellectual resistance movement. Paik Nak-chung wrote in the editor’s comments in vol. 10 of *Changbi* that he planned to persistently publish papers concerned with the rediscovery of Korean history and Korean philosophies. Then, *Changbi* (vol. 24, summer 1972) made a declaration by stating: “we will more earnestly touch on the efforts that have been made to eliminate the remaining feudal system formed during the Joseon dynasty and Japanese colonialism and then construct an authentic civil modern society.”⁴

The analysis of Kim Dong-Choon provides useful insights on what was happening. He argued that from the late 1960s to the late 1970s, a period dominated by the Cold War order armed with a state ideology, discussion in the social sciences overwhelmingly favored liberalism and a capitalistic economic system and, as such, served as a massive fanfare to advertise Korea’s advantageous position as one of the few countries chosen by the First World nations for its econom-

4. “Editor’s Comment,” *Changbi* 24 (1972). For a general review on the contents of *Changbi* reflecting the network with the Korean history studies that presented the theory of internal development, see G. Lee (2010, 365-377).

ic achievements” (D. Kim 1996, 84-85). Kim also added that “except for novels or literary criticism, most of the space in *Changbi* was devoted to critiques on religion, history, or international affairs, which came in the form of metaphors, similes, or intimations of another reality” (1996, 85). Of course, it does not mean that *Changbi* totally excluded the debates carried out in the circle of social sciences.

Since its foundation, *Changbi* has paid continuous attention to the Marxist-based literary criticism and social sciences of the West. The authoritative works by Marxist literary critics such as Raymond Williams and Arnold Hauser made their debuts in Korea through *Changbi*. Works on the sociology of Mills Wright and the writings of economist Gunnar Myrdal were also translated and introduced in *Changbi*. Wright emphasized the mission of intellectuals and criticized the structure of U.S. society. Myrdal addressed the poverty of Asia and the development problems of underdeveloped countries. These writings served as central references and sources of inspiration for contemporary intellectuals to more deeply understand Korean society and its history. However, the subjects of these Western works dealt with neither Korean society nor its history. The historians, who played the most prominent role in the journal, advocated a scientific approach to history and adopted a socioeconomic methodology. Nevertheless, their research focused on the history of the late nineteenth century or the early twentieth century. Discourses over Korean modern history after independence and division and over contemporary Korean society and life unfolded through literary criticism rather than through the discipline of history. In this sense, literary criticism played a major role in analyzing and understanding Korean modern society through application of the social sciences.⁵

It is worth noting that the history of the intellectual media before the appearance of *Changbi* in the arena of the social sciences was *Cheongmaek*, which published its first issue in August 1964. The

5. For reference, *Changbi* began to adopt the writings on Korean society and its history from the field of social sciences in the mid- and late 1980s when the debate over Korean social formation was started. See D. Kim (1996, 87).

journal claimed to follow in the spirit of the “square” where students staged a protest movement against the Korean-Japanese summit on June 3 in 1964 and was mainly concerned with the social sciences rather than history or literature.⁶ Expanding upon Kim Kunwoo’s view regarding the nature of the intellectual media following *Sasanggye*, it may be said that *Cheongmaek* and *Changbi* took over two aspects of *Sasanggye*: social sciences (politics and economy) and humanities (literature and history), respectively.

Among some of the economic, social, and educational issues at its thematic center, *Cheongmaek* placed the Korean-Japanese summit, party politics of Korea, the stratification system of Korean society, and capitalism and nationalism in less developed countries. The journal had a plethora of writers ranging from officials working for the survey division of the Bank of Korea, economists who were in charge of economic policy in the Park administration, sociologists, political scientists from colleges, and journalists writing on international affairs. The socioscientific themes advanced by *Cheongmaek* were epitomized by the following feature: the journal construed the modernization theory, which served as a powerful ideology underpinning the economic development during the consolidation of Park Chung-hee’s regime, as the comprador capital theory or the national capital theory. Understanding the process of colonization not only from the perspective of political rule but also as the flow of foreign capital, *Cheongmaek* emphasized the continuity between the colonial era and Korean society of the 1960s, which was dependent on assistance and loan capital. The journal sketched out a sociohistoric image of South Korea where different temporalities overlapped.

