

Japan's Colonial Responsibility and National Subject Formation

日本の植民地責任と国民主体の形成

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〈論文要旨〉

1990年代の日本では、冷戦の終結、アジア諸国の経済成長、昭和天皇の死などによって引き起こされた社会的状況の変化を背景に、日本の侵略戦争、植民地支配のもとで被害を受けた東アジアの人々が日本国家の責任を追及するという動きがはじまった。元日本軍「慰安婦」であった軍事的性暴力の被害女性が名乗りをあげ、それまで忘却・封印されてきた戦争・植民地責任が社会的な論争となった。知識人の間では「歴史認識論争」がおり、続いて「歴史主体論争」へと発展していった。戦争責任は過去に幾度となく議論されてきたが、90年代での論争では、植民地支配の責任が1つの焦点になった。そうした展開の中、97年に日本の戦争責任資料センターにより「ナショナリズムと『慰安婦』問題」というシンポジウムが開かれたが、このシンポジウムとそれに続く論争の中で、植民地支配の問題が国民主体の形成との関係で議論された。シンポジウムには徐京植が参加し、「他者」に回答する責任が論争点となったが、徐が提起した戦後日本社会における「日本人」の特権の問題については議論が深まらなかったと思う。以下では、この問題に関する部分のシンポジウムの議論を分析してみたい。シンポジウムからすでに長い年月が過ぎているが、そこで提起された問題は、今日の日本における中国や韓国との領土問題、それをめぐるナショナ

リズムの問題と結びついている。またアジア系の移民が増加する傾向にある日本社会では、「日本人の責任」だけでなく、「日本人」の意味が問われるようになっており、シンポジウムの論争はそうした問いを考える上で示唆に富んでいると思われる。

Summary: This article examines where intellectuals in Japan stood on the question of responsibility for the colonial past at the turn of the millennium through analyzing arguments generated by the 1997 symposium, "Nationalism and the 'Comfort Women' Issue." The debate, which took place in a form of interethnic dialogue, focused on the question of national subject formation. The issue of Japanese historical responsibility, which drew a great deal of media and public attention in the 1990s, has yet to be resolved, and is at the heart of anti-Japanese sentiments currently escalating over territorial disputes. It is central to Japan's relations with its Asian neighbors in the twenty-first century. The debate on the issue I analyze here is important because the participants are influential public intellectuals who are shaping the thought and politics of Japanese society. Suh Kyung-Sik, a resident Korean thinker, asserted that people should take responsibility as Japanese so long as they had enjoyed Japanese privilege in

postcolonial Japan. He criticized Ueno Chizuko and Hanazaki Kōhei, scholars of feminism and multiculturalism respectively, for evading “Japanese” responsibility on the ground that accepting such responsibility effectively promoted national identity as Japanese. Elaborating on Suh’s arguments, Oka Mari, a specialist in Middle East literature and Third-World feminism, and Nakano Toshio, a specialist in intellectual history, illuminated the problematic nature of subject formation among Japanese liberals who approach the issue of responsibility from a universal perspective. Takahashi Tetsuya, a philosopher known for his critical work on the Yasukuni Shrine, argued that people should take both universal responsibility as human beings and particular responsibility as Japanese

Introduction

Japan witnessed many social changes in the 1990s. One of the important developments in this period was the emergence of the issue of war responsibility in public consciousness, reflecting the social climate characterized by the end of the Cold War and the 1989 death of the Shōwa emperor, among other things. War responsibility had been discussed by scholars and public commentators from time to time, but the controversy over this issue in the 1990s significantly differed from previous debates. It drew a great deal of media and public attention, and more importantly, it included arguments on Japan’s responsibility for colonial domination in Asia. Voices raised by former “military comfort women” and other

victims of Japanese imperialism played a central role in pushing Japan to confront this past.

As has been pointed out, most Japanese had been oblivious to colonial responsibility largely due to discourse formation during the Occupation period. Prime Minister Higashikuni Naruhiko’s call for collective repentance in August 1945 rendered the responsible parties ambiguous and in effect held nobody responsible. At the same time, he addressed only the responsibility for Japan’s defeat, not for the violence Japan inflicted upon other Asian countries. The “Pacific War” discourse was soon created through the cooperation of the Occupation Forces led by the United States and conservative Japanese leaders, obscuring the period preceding the war when Japan was committing aggression against other Asian countries. Under the Occupation Forces, Japanese people saw themselves not only as victims of the state but also as a colonized people. The absence of an adequate contingent of Asian representatives at the Tokyo war crimes tribunal reinforced the emerging tendency to ignore what Japan did in Asia. This tendency was maintained in the Cold War regime. Some efforts were made to maintain war memory. Yet, while the media never failed to address the remembering of Japanese war victims on the anniversary of Japan’s defeat in the war, it rarely dealt with the issue of Asian victims even on such an occasion.¹ The field of scholarship was not free from the tendency. As Yoon Keun-Cha, a resident Korean scholar, has pointed out in his influential books, Japanese scholars lacked an “Asian perspective” and

¹ Kiyoteru Tsutsui, “The Trajectory of Perpetrators’ Trauma: Mnemonic Politics around the Asia-Pacific War in Japan,” *Social Forces* 87:3 (2009): 1389-1422.

did not study the issue of decolonization seriously.²

This began to change in the course of the 1980s, when the issue of war responsibility gained importance internationally and the Chinese and Korean governments harshly criticized the Japanese government for sanitizing descriptions in history textbooks of Japanese aggressions in Asia. The radical social changes at the end of the decade facilitated the rise of public and intellectual interest in the issue of responsibility. In the 1990s, demands for official apology and compensation by those victimized by the Japanese empire prompted progressives to look into the past and led some politicians to make apologies. However, there also emerged a conservative nationalistic move to deny their testimonies. In turn, a "debate on historical consciousness" developed between those refusing to admit Japan's past wrongdoings and those criticizing such a refusal. The debate was intensified by the rise of an ultra-right position that denounced the critical view of Japanese imperialism as masochistic and promoted the adoption of a "new history textbook" free of negative appraisals of the past.

