

## **Historical Consciousnesses of Multilayered Indigenization: A Preliminary Comparative Analysis of the Literary History Discourses of Huang Te-shih and Shimada Kinji**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The argument of this paper can be summarized as follows. Shimada Kinji's discourse of literary history adopted the European theory of overseas or colonial literature as its framework. The so-called "overseas literature" is a complicated theory with duality. On the one hand, it regards overseas literature as extension of the literature of the metropole from the political stance of expansionist nationalism. On the other hand, it maintains that overseas literature should create works with local characteristics, and this aesthetical position entails differences, distortions, oppositions, and even the possibility of secession. Starting from such theoretical position, Shimada went on to construct a subject of literary history that manifested a dialectic relationship between metropole and colony. While he argued that literature in Taiwan could not be anything but the extension of the history of Japanese literature in metropole and thus Taiwan could not become a subject of literary history by itself, he admitted and even maintained that within the larger context of a Japanese language expanded overseas the subject formation of colonial Taiwan was possible.

Secondly, based upon the linguistic criterion of Japanese-centrism, Shimada's conception of literary history dealt only with those Japanese writers traveling or immigrating to Taiwan who had a good command of Japanese as a literary language. The level of written Japanese of the Taiwanese writers was still so primitive that they were excluded from his treatise for the time being. Thirdly, Shimada followed the chronological sequence in constructing his narrative structure, but two related logics were hidden in this time sequence. On the one hand, Shimada evaluated the artistic maturity of each author's works of various stages according to criteria of realist aesthetics. On the other hand, however, the process of gradual maturation of the realist aesthetics among the

authors under discussion tacitly corresponded to that of the indigenization of the Japanese settlers in Taiwan. Fourthly, the emergence of a colonial subject in Shimada's literary history was a corollary of his aesthetic argument of realism. In other words, the emergence of colonial subject was an unintended political consequence of his unpolitical writing.

Huang Te-shih borrowed the theoretical framework of the nineteenth century French historian Hippolyte Taine's masterpiece, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, to construct his own literary history and thus was a typical discourse of history of national literature. First of all, Huang presumed that "Taiwan" constituted a subject of literary history parallel to "England" and "Japan." Secondly, he creatively extended the concept of race in Taine's methodology and interpreted the Taiwanese nation formation as the outcome of two processes of social history, i.e., indigenization and amalgamation of races. By way of this interpretive strategy, he on the one hand overcame the discontinuity of Taiwan's political history and made it possible for Taiwan to become a subject of literary history, and on the other hand constructed a pluralistic concept of "Taiwanese," thereby preserving a theoretical space for discussing multi-racial and multi-linguistic works. Thirdly, in terms of narrative structure, Huang followed a time sequence of indigenization characteristic of a teleological order of "from settlers to natives." He discussed period by period how the creative works of Chinese settlers or writers about Taiwan were transformed from the writings of exiles, bureaucrats and travelers to native writings. Fourthly, Huang's history of Taiwanese literature was a distinctly political writing in that he intentionally appropriated the discourse of local culture of Japan's *Taisei Yokusan* Movement of early 1940s to represent the thesis of Taiwanese cultural nationalism that emerged out of the new literature movement of the 1930s.

**Keywords:** Huang Te-shih, Shimada Kinji, Literary History, Settlers, Indigenization, Historical Consciousness, Colonial Literature, Overseas Literature, Nationalism