Cheongmaek portrayed South Korean society as one with additional contradictions because, on top of the basic properties of the economic order formed in the colonial era, the country persistently

6. In a conversation with Cheon Jeong-hwan, he suggested that *Cheongmaek* showed how Korean social sciences were formed in their own autonomous fashion, different from that of the West. I would agree with him; however, a detailed analysis of the social scientists of *Cheongmaek* and their research themes and viewpoints is reserved for a future study.

depended on foreign capital. The social science underlying *Cheongmaek* established a basic motif for the theory of national economy, which agreed with the perception of history based on the theory of internal development. Another noteworthy item on the social science agenda in *Cheongmaek* was unification. *Cheongmaek's* writers criticized Korean society and the political culture for having failed to take on the important task of the South-North unification and exposed the attitudes of South Koreans that became established after the Korean War. During the 1960s, when politically weak nations wished to gain access to power by melting the Cold War tension, based not on ideology but pursuing the nation's own interest,⁷ *Cheongmaek's* agenda focused on the "society of South Korea" frozen by the Cold War atmosphere and called attention to its efforts for decolonization including democratic advancement. However, the debates had to be limited. Criticism against the contemporary political situation had to be restricted to the issue of the liquidation of colonial legacies and economic development.

Following from these intellectual debates in the 1950s and 1960s, *Changbi* maintained similar lines of thinking, yet in modified form. The journal published a spate of historical writings that concerned the transitional period of the nineteenth to the twentieth century (also called an age of internal development), as well as literary criticism that used literary works as a filtering device. This freed the journal from the limitations of the state agenda. However, the leitmotif of historical writing and literary criticism gaining ascendancy in the 1960s went through an ideological adjustment as the intellectuals wavered in their thinking with the fluctuating political situation of South Korea. Briefly, a clear direction became apparent in the assumption or establishment of a theory that the development of capitalism depended on the dissolution of feudal relations of production and the caste system, the emergence of a republican constitution, and

7. It is worth emphasizing the fact that the relaxation of the Cold War system, one of the changes in the international order in the 1960s, did not directly mean a creation of a peaceful mood. Continuous civil wars with national liberation movements in conflict with the United States made the Third World oppressed and unstable.

the expansion of democracy. This suggested that an analytical description of modern society and a political proposal for the government in relation to modernization became the norm and the rule universally applied to history and human beings. Critics, however, realized that this kind of historical approach was one of Western-centric or teleological modernism, which regarded the Western model of the United Kingdom's Industrial Revolution or the French Revolution as the norm. This approach shed little light on the fact that people's perception of history is formed through complex interactions of the contemporary physical environment, social relations, and intellectual exchanges. Such a perception of history was made possible because the time of capital and the time of democracy never arrived simultaneously.

Time of a Nation: Subjects of History and Criticism

In the previous section, I argued that *Changbi* gave intellectuals a forum for debate, which had been corroded with the more explicit antidemocratic nature of the Park Chung-hee regime. However, we need to remember that the regime justified its antirevolutionary position through attaining brilliant economic growth, which existed in austere counterpoint to the political silencing of intellectuals. Considering this situation, it is understandable why intellectuals wished to move away from a "time of capital" and build a "time of a nation" and why literary criticism turned its attention to rural instead of urban areas.

Annual economic growth on average in the 1960s reached 8.3 percent, and exports were greatly increased from 1965. The national income per capita jumped from US\$83.6 in 1962 to US\$123.5 in 1967. Various indices attested to this economic growth. Korea dispatched its troops to Vietnam and concluded an agreement with Japan, both moves encouraged and backed by the United States. Editor Paik Nak-chung pointed out that the influx of foreign capital in return for sending troops into Vietnam and the signing of the Korea-Japan Agree-

ment created a distorted growth of the government-funded broadcasting media while at the same time constricted the liberal expression of intellectuals. He implied that economic growth did not necessarily lead to democracy, contrary to his expectations. This self-realization was reflected in his Editor's Comments, which were largely devoted to a critique of *Bullyegi* (Bullye's Story). In his critique, he eloquently vindicated the controversial full-length novel published serially by Bang Yeong-ung. The critique proceeded with a description as follows: the rural community, which was completely excluded from historical time, "was a space where most of the Korean people live from hand to mouth, isolated from the notions of an active creation of history or a will to develop society." He also argued that, despite the slogan of "modernization of rural communities," the gap between rural and urban areas was even wider than in the 1930s. To quote Paik:

The deformed rural village depicted in *Bullyegi* was directly affected by the existence of Seoul, also a deformed city. The deformation of the rural area is characterized by its complete isolation. Likewise, the deformation of Seoul resulted from the lack of an organic bond with rural areas. A normal city originates from rural areas, its economic and cultural ground, and acts as a center for intensive use of the social and cultural resources demanded and allowed by the ground. However, many cities of underdeveloped countries, including Seoul, are just hectic and disconnected from their inherent roots. This is comparable to the Chinese merchants named comprador merchants in the late nineteenth century as they acted as if they were not Chinese people (Paik 1968, 347-348).

Kim Woo-chang said that *Bullyegi* depicted "the natural state before [Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of] the knowledge of good and evil"⁸ and added, "As change in Korean society was encapsulated by the shift in the central experience from rural to urban areas,

8. Kim Woo-chang, "Gyeonghyang dareun dugae-ui nongchon soseol" (Two Rural Novels with Different Ideologies), *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 22, 1967.

and the experience of cities became the engine to move Korean society, how to reify it was one of the primary themes of contemporary literature.” Paik Nak-chung was the only critic who argued that the reality of modernization was hidden within the novel depicting the hapless destiny of a rural woman and the life and manners of the poor rustic people. According to Paik, the world in *Bullyegi* reversely mirrored the deformed cities churned out by modernization and exposed the severing of the bond between rural and urban areas. In this sense, some critics viewed *Bullyegi* as a peasant novel that decried the violence of crippling modernization (J. Park 2007), while others argued that it showed the negative attitudes held against the development initiated by the Park administration (Kwon 2010, 300-305) by emphasizing the non-historicity and filthiness of the rural areas at the time. Either of the two can be considered as successors to the legacy of Paik Nak-chung’s critiques. Through strong support for *Bullyegi*, Paik attempted to react against the new critics of his generation, which emerged after the April 19 Revolution and put a premium on the experiences of urban intellectuals as a literary theme.

In Korea, the modern novel in the form of *bildungsroman* (self-formation novel) emerged in the 1960s when the economic foundation, population, culture, and education centered on Seoul. This form followed from Lukacs’ definition of the modern novel as a male genre, which was further developed by Franco Moretti. Kim Sung-ok’s short story “Mujin gihaeng” (Journey to Mujin), one of the most representative short stories from the 1960s, shows that the protagonist of the short story returning to Seoul where his wife and father-in-law operate a mid-sized company. Though he feels guilty for abandoning his roots and feels humiliated by adapting himself to the managed society, his move is considered the entrance into the symbolic order in Lacanian sense, instead of a mere submission to the material world.⁹ Critics,

9. See Kim Sung-ok, “Mujin gihaeng” (Journey to Mujin), *Sasanggye* (October 1964). Kim Sung-ok became one of the most famous writers in the 1960s through this work. In 1964 when this work was published, the National Development Plan was established in order to decentralize population concentrated around Seoul and big cities.

such as Kim Hyun, Kim Chi-su, and Kim Ju-yeon, whose viewpoints differed from those expressed in *Changbi*, formed the group of *Munji*, an acronym of *Munhak-gwa jiseong* (Literature and Intelligence). Kim Seung-ok's novel addressed in a literary way the confined life, desperation, and fatigue felt in the managed society of the individual, whose literary consciousness was named "the petit bourgeois consciousness" by the critics of the *Munji* group. Compared to the literature of the previous generation that had been overwhelmed by the collective experience of the Korean War, Kim Seung-ok's novel was considered superior in terms of literary modernity. Incredibly, South Korean society's standard of normality worked within such a narrow framework that intellectuals were able to find their place only within aesthetic compensations or linguistic transformation. In this sense, their critiques were more tied to the sociopolitical reality of South Korea than those of *Changbi*. By demonstrating its inevitability in the world of language, they attempted to alleviate the anxiety that arose from the situation where cases proving that a departure from normality led to a distressed result were accumulated.