The debate was further complicated by the 1995 publication of an essay "Haisengo-ron" (Since Defeat) by Katō Norihiro, a literary critic. He argued for taking responsibility, but he called for establishing a

unified Japanese national subject before apologizing to victims in other Asian countries. His argument attracted a great deal of attention. While appreciated by many, it was harshly criticized by progressive intellectuals, most notably by Takahashi Tetsuya, a philosopher publicly known for his critical work on the Yasukuni Shrine. The dispute between the two developed into a "debate on the historical subject" (*rekishi shutai ronsō*).³ As J. Victor Koschmann notes, starting with the Meiji era, many Japanese thinkers, both on the political right and left, had tackled the issue of subject formation.⁴ There had been a tendency in the discourse of subject formation to ignore the colonial past and Asian Others, i.e., non-Japanese Asians victimized by Japanese imperialism. Given the public testimonies of former "comfort women," the debate on the historical subject could no longer avoid addressing the question of Asian Others. Katō, however, hardly dealt with this question. Lee Hyo-Duk, a resident Korean scholar, characterizes Katō's argument as concerning the "war responsibility of 'Nihonjin' for 'Nihonjin' by 'Nihonjin.'" It was addressed to Japanese audiences and advocated taking responsibility solely for the purpose of recovering Japanese pride. Lee thus calls it a "masturbatory monologue."⁵ Witnessing the popularity of Katō's inward-looking view, progressive Japanese intellectuals felt an urgent need to have a dialogue with Asian Others. Many of them, including

² Yoon Keun-Cha, *Kozetsu no rekishi ishiki: Nihon kokka to Nihonjin*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1990; *Minzoku gensō no satetsu: Nihonjin no jiko-zō*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1994.

³ See Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "Unquiet Graves: Katō Norihiro and the Politics of Mourning," *Japanese Studies*, 18:1 (1998): 21-30; J. Victor Koschmann, "National Subjectivity and the Uses of Atonement in the Age of Recession," in Tomiko Yoda and Harry Harootunian, eds., *Japan after Japan: Social and Cultural Life from the Recessionary 1990s to the Present*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006, 123-41.

⁴ Koschmann, "National subjectivity," 126-27.

⁵ Lee Hyo-Duk, "'Yoriyoi Nihonjin' toiu keishō o koete," in Komori Yōichi and Takahashi Tetsuya, eds., *Nashonaru hisutorii o koete*. Tokyo: University Press, 1998, 112-13. For names, I follow the spelling each author uses in their publications. All translations are by the author.

Takahashi, understood responsibility primarily as the “responsibility to respond” (*ōtō sekinin*) to the Other.

In 1997, a symposium, entitled “Nationalism and the ‘Comfort Women’ Issue,” was held by the Center for Research and Documentation on Japan’s War Responsibility (JWRC). The JWRC invited Suh Kyung-Sik, an influential resident Korean activist-intellectual, and created the possibility of opening up a long-overdue dialogue about Japan’s colonial past between the colonized and colonizers. The symposium drew a great deal of attention from progressives, and the 1998 book of participants’ discussions and essays promoted a number of intellectual exchanges. In what follows, I will examine how Japanese intellectuals and Suh tackled the question of “taking responsibility as Japanese,” analyzing arguments about this question presented in books and essays published between 1998 and 2002.⁶

With Suh’s participation, the symposium debate on colonial responsibility became a site of interethnic interaction where the practice of Japanese subject formation was foregrounded. Critical of nationalistic Japanese who denied responsibility, participants sought to avoid promoting nationalism in their arguments for taking responsibility. Suh, however, asserted that people should take responsibility as *Nihonjin* regardless of their other identifications, so long as they had enjoyed Japanese privilege in the economically successful society built upon Japan’s colonial domination. Using the idea of privilege, he

criticized those who argued for transcending national identification as in effect evading responsibility as Japanese. In holding the symposium, JWRC’s director Arai Shinichi wanted to problematize the lingering effects of the Tokyo war crimes tribunal, where he thought universal values such as peace were stressed while Japan’s responsibility for its particular actions was ignored.⁷ Nevertheless, the appeal to universal values bulked large in the symposium debate. Further, a sense of Japan itself as a colonial victim of postwar U.S. dominance complicated the debate. A Japanese subject position attempting to transcend nationality by an appeal to universal values was thus not the only idea that was criticized during the debate. Japan’s own victim mentality also came under scrutiny. Suh’s confrontational style of communication, which was intended to transform the colonizer-colonized relationship, contributed to illuminating the complex dynamics of the Japanese subject positions at issue.

I want to return to the debate generated by the symposium held more than a decade ago because the problems raised in the debate have not been adequately addressed despite their importance in ongoing politics on colonial responsibility. The “comfort women” issue has persisted in twenty-first century Japan and has continued to receive international attention. As Takahashi has admitted, however, public concern with Japanese responsibility for war and colonial domination began to dissipate at the beginning of the millennium.⁸ In December 2000, the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal on

⁶ Other questions raised at the symposium include the role of oral testimonies in historiography and an interrelationship between gender and ethnicity.

⁷ Arai Shin’ichi, “Maegaki,” in JWRC, ed. *Nationalism and ‘Ianfu’ Issue*. Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1998, 3-5.

⁸ Takahashi Tetsuya, “Ōtō no shippai,” *Gendai shisō*, 33:6 (2005): 46-54.

Japan's Military Sexual Slavery was held in Tokyo, but the media failed to publicize its significance. The confirmation of the abduction of Japanese by North Korea's operatives in September 2002 generated a nationwide hysterical reaction and led many Japanese to embrace the idea that Japan's colonial responsibility should be offset by the suffering of the Japanese abductees, their families, and by extension, the Japanese people. As the Japanese social climate was pushed toward the right, the Citizens' Group against Special Rights for Korean Residents in Japan (Zaitokukai) was formed in 2007 to denounce resident Koreans, not Japanese nationals, as having special privileges.⁹ In response to South Koreans' persistent demand for official apologies and compensation to former "comfort women," many Japanese have criticized South Korean ethno-nationalism from a human-rights or transnational-feminist perspective. The idea of taking an Asian perspective or that of taking responsibility as Japanese explored at the symposium has dissipated.