As is shown in his "theory of citizen literature" in 1969, Paik Nak-chung's interpretation of the April 19 Revolution, which began with a comment on the debate over petit bourgeois, strongly criticized the critics of the *Munji* group for their lack of political consciousness. He argued that the April 19 Revolution, which had laid the foundation for the theory of "empirical cognition" (*empirische Erkenntnis*) for the intellectuals of the 1960s in establishing their identities, was limited only to the southern part of the Military Demarcation Line, mainly to urban areas, and was backed up by the support of the United States.¹⁰ His argument called attention to the fact that the revolution broke out in Seoul, the central city that produced the standard for normality during the progress of division with the intervention of foreign powers. Through this, he warned against the attempt to sever the temporality of the here and now from the history of Korea and absolutize it. For those who understood that the

10. Refer to Paik (1969, 495-497).

April 19 Revolution was part of chain in the historical and political process that included South Korea, city, and foreign powers, the aim was to deconstruct that chain. From the viewpoint of productive force determinism, Paik suggested prerequisites for the possible deconstruction of the chain as following: 1) advanced industrialization and globalization that would enable a spillover of the material and cultural abundance of urban areas into rural communities; or 2) dissolution of the duality of modernity through the global amelioration of the plight of the poor.¹¹ However, this condition would only be manifested where there existed a “sense of citizenship.” A sense of citizenship could be epitomized by the principle, “a citizen is neither enslaved by others nor enslaves them” and must be applied to the relations between urban and rural people (Paik 1969, 476-477). This statement should hold true in any period of modern world history, including Western European history, spanning from the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. Nevertheless, such a sense of authentic citizenship did not manifest itself even in Europe because of imperialism. European countries had conquered and ruled many colonies. Without self-awareness and self-criticism regarding the colonial empires that they battled for and built in Asian countries, an authentic sense of citizenship could be achieved in Western Europe.

Ironically, South Korea, with its history of colonial rule and division caused by Cold War politics of the new global powers, has the potential to develop genuine citizenship. This cannot be achieved without effort; only through historical criticism can a sense of citizenship be established. Paik’s “theory of citizen literature” encompassed the historical criticism that included the April 19 Revolution, the 1919 Independence Movement, and even the Peasant War of 1894 as in-

11. Paik (1969, 509) wrote, “As the entire globe becomes one world and material destitution is gradually overcome, the differences between citizens and farmers, citizens and subjects, and global citizens and people are accordingly blurred or further deformed. Thus, we cannot affirm that the most advanced sense of citizenship must be located not in rural areas but in cities, or not in weak nations but in strong nations.”

evitable components. Historical criticism, builds on a belief that we can critically alter human behavior and build awareness even though we cannot change the past. Within historical criticism, there exists a desire for the manifestation of the ideal human being, which, like the notion of “an authentic citizen,” has yet to be realized.

Paik Nak-chung’s “theory of citizen literature” clearly identifies the history perception ultimately gained by adding an extrapolation of critique to *Bullyegi*, which features non-temporality excepting time of fortune: a recognition of the social collectivity, influenced by the time of capital acting unevenly according to space and time, and of diachronic collectivity. Here, the time of a nation becomes a powerful leitmotif for historical writing and literary criticism because it grants a norm to the time of capital that acts unevenly according to space and time and also points out the one who should implement the norm.

In the 1970s, the Park Chung-hee administration’s New Village Movement (Saemaoul Undong) for modernizing rural areas started. Around this time, *Changbi* paid special attention to peasant literature as well as acknowledged the historical perception of the internal development theory. The critical achievements of *Changbi* following the “theory of citizen literature” were continued through Yeom Muwoong’s “Nongchon hyeonsil-gwa oneul-ui munhak” (The Reality of Rural Areas and Today’s Literature) and Shin Kyong-Nim’s “Nongchon hyeonsil-gwa nongmin munhak” (The Reality of Rural Areas and Peasant Literature). Particularly, Shin Kyong-Nim pointed to an awareness of the rural area as shown in Paik’s critique of *Bullyegi* by saying, “today’s rural areas are acting as a double colony; an internal colony of urban areas and a colony oppressed by foreign capital, in accordance with the progression of the *Schere*¹² phenomenon, stemming from the structural flaws of the capitalist economy” (Shin 1972, 269). Shin Kyong-Nim discussed the formation process of the Korean modern agricultural areas by tracing historical events such as the

12. A German word meaning “scissors.” In this citation, the word is used to refer to the phenomenon in which the gap of price between industrial products and agricultural products increasingly grows in tandem with capitalist development.

land survey project led by the Japanese colonial Government General of Joseon from 1910 to 1919, the takeover of land to build a Japanese military logistics base after 1937, the agrarian reform after liberation, and the more recent New Village Movement. From his viewpoint, the rural problems created by colonial rule still remained in a modified form because of the harsh poverty and the silencing of farmers. He criticized an attempt to attribute farmers' poverty to their laziness and ignorance. Particularly, he argued that, after the Korean War, speaking out on agricultural problems had been forbidden, as the agricultural areas had fallen victim to conflicting ideologies after liberation.

The confrontation between the two ideologies. . . . Those who should have kept their silence with the defeat of Japanese imperialism started raising their voices, while those who should have been at the head secluded themselves in a deep and dark silence. Accordingly, literary attention to the rural situation withered away. Under the changed environment, concern for rural communities was stymied by an attempt to divide the nation while only the literary elites with the same consciousness or mindset as those of Paris, London, or New York had a voice. Finally, the end of agricultural literature was declared when the Korean War broke out (Shin 1972, 283).

Shin Kyong-Nim also argued that as pro-Japanese Koreans joined the ruling classes leveraging the Cold War situation, the ideological confrontation was intensified and rural communities were subsequently damaged. He insisted that "the farmers who were able to enjoy their freedom after liberation from the long-time oppression of Japanese colonialism began to take part in political life" (Shin 1972, 269), but the following "atrocious persecution of them by the political powers" (Shin 1972, 269), silenced their voices and forbade any mention of rural problems. This quotation suggests that in tandem with the extensive oppression of the left-wing political factions organized after the liberation in 1945, existing political powers began to label the farmers as national disruptors. Coincidentally, Cho Bong-am, who from Shin's viewpoint was a failure as a designer and administrator

of agrarian reform, was sentenced to death in 1959 for criminal espionage by Rhee Syngman's administration, the very administration that selected Cho as the first Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. Although Shin Kyong-Nim did not elucidate, the taboo on discussing rural problems was equal to the taboo on discussing progressive ideology and prodemocratic activities. This prohibition made it difficult to include rural communities thematically in literature, which led to the dominance of the literary elites whose preferences were for the urban culture of the West. In actuality, however, rural culture, with its scars and contradictions resulting from colonization, liberation, war, and division, was the "embodiment of the reality of Korea" (Shin 1972, 269). In spite of this, the experience of the urban- and Western-oriented elites dominated Korean literature. To summarize, intellectuals should have been aware of the underlying urban- and Western-centered bias and orientation in their historical writing. By tracing the historical process of change in the rural communities and farmers' lives, they would be able to reflect upon and develop a genuine understanding of a national history from a different perspective that incorporated the themes of colonization, decolonization, the Korean War, and the division.

Intellectuals between the State and the People: The Subtext of Silhak Studies

Here, the subject of criticism and the subject of history come together. Only through inclusion of the rural communities and farmers could the historical development of the premodern period, the transition to modern society, and the period of the 1970s be shown.¹³ That

13. Without developing an actual ideological connection with rural areas and farmers, the Park administration would have had difficulty making the people perceive the urban-centered industrialization and modernization for improving productivity as the major national priorities. Although the New Village Movement's original aim was to strengthen the political bedrock of the administration's support in the rural areas, which had been weakened by the urban- and industry-centered economic

is why the “theory of citizen literature,” which had been established through the critique of *Bullyegi*, could evolve into the “theory of peasant literature” (*nongmin munhangnon*). For the same reason, Kim Yong-Sup’s studies on the agricultural history in the late Joseon period gained prominence. Kim, a seminal scholar of the internal development theory tradition, brought all his scholarly writings of the 1960s together in the two volumes of *Joseon hugi nongeopsa yeongu* (Studies on the Agricultural History of the Late Joseon Period). Chung Seungjin (2009) recently evaluated the historical knowledge condensed in the two books as follows: “The author clearly establishes and applies the theory of the embryo of capitalism, which holds that the capitalist relation overcomes the various contradictions of the feudal system through the dynamic dialectic of productivity and the relations of production (commercialized agriculture and managerial wealthy farmers) and is spontaneously created, to the late Joseon period.” His historical viewpoint is reflected in the “theory of basis and superstructure that attempts to identify the economic (mainly agricultural), social, and ideological changes based on the premise of feudalism in an economic sense.”¹⁴ Continuing, Chung stated: “Kim Yong-Sup’s radical ‘theory of primitive accumulation’ was positioned as one of the nationalism-based history studies as he linked the theory of agricultural technology presented in his ‘Yeongu II’ (Studies II) and the theory of the Silhak trend. It was an interesting process of metamorphosis in terms of ideologies born by the division and the