In the academic sphere, the tendency to see the Japanese as the colonized has persisted. In his well known book, Komori Yōichi uses the expression "self colonization" (*jiko shokuminchika*) to describe Meiji Japan's desire to master European civilization.¹⁰ Appreciating Komori's perspective, Nishikawa Nagao, a leading scholar of the nation state, discusses

colonialism based on his experience of feeling colonized in Japan under the U.S.-led Occupation, not that of living as a colonialist in Korea prior to his return to the homeland.¹¹ Though critical of Japanese colonialism, Komori and Nishikawa allowed their criticism to be clouded by their view of Japan as a colonized country. In the mid-2000s, those embracing the position of transcending nationalism appreciated the idea of reconciliation (*wakai*) presented by Park Yu-Ha, a South Korean scholar. In his 2010 *Violence of Colonialism*, Suh criticized this phenomenon, reiterating his argument in the symposium and pointing to the problem of unconscious nationalism in the assertion of transcending nationalism.¹² Meanwhile, Kang Sang-Jung, a resident Korean scholar rising in the Japanese mainstream media, has started to call for transcending nationalism, both among Japanese and among Koreans, going against Suh's effort to clarify particular historical responsibility. Nonetheless, as Suh acknowledges, some scholars have begun to tackle the issue of colonial responsibility with renewed interest, inspired by the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban, which addressed the issue of responsibility for colonialism.¹³ There have emerged studies of "*keizoku-suru shokuminchi-shugi*" (ongoing colonialism) and "*teikoku*" (empire). The new scholarly efforts may benefit from revisiting the symposium debate, especially as regards the question

⁹ Zaitokukai argues that postcolonial Koreans should be treated like other foreigners.

¹⁰ Komori Yōichi, *Posutokoroniaru*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2001.

¹¹ Nishikawa Nagao, *<Shiru>shokuminchishugi-ron: Gurōbaruko jidai no shokuminchi-shugi o tou*, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2006.

¹² Suh Kyung-Sik, *Shokuminchi-shugi no bōryoku*, Tokyo: Kōbunken, 2010, 63-68.

¹³ Nagahara Yōko, ed., *Colonial Responsibilities: A Comparative History of Decolonization*, Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 2009; Itagaki Ryūta, "Nikkan-kaidan hantai-undō to shokuminchi shihai sekinin-ron," *Gendai shisō*, 1029 (2010): 219-238; Kim Pu-Ja and Nakano Toshio, eds, *Rekishi to sekinin: "Ianfu" mondai to 1990-nendai*, Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2008.

of national subject formation in the act of taking responsibility.

Transcending National Identification

The question of taking responsibility as Japanese (*Nihonjin toshite sekinin o toru*) is complex because it concerns not only the issue of responsibility but also that of national identification. As Nishino Rumiko, a journalist and coordinator of the symposium, points out, many Japanese born in the post-war period have an allergic resistance to social and political pressures to identify as Japanese.¹⁴ Those Japanese are not willing to take responsibility as Japanese, not because they deny the colonial past like conservatives do, but because they do not want to identify themselves as Japanese to begin with. Moreover, progressive scholars who have learned postmodern theories tend to embrace blindly the idea of transcending nationalism.¹⁵ Nishikawa Nagao's 1992 *How to Transcend National Borders* was especially influential in spreading the idea. This tendency turns researchers away from looking at nationalism or national categorization (such as "Japanese") as an object of study. This amounts to an ironic use of the notion of nationalism, insofar as its refusal of national identity results in evading national responsibility or discouraging scholarship on this issue. The position of transcending nationalism was adopted by those critical of Kato's "Since Defeat" in their effort to stay away from any hint of nationalism.

Suh addressed this problem at the symposium as he discussed two types of people. He calls those promoting a new revisionist history "dangerous subjects" (*kikenna shutai*), criticizing them for expressing racism. He points out how they denigrate Koreans involved in the "comfort women" issue as extremely ethno-nationalistic while at the same time they promote their own nationalism, itself with a distinct ethnic basis, as "healthy."¹⁶ The other type, "hollow subjects" (*kūkyōna shutai*), are found among people born after Japan's defeat. Their subjective consciousness has been "hollowed out" and voices from the Other have been passing through this hollow. They insist that they are innocent of Japan's past wrongdoings, claiming that they simply happened to be born as Japanese but have never identified themselves as Japanese. Some of them show concern about the issue of "comfort women," but only from a universal perspective of deploring sexual violence.

Suh asserts that regardless of their stance on national identification, those Japanese who are situated in the system of privilege are to be held responsible.¹⁷ People should take responsibility as *Nihonjin* so long as they have enjoyed the privilege of being *Nihonjin* in the economically successful society built upon Japan's colonial domination in Asia. This is what Suh means by *Nihonjin*. He wants *Nihonjin* to realize that they should become "responsible subjects." In his view, such a realization should take place individually (*sorezore-ni*), not in unison, i.e., not in a way that

¹⁴ Nishino Rumiko, "Shinpojiumu ga nokoshita mono," in JWRC, "*Ianfu*" Issue, 237-247, 238.

¹⁵ Nakamasa, Masaki, *Posuto-modan no hidari senkai*. Tokyo: Jōkyō shuppan, 2002, 216.

¹⁶ Suh Kyung-Sik, "Minzoku-sabetsu to "kenzenna nashonarizumu" no kiken," in JWRC, "*Ianfu*" Issue, 40-43.

¹⁷ JWRC, "Paneru Disukasshou," in JWRC, "*Ianfu*" Issue, 59-96, 64-68.

would promote nationalism.¹⁸ His conceptualization of *Nihonjin* based on the notion of privilege opens up the possibility of taking responsibility as *Nihonjin* without essentializing this category. For Japanese privilege is distributed unevenly among Japanese nationals.¹⁹

The difficulty of transcending nationalism was highlighted by an exchange between two keynote speakers at the symposium, Takahashi and Ueno Chizuko, a leading scholar in the field of feminism. In taking responsibility, Takahashi argues in his speech, Japanese people need to affirm their membership in Japan as a political community precisely because it is Japan's responsibility that is being interrogated by the Other. While saying this, he at the same time emphasizes that affirming one's political membership in the state means neither identifying with the state nor succumbing to nationalism.²⁰ In the panel discussion, Ueno argues that his position is not very different from the position taken by advocates of civil-society discourse, especially the sociologist Hashizume Daizaburō, who claims that citizens should abide by the state's laws and that it is proper for them to go to war when drafted by the state. Takahashi counters Ueno's argument by saying that whereas Hashizume talks about citizens abiding by the law, he talks about members of the state acting on the state and pushing it to take responsibility. Though saying that she is aware of the need to take

responsibility for what Japan has done, Ueno rejects the idea of taking collective responsibility based on the acknowledgement of membership in the state.²¹ Such an acknowledgement means identification with the state and hence nationalism, she argues.²² One can see an ironic use of the notion of nationalism for avoiding collective responsibility. I will come back to her argument later.

Japanese Privilege

In his essay in the symposium book, Suh elaborates on the idea of privilege, using Hannah Arendt's "Collective Responsibility" as his theoretical basis. Arendt distinguishes political responsibility, which is collective in nature, from moral and/or legal guilt, which belongs to the agency of wrongdoing and is hence personal. She argues that by virtue of one's membership in a community, one has collective responsibility for what has been done in the name of the community.²³ Suh claims that people born in post-war Japan are not guilty, but that they must take collective responsibility as Japanese for war and colonial domination.²⁴ Arendt's following statement, quoted at the beginning of his essay, is especially relevant to his argument:

We can escape this political and strictly collective responsibility only by leaving the community, and since no man can live without belonging to

¹⁸ Suh Kyung-Sik, *Han-nanmin no ichi kara: sengo-sekinin ronsō to zainichi Chōsenjin*. Tokyo: Kage shobō, 2002, 83-87.

¹⁹ The dispute over U.S. military bases in Okinawa and the Fukushima nuclear disasters have revealed that Japanese nationals in some regions and in some occupations are systematically disadvantaged.

²⁰ Takahashi Tetsuya, "Sekinin towa nan-darōka," in JWRC, "*Ianfu*" Issue, 47-58, 54-57.

²¹ JWRC, "Paneru Disukasshon," 60-61, 71, 81.

²² Ueno Chizuko, *Nashonarizumu to jendā*. Tokyo: Aotosha, 1998, 185-190.

²³ Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment*. New York: Schocken Books, 2003, 147-151.

²⁴ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 70-71. His symposium essay is included in this book.

some community, this would simply mean to exchange one community for another and hence one kind of responsibility for another. It is true that the twentieth century has created a category of men who were truly outcastes, belonging to no internationally recognizable community whatever, the refugees and stateless people, who indeed cannot be held politically responsible for anything.²⁵

Suh delineates how both state and community are complicated matters for him. He belongs to the group of Koreans who moved from colonial Korea to the homeland of the Japanese empire as its nationals, were deprived of Japanese nationality after its collapse, and were thereby left in post-war Japan as aliens with an uncertain legal status. Those who acquired South Korean nationality were granted permanent residency after the 1965 ratification of the Japan-South Korea Treaty, but other resident Koreans, who advocated a unified Korea or supported North Korea, stayed on non-permanent resident status. In 1991, all postcolonial Koreans received access to permanent residency in Japan, but those without South Korean nationality remained stateless. Not equipped with full citizenship rights, resident Koreans have encountered various forms of discrimination. Given their situation, Suh regards them as a kind of "refugee" produced by Japan's colonial control and the world war. At the same time, those with South Korean nationality are nationals in the context of South Korea. Suh thus calls

himself a "a quasi-refugee" (*han-nanmin*).²⁶

Suh speaks of responsibility from this perspective. Even though he has received no privilege from South Korea and his brothers were jailed and tortured by the state,²⁷ he thinks he is responsible for what it has done. If interrogated by Vietnamese about Korean soldiers' atrocities during the Vietnam War, he must admit responsibility and respond to their interrogation. This is not because he is tied to South Koreans in blood and culture but because he has a South Korean passport. A person carrying a South Korean passport must not evade an inquiry from a Vietnamese about war responsibility by saying: "I do not identify as South Korean," "I am a global citizen," or "Many South Koreans are nice." One could be relieved from the responsibility of responding to such an inquiry only if one quit being a South Korean national, Suh says, invoking Arendt's argument.²⁸

The same can be said about Japanese responsibility for Japan's past, Suh thinks. Unlike resident Koreans, however, most Japanese take nationality for granted. In addition, they do not acknowledge the extraordinary privileges that have come from Japan's colonial domination. Thus, he makes an appeal:

Dear Japanese nationals, please don't irresponsibly say: "Having been born in Japan by chance, I do not see myself as 'Japanese'" or "I am a resident Japanese" (i.e., a Japanese

²⁵ Arendt, *Responsibility*, 150.

²⁶ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 57-62.

²⁷ Suh's brothers were seen as North Korean operatives.

²⁸ Suh, *Han-nanmi*, 61-65.

who happens to live in Japan). These statements could be taken seriously only if you discarded all the rights generated by Japanese colonial domination and all the privileges bestowed on Japanese nationals, and demonstrated the spirit of voluntarily becoming a refugee by tearing up your Japanese passport. If not, the Other in Asia will continue to call you "*Nihonjin*."²⁹

Suh thus expands on Arendt's argument about political responsibility to include the privileges of belonging to a state as well as state membership itself, an inclusion that makes Japanese unwillingness to accept responsibility for Japan's colonial behavior all the more egregious.

What does "passport" mean to Suh? When discussing his South Korean passport, Suh treats it in terms of civil rights and duties. In the context of Japan, however, he employs "passport" metaphorically to make it signify much more. "Passport" symbolizes many things Japan has done to resident Koreans: the deprivation of Japanese nationality after Japan's defeat, the instigation of intra-ethnic conflict by the offer to some of a South Korean passport, the creation of stateless people, and discrimination based on the lack of Japanese nationality. These problems are not only national but ethnic in nature because nationality is granted based on ethnicity in Japan. For Suh, "passport" also symbolizes the political, economic and cultural privileges Japanese nationals enjoy in their daily lives, privileges from which most resident Koreans are excluded due to their ethnicity. For him, a Japanese passport is an index of many aspects of

being and performing "*Nihonjin*."

Indeed, "passport" does not simply signify national citizenship; it also implies ethnic or racial categorization, which is colonial in nature in the case of Koreans in Japan. Radhika Viyas Mongia notes, as regards Indians in early twentieth-century Canada, that in the history of the modern passport, one can find a history of racism and "a history of naturalizing the territorial boundedness of a national space as self-evidently the legitimate abode of certain people." She continues to say that the passport is "a document that has effectively naturalized the rule of colonial difference in what one might call the 'rule of postcolonial difference,' where the marker of difference is not 'race,' but the 'universal' category of 'nationality.'"³⁰ Given post-war Japan's treatment of the formerly colonized, one can say that a passport has naturalized colonial difference in post-war Japan. To Japanese, the Japanese passport may simply mean a universal category of nationality, but to many resident Koreans like Suh it signifies the particular history of colonial and postcolonial racism and Japanese privilege resting on such racism, which is exercised in the language of ethnicity.

For Suh, ethnicity is political in the sense that it produces political consequences. This is where he differs from Takahashi. Both stress political responsibility and talk about the responsibility Japanese must fulfill as nationals through making the state take legal responsibility. But Suh sees political responsibility as responsibility people must take not

²⁹ Ibid., 80-81.

³⁰ Radhika Viyas Mongia, "Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport," *Public Culture*, 11:3 (1999): 527-555, 554-555.

just as Japanese nationals but also as ethnic Japanese. He prefers to use *Nihonjin* in place of "Japanese national" (*Nihon kokumin*) precisely because *Nihonjin* not only indicates Japanese nationality but also implies the majority Japanese ethnicity.³¹ Takahashi, on the other hand, uses *Nihonjin* as equivalent to *Nihon kokumin*. To clarify his distinction from Takahashi, Suh talks of the idea of "responsibility for the whole of colonial control."³² For him, colonialism is not only political and economic, but also cultural, and its effect is far from over. Hence he sees the "comfort women" issue as interwoven with the predicament of resident Koreans in the postcolonial period, during which Japan has achieved economic success by initially benefitting from opportunities provided by the Korean War.³³

In concluding "Collective Responsibility," Arendt says that collective responsibility for things we have not done is "the price we pay for the fact that we live our lives not by ourselves but among our fellow men, and that the faculty of action, which, after all, is the political faculty par excellence, can be actualized only in one of the many and manifold forms of human community."³⁴ Suh's usage of "political" is also inclusive of the meaning of living a life with others in a community. Yet, as seen above, he extends Arendt's argument to include in the "political" the idea of privilege manifested in national, ethnic, and other

facets of life. For Suh, as for Arendt, one can escape political responsibility only by leaving a community, i.e., only by tearing up a passport.

The Right to Identification

The passage on passport quoted above is Suh's plea to Japanese nationals in general, but it is addressed specifically to Ueno as it immediately follows his criticism of her. In it, Suh is implicitly accusing Ueno of refusing to see the privilege she has by virtue of being *Nihonjin* regardless of her own personal identification. She explicates her position in her 1998 book. Stressing the primacy of "I" (*watashi*), Ueno says: "I consists of various kinds of relationships such as gender, nationality, occupation, social status, race, culture and ethnicity. 'I' cannot escape any of these relationships, but it cannot be reduced to any of these either. 'I' rejects privileging or essentializing one single category."³⁵ It is certainly true, Suh acknowledges, that being Japanese is just one of the multiple aspects of what makes up the self of a Japanese person. But he goes on to say:

Yet, in the context where a victimizing group's responsibility for its victims is problematized, the particular aspect of "I" as a member of the group is being interrogated. If "I" was designated by a Vietnamese as a South Korean and responded with "No, I am a man," wouldn't that be an

³¹ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 112. Suh is critical of those who evade Japanese responsibility by referring to Ainu and Okinawan people. He understands these peoples as marginalized Japanese nationals, but does not discuss how their responsibility differs from responsibility held by majority Japanese. He holds naturalized Koreans responsible for making the Japanese government take responsibility.

³² JWRC, "Paneru Disukasshon," 90.

³³ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 212.

³⁴ Arendt, *Responsibility*, 158.

³⁵ Ueno, *Nashonarizumu*, 197.

evasion or a rejection of the dialogue?³⁶

Oka Mari, a scholar in Middle East literature, agreed with Suh on this point and elaborated on it in her essay in the symposium book. In reference to Ueno's argument, Oka inquires into the question of "speaking as." If a Japanese national chooses to speak as a feminist or as an anti-nationalist when designated by the oppressed as the oppressor, that means that she is not simply refusing to respond to the oppressed but more importantly that she is exercising the privilege of being a Japanese, i.e., exercising the right to choose from various options as to whom she can "speak as." She is taking this privilege for granted while one-sidedly defining the oppressed as nothing but the oppressed. Oka sees colonial violence in such an exercise of power, noting that the same pattern has been repeated in other interethnic encounters.³⁷ Oka finds Ueno's following remark to Suh especially ethnocentric. Ueno tells him that he, as a resident Korean, should tackle the issue of "comfort women" as a problem of colonial domination while she, as a feminist, tackles the issue as a transnational problem of sexual violence.³⁸ In refusing to tackle the issue of "comfort women" as a problem of colonial control, Ueno's feminism ignores the colonialist privilege granted to Japanese women, Oka says.³⁹

Further, in criticizing Ueno for admonishing

Suh to speak as a resident Korean — that is, from the standpoint of his ethnicity — Oka's argument resonates with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's discussion of "speaking as." Spivak notes that when hegemonic people want to hear "a Third World woman speaking as a Third World woman, they cover over the fact of the ignorance that they are allowed to possess [of the range of other positions a Third World woman may occupy], into a kind of homogenization."⁴⁰ Ueno essentializes Suh as a resident Korean, covering over the ignorance that she is allowed to possess about the various positions he occupies besides merely the colonized. In doing so, she joins those Japanese who characterize resident Koreans almost always in terms of ethnicity.⁴¹ No wonder that they find disconcerting his arguments about passport, which are grounded in his experiences as a South Korean national, i.e., as a member of a state on equal terms with Japanese nationals irrespective of ethnicity.

It is true that Ueno talks about the importance of critically examining the role of Japanese women in the war effort and Japanese nationalism. However, such an examination is important to her precisely because she wants to criticize nationalism in the victorious countries of World War II such as the United States.⁴² Oka finds that Ueno's criticism of the victors' nationalism ironically reflects nationalism on her own part, belying her assertion of anti-

³⁶ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 80.

³⁷ Oka Mari, "Watashitachi wa naze mizukara nanoru-koto ga dekiru noka," in JWRC, "Ianfu" Issue, 215-236, 215-219.

³⁸ JWRC, "Paneru Disukasshon," 62.

³⁹ Oka, "Watashitachi," 225.

⁴⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The Postcolonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*. New York: Routledge, 1990, 60.

⁴¹ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 59.

⁴² Ueno Chizuko, "Jendashi to rekishigaku no hōhō," in JWRC, ed., *Nationalism and "Ianfu" Issue*. Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1998, 21-31, 31.

nationalism.⁴³ Oriented toward the discourse of Japan as the colonized, Ueno hardly sees herself as possessing colonialist privilege as *Nihonjin* over other Asians. As regards European imperialism, Edward W. Said delineated in his analysis of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century English literature “how it was that the imperial European would not or could not see that he or she was an imperialist and, ironically, how it was that the non-European in the same circumstances saw the European *only* as imperial” (italics in original).⁴⁴ Suh sees *Nihonjin* as imperial, and is committed to continuing to criticize *Nihonjin* until they fulfill their responsibility.⁴⁵

Open-minded Subject

The Suh-Hanazaki debate, which was touched off by the symposium, stirred heated arguments from others. It took place in 1999 in *Misuzu*, a humanities magazine. Hanazaki Kōhei, an activist-intellectual known for his theorization of living together (*kyōsei*), published an essay (in two parts) upon receiving a copy of the 1998 symposium book from Suh. Suh wrote a response, criticizing Hanazaki’s argument and inquiring of him about his position on the issue of responsibility. Hanazaki never responded to this inquiry in *Misuzu* or in any other publication, but he included a substantially revised version of his *Misuzu* article in his 2002 book, *An Inspiration for Living Together*. This odd termination of the debate bewildered those following it. Suh also published a

book in 2002, *From a Quasi-Refugee’s Perspective*, including his original *Misuzu* article.

In his *Misuzu* article, Hanazaki first offers his personal history on the question of responsibility. Born before the time of Japan’s defeat, he became involved in ethnic minority politics in the 1950s. Exposing his old diary and expressing sincere self-reflection, he talks about how at that time he lacked historical consciousness about Japan’s aggression in Asia and neglected the issue of decolonization.⁴⁶ He confronted the issue in the 1980s when he read works by Yoon, the aforementioned resident Korean scholar. Hanazaki wrote an essay in 1986 to respond to Yoon’s call for cultivating ethnic consciousness as Japanese and tackling the problem of ethnic discrimination based on such consciousness. It should be noticed that this was basically the same as the view presented by Suh a decade later at the symposium. Learning from Yoon that colonial control was ethnic control, Hanazaki argued for forming a “responsible ethnic subject.” He stressed the importance of recognizing the connection between *kokumin* (nation) and *minzoku* (ethnicity) in thinking about responsibility for the colonial past.⁴⁷

Instead of deepening his understanding of colonialism as an ethnic problem, however, Hanazaki moved toward a trans-border concept of “living together” (*kyōsei*). He says he did so because his 1986 essay was criticized for promoting the reconstruction of imperialist nationalism through linking national

⁴³ Oka, “Watashitachi,” 217, 232.

⁴⁴ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993, 162.

⁴⁵ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 361.

⁴⁶ Hanazaki Kōhei, “‘Datsu-shokuminchika’ to ‘kyōsei’ no kadai (I),” *Misuzu*, 41:5 (1999): 2-25, 3-5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8-9. See his “Gendai-Nihonjin nitotte minzokuteki jikaku towa,” *Sekai*, 483 (1986): 99-117.

consciousness and ethnic consciousness. Here, we see again an ironic use of the notion of nationalism, insofar as disavowal of nationalism is used to discourage an examination of Japanese nationals' responsibility for Japan's colonial past. Hanazaki decided to try to transcend the paradigm of the unity of nation and ethnicity and started to promote the paradigm of living together, especially as regards Ainu activism. After the end of the Cold War, he enlisted the cause of decolonization in an effort to form a new "trans-border democracy," with a "more open-minded subject" (*yori hirakareta shutai*) as an agent in this effort.⁴⁸

What does Hanazaki mean by these trans-border concepts? He delineates "open-minded subject" as he examines the discussions in the symposium book. His stance is to accept the categorization as "Japanese" by the Other (*tasha*) "tentatively at first" (*ittan wa*) and then develop a relationship of living together in a joint effort to deal with responsibility, apology, and compensation.⁴⁹ One should not escape categorization by *tasha* as Ueno has done, he says. However, he emphasizes that one should not succumb to such a categorization either. In order to have a productive dialogue with *tasha*, one should clearly present a reason for accepting the category and at the same time should express one's determination not to surrender one's "I" to the category.⁵⁰ In Hanazaki's view, Suh's argument about tearing up one's passport is problematic because it asks for a passive acceptance

of the categorization of the self by the Other. When one is faced with such a demand, Hanazaki argues, one cannot avoid being in a conflictual relationship or being restrained by the Other's gaze forever. He thus calls Suh's style of argument *kyūdan*, i.e. the style of accusation in which the accuser corners the accused and turns their relationship into non-dialogue. Hanazaki reports observing this style among Ainu activists, but he goes on to say that in their collaboration with him, they adopted the communication mode of *wakatte morau* (to beg the other party to understand). He recommends it to Suh. In it, there is freedom on the side of the accused. It is a way to move toward living together, Hanazaki says.⁵¹

Suh squarely opposes Hanazaki in this regard. Having observed resident Koreans trying hard to have Japanese people understand them, often self-deprecatingly, or passing as Japanese resigned to the futility of even making such an attempt, Suh declares that he rejects to the fullest extent of his being the majority's request for the act of *wakatte morau* on the part of the minority. Such a request, he claims, is a convenient device to shift the responsibility for discrimination to a lack of effort by the victimized to be understood. Instead of blaming the minority for this, Hanazaki should have problematized how it is the majority who show a lack of effort to understand their accusers, and why they are being accused, Suh says.⁵²

⁴⁸ Ibid., 9-12.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 14.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 22.

⁵¹ Hanazaki Kōhei, "'Datsu-shokuminchika' to 'kyōsei' no kadai (2)," *Misuzu*, 41:6 (1999): 12-32, 14-16, 25.

⁵² Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 131-132.

Many Japanese intellectuals have supported Suh's argument against Hanazaki. Ōta Masakuni understands Suh's harshness as inevitable for the minority if it is to lodge effective criticism against the majority.⁵³ Here, Ōta agrees with Stuart Hall. In discussing the situation of postcolonial diaspora, Hall says that in order to make a meaning, an utterance has to be enunciated from a certain position.⁵⁴ As a postcolonial Korean, Suh has to take a position strong enough to make his utterance heard by the majority. He cannot afford to take the risk of switching to the *wakatte morau* mode because his minority position has already and always been weak and will be further weakened by using such a mode. Saitō Jun'ichi says that when a hierarchical power relationship pre-exists, a refusal by the party in the superior position of categorization by the Other means not only rejecting a dialogue with the Other but also strengthening that pre-existing relationship.⁵⁵ Similarly, Takahashi finds Hanazaki's instruction to Suh on communication modes paternalistic. In order to change the majority and minority relationship, Takahashi says, majority people should try to change themselves first, i.e., understand why they are being accused and act to redress the grievances on which the accusations are based.⁵⁶ Criticizing the

oppressor's paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, Paulo Freire says: "Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture."⁵⁷ Hanazaki's posture is not radical. As an advocate of living together he talks of a dialogue with openness and democracy, but he cannot endure the difficulty of sustaining a truly open and transformational dialogue even "tentatively."⁵⁸

Hanazaki's notion of "open-minded subject" is also slippery, in that it allows such a subject to enjoy ethnicity without acknowledging any responsibility for the acts of one's ethnic group. He makes a distinction between what one as a group member should do and what one can do as an individual, criticizing Suh for ignoring this distinction.⁵⁹ Then, he introduces the notion of "unique I" (*koyū no watashi*). One has the right and freedom to assert one's "unique I," he goes on to say, borrowing ideas from Ueno. In his case, his attachment to Japanese history, culture and natural environment and his love for the Japanese language, i.e., the emotions he has acquired as a unique person, belong to the realm of "unique I" and should be distinguished from the consciousness of membership in nation or ethnicity.⁶⁰ Yet, these traits and emotions he sees as part of what he has acquired

⁵³ Ōta Masakuni, "Shohyō, Suh Kyung-Sik, *Han-nanmin no ichi kara*," *People's Plan*, 19 (2002): 154-157.

⁵⁴ Stuart Hall and Sakai Naoki, "Bunka kenkyū to aidentiti," *Shisō*, 887 (1998): 120-140, 135.

⁵⁵ Saitō Jun'ichi, "Seijiteki sekinin no futatsu no isō," in Abiko Kazuyoshi, Uozumi Yōichi, Nakaoka Narifumi, eds., *Sensō-sekinin to "wareware": "rekishi shutai rosō" o megutte*. Kyoto: Nakanishiya shuppan, 1999, 76-98, 88.

⁵⁶ Takahashi Tetsuya, "Konnichi no 'rekishi ninshiki' ronsō o meguru jōkyō to ronten," in Takahashi, ed., *Rekishi/Shūsei-shugi*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2002, 39-50, 50.

⁵⁷ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Myra Bergman Ramos, trans. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970, 34.

⁵⁸ Hanazaki criticizes Tessu Morris-Suzuki for not taking the position of the White middle class in her argument on an Aboriginal man, but he does not fully admit his privilege as a Japanese man himself. See her "Unquiet Graves."

⁵⁹ Hanazaki, "Datsu-shokuminchika (2)," 14.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 28-30.

as a unique person do not uniquely belong to him but are shared with others in the Japanese ethnic group. His concept of the "unique I" is problematic because it submerges the "private" individual deeply and un-self-consciously within the ethnic group while insulating him from responsibility for the group's acts. It is problematic also because it is oblivious to the privileged nature of those private enjoyments and ignores the fact that most resident Koreans are deprived of the opportunity to enjoy their ethnicity. Hanazaki misguidedly accuses Suh of not being satisfied with enjoying his ethnicity in the private realm.

Further, in making a distinction between the realm of national membership and the private realm and then slipping ethnicity into the latter, Hanazaki ironically reintroduces the unity of nationality and ethnicity. Contrary to what he seems to assume, locating ethnicity in the private realm does not sever its linkage to nationality, precisely because the ethnicity he talks about (defined in terms of cultural practices and familial bloodlines), is the basis for obtaining Japanese national citizenship, as demonstrated in the Nationality Law and immigration policy. His private enjoyments within the ethnic group are imbued with the traits of national character. The commentators on his 1986 essay were correct in saying that the linkage of ethnic and national consciousness would promote nationalism. But they were wrong in leaving this linkage unexamined. It should be examined precisely because it tends to intensify a sense of Japanese nationalism. Hanazaki

thinks it possible to enjoy his ethnicity privately, without further ramifications. But in these private moments he is actually enjoying his nation.

In sum, Hanazaki argues against the thesis of taking responsibility as *Nihonjin*. Takahashi notes that Suh sheds a critical light on how Hanazaki is just like many other Japanese who evade the Other's accusations and protect Japanese privilege by denouncing that thesis.⁶¹ Hanazaki is also in tune with those liberal Japanese who have embraced the universal values of peace and democracy and have recently begun to espouse the idea of "multicultural living together" (*tabunka kyōsei*) from the perspective of human rights without attention to the colonial past. Both sides of Hanazaki's argument are problematic not least because they are widely shared among self-claimed progressives.

Self-Transformation

In countering Suh's argument about Japanese privilege, Hanazaki claims that Japan's economic success, which is an important source for this privilege, was brought about not solely by Japan's initiative but partly by the US-led Occupation policy and by Cold War pressures. In a sense, Japan was forced to select the path of economic recovery, he says.⁶² His sudden introduction of this topic puzzled Suh and led him to suspect that Hanazaki was trying to protect something.⁶³ When looking at their exchange as a whole, what is also odd is the way in

⁶¹ Takahashi, "Rekishi ninshiki," 50.

⁶² Hanazaki, "Datsu-shokuminchika (2)," 14.

⁶³ Suh, *Han-namin*, 128.

which Hanazaki terminated their exchange. What is hidden behind these odd actions?

In analyzing the Suh-Hanazaki debate after the publication of their 2002 books, Nakano Toshio, a scholar in intellectual history, finds a profound historical meaning in Hanazaki's odd (*kimyō*) termination of the exchange. In Nakano's view, Hanazaki was trying to protect a certain kind of national subject, whose formation could be traced back to wartime Japanese thought production. Nakano praises Hanazaki's intention to initiate a long-overdue inquiry into decolonization. Yet in responding to Suh, Hanazaki immediately stumbled over a communication problem. Nakano takes this as an unavoidable consequence precisely because colonialism is, in his view, a mode of control that generates and fixes a relationship between the colonizers and the colonized through systematic discrimination. An equal communication between them is structurally precluded. In his communication with Suh, Hanazaki, acting as a majority person, asserted the right to self-definition. Historically, the self-defining subject (*jiko kettei-suru shutai*) discursively emerged as the agent of imperialism and colonialism who internalized the state's goal as its own personal goal, and voluntarily committed hideous colonial violence, Nakano says.⁶⁴

Pointing out that Hanazaki evaded Suh's criticism by a rhetoric of self-reflection (*hansei*) in

his revised *Misuzu* essay, Nakano argues that the self-defining subject does not ignore the Other completely. It includes a self-reflective component, which extends a sense of responsibility to a sincere concern for a minority person's appeal and "offers understanding" (*wakatte ageru*) to that person. Yet, it is willing to communicate with the minority only so long as the minority does not present any contradiction to its self, which it claims the sole right to define. Nakano traces the idea of the self-reflecting subject to the post-war discourse of national subject formation by the influential intellectuals Ōtsuka Hisao and Maruyama Masao, in which the function of self-reflection is to forget the colonial past and create a domestically-oriented national subject. Such a self-reflecting subject refuses to confront the colonized Other on any but the subject's own terms, Nakano says. He regrets that Hanazaki ignored this intellectual history and refused to talk to Suh, the colonized.⁶⁵ In Naoki Sakai's words, Hanazaki recoiled into the "familiar and intimate sphere" of the national subject and confirmed "its putative unity."⁶⁶

Nonetheless, Nakano sees the possibility of dismantling the idea of the self-defining subject in the Suh-Hanazaki debate. In encountering a minority, a self-defining subject cannot avoid feeling a threat to the unity of the self. But such a feeling of threat can be a beginning of self-transformation, a beginning of dialogue with the minority, Nakano says.⁶⁷ In his view, which he has expressed elsewhere, self-

⁶⁴ Nakano Toshio, "Jiko-hanseiteki shutai no airo," *Gendai shisō*, 30:7 (2002): 17-24, 18-19, 22.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁶⁶ Naoki Sakai, "The West—A Dialogic Prescription or Proscription?" *Social Identities*, 11:3 (2005): 177-195, 178.

⁶⁷ Nakano, "Jiko-hanseiteki shutai," 24.

transformation is inevitable if one wants to fulfill one's responsibility to the Other. Contrary to the assertion by Katō and others that it is necessary to establish a unitary national subject before taking responsibility, Nakano says, the unified subject, or rather the imagination of it, should fall apart at the moment it takes responsibility. For when responsibility is understood as a response to the Other, the act of taking responsibility as Japanese inevitably involves listening to the Other's voice and accepting the conflicts, tensions, and uneasiness it causes inside the "I." These conflicts and tensions lead to a critical examination of "I" as Japanese, going beyond the concern for the Other's appeal acknowledged by Hanazaki. When responding to the Other, the imagined unity of the subject is inevitably fragmented under the Other's gaze. This fragmentation (*bunretsu*) may in turn generate political action to fulfill responsibility, Nakano argues.⁶⁸

Hanazaki's self-reflective national subject, disguised as a postmodern "I" with multiple identifications, refuses to go through *bunretsu*. Nakano sees a similar refusal in Ueno's "I." Like Ueno, Nakano talks of "I" as having multiple positions. But he does not characterize "I" as an ultimately unified subject, but as an agent that has the potential to change in response to the Other's voice. In his view, the problem with Ueno's argument is an *a priori* assumption of what "I" is, however multiple. One needs to accept not just the multiplicity but the vulnerability of one's "I" to fragmentation, change,

and reconstitution when trying to take responsibility in an encounter with the Other and facing the inevitable conflict such an encounter entails. Ueno refuses to experience such conflict, Nakano says.⁶⁹

In this way, Nakano finds the same problem in holding onto the old identity position of national subject, in the case of Hanazaki, as in asserting the new postmodern identity position of "I," in that of Ueno. The problem is a desire to protect one's right to define oneself and ultimately one's right to maintain a unitary self. A corollary to this is the problem of refusing to examine and transform oneself in response to the Other. Probably, such a unified subject cannot listen to the Other, not because its consciousness is "hollowed out," as Suh says, but because its mind is filled with an ironically un-self-reflective imperialist desire. In its empire of self, it can only have a self-serving monologue.

Like Nakano, Suh talks about deconstructing the notion of *Nihonjin* in the process of fulfilling responsibility. Indeed, Nakano's thesis of fragmenting a unified subjectivity echoes Suh's metaphor of tearing up a passport. For