development, the ideological effect of the movement may not have been limited only to the rural areas and farmers, given that most of the urban laborers had flowed in from rural villages. The New Village Movement created an effective symbol for a national economic unit composed of rural and urban areas. In addition, it succeeded in creating a collectivized personality that reflected labor ideologies through the motto of “diligence, self-reliance, and collaboration,” although contempt for physical labor at factories was not eliminated in spite of the industrial progress. President Park succeeded in concealing realities with positive political images (in one such instance, he was seen planting rice with farmers). Behind the gestures and performances of President Park Chung-hee was the fact that factory workers labored under the miserable conditions of low wages and harsh treatment.

14. Refer to Chung (2009).

Cold War system.” Chung concluded that the theory of primitive accumulation was no longer considered to be drastic and, as a result, the way for nationalistic modernization was sought as a result. This argument suggests that Kim Yong-Sup’s study on the agricultural economy replaced the orientation towards social revolution through class strife, or radical transformation of the relations of production inherent in the Marxism-based history studies, with a proposal for political and technological reform and national or social convergence. He provisionally considered the state as a body of authority that sets the national agenda and enforces it—an idea embodied by his study on the nationwide land survey conducted in the Gwangmu era (Gwangmu Yangjeon 光武量田) initiated by the Great Han Empire (Daehan Jeguk) (Y. Kim 1968).

In addition, in order to illuminate the ideological foundation of the Gwangmu Reforms (Gwangmu Gaehyeok 光武改革), he attempted to keep track of Kim Seong-gyu’s thoughts on agrarian reform that followed the land survey as a *yangmu gamni* 量務監理 (a position of municipal governments in the Joseon dynasty) (Y. Kim 1972). There is a need to shed new light on the status of the studies on Silhak because most of the theorists on internal development, including Kim Yong-Sup, regarded both Silhak and its philosophers as an intermediate stage in the setting up and enforcement of state policies. In actuality, studies on Silhak have contributed to the consideration of “people” and “intellectuals” as entities worthy of examination, particularly in the 1970s. How to define intellectuals was one of the sub-texts in the studies on Silhak.

It is well known that Silhak served as a core subject to enlighten Korean studies through its interdisciplinary research themes and methodologies encompassing diverse disciplines such as Korean literature, Korean history, and Korean philosophy. Silhak has been pivotal in forming an academic community, through which its symbol and knowledge system were determined. The study of Silhak produced discourse on modern-oriented ideology and the theory of the embryo of the national economy. Representative scholars of Silhak such as Bangye Yu Hyeong-won, Dasan Jeong Yak-yong, and Yeonam Bak Ji-

won played instrumental roles in the development of the field. One of the reasons that made the Silhak studies important was its discourse to define an intellectual as a representative for the people.

Kang Man-gil argued in his “Silhak-ui minjung saenghwal gae-seonnon” (Discussion on Silhak’s Role in the Advancement of People’s Life) that the Silhak scholars spoke for the people as “the Silhak idea integrated the thoughts of the intellectual people, who were close to the people’s livelihood.” He also explained that “their ideas aimed to represent the people’s interests and improve their environment.” Kang Man-gil recognized that Silhak scholars expounded the theory of agrarian reform in order to defend rural people who had lost ownership of their lands to aristocrats and were being forced to work as tenants (Kang 1973, 1978).

Kim Yong-Sup published an article in relation to Silhak in vol. 45 of *Changbi*, titled “Joseon hugi-ui nongeop munje-wa silhak” (Agricultural Problems and Silhak in the Late Joseon Period), which can be considered a compilation of his works on Silhak. He evaluated Silhak as one of the modern social reform ideas that superseded the caste system-based power doctrine of Neo-Confucianism by Zhu Xi. He also argued that Silhak is a social reform theory centered upon farmers and the subjugated class, which was inherent in the Korean traditional philosophy before socioeconomic ideas were adopted from the modern West. Silhak’s theory of modernization was different from the Western and Japanese-style reform plans proposed by the so-called “reformist government.” According to Kim, the confrontation and conflict between social classes that led to peasant uprisings occurred mainly due to the development of farming technology, expansion of farm management, and the division of the farmer class in the nineteenth century. Although one faction of the elite class, the Silhak School, nevertheless, came up with diverse proposals to resolve divisions, by being open to the opinions of farmers and agricultural elites (Y. Kim 1977, 160-167).

It would be misleading to say that Silhak philosophers merely stood in front of the people lecturing history. These intellectuals actively proposed plans for social reform to the state on behalf of the

people. The Silhak studies in the 1960s and 1970s envisioned dynamic relationships that would bring together the people, intellectuals, and the state rather than simply between the people and intellectuals. The state was to serve as an essential link between the other two. Thus, the studies of Silhak contributed to the birth of nationalism.

Kang Man-gil investigated how many and which policies proposed in the Silhak reform plan were accepted by the state. These questions were also raised by the Silhak intellectuals themselves. Kang Man-gil pointed out that, “we need to put more effort into demonstrating that Silhak philosophy is not merely the work of a few geniuses but a compilation of the ideas of an extensive group of intellectuals that did not involve themselves in political power.” Kang’s argument can be summarized as follows: in the late Joseon period, Silhak held an extensive hegemony in terms of ideology but their ideas were not adopted because they were contrary to the interests of the governing powers. The reform plan, both radical and, therefore rejected, was like a manifesto that had to wait for another time to find acceptance. It is here that an overlap is found between the thinking of the Silhak philosophers and their later supporting critics, who also looked forward to the arrival of a time when history and criticism could flourish in a true democracy.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the relationship between the form of knowledge and the time consciousness that have been reified through *Changjak-gwa bipyeong*. Koreans began to understand that capitalistic social relations exerted dominant power over politics, culture, and individuals, and that economic growth was an important issue. Intellectuals began to recognize the progress of capitalism as a principal feature in historical writing. In particular, one group of historians attempted to analyze the history of the social economy, the shift in the political system, and the ideologies of the transitional period from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century, based on the perspective that

the seeds of modernity or capitalism blossomed inherently in Korea without external intervention. *Changbi* adopted a form of historical writing that attempted to recover the colonialist recognition of history, advancing the theory of internal development as its main theme. The background and reasons were as follows: elite journals such as *Sasanggye* and *Cheongmaek*—the forums activated through the experience of the April Revolution—put forward through a social scientific analysis topics such as modernization, unification, and other issues that were also fundamental to the political agenda. However, the forums were closed by Park Chung-hee's oppressive regime which had built its foundation for governance by monopolizing the agenda. In this situation, *Changbi* adopted a form of historical writing that did not directly point out the repressive situation but used figurative language as its form of expression, combining historical writing with literary criticism. As the division between the South and the North became permanent and growth through the economic development initiated by the Park administration was proving to be a myth, intellectuals began to recognize that the basis for democracy was collapsing. In this paper, I named the historical consciousness "time of a nation"—a consciousness that meaningful capitalist development or modernization must be initiated by a "nation" not by a ruling political power or specific class.

The notion of the "time of a nation" was constructed by rediscovering the farmers and rural communities that have been overlooked and overshadowed by modernization. The theory of internal development stressed that farmers, rural communities, and an agricultural economy had existed long before the externally lead modernization. In the 1970s, the key writers of *Changbi* took a stand against the trend that supported the urban- and elites-centered literature and advanced the "theory of peasant literature." Much scholarly work already had been done on Silhak, which is an interdisciplinary research approach encompassing diverse fields such as history, philosophy, and Korean literature. The Silhak philosophers who came to the fore through these works were presented as intellectual models, bridging the space between the state and the people. They contributed

to forming the framework of “the people and the intellectual.” Such intellectual movements that evolved during this period highlighted critics and historians with adequate historical consciousness as the most awakened citizens and, thus, emphasized the need for persistent critical writing as a vital practice for intellectuals.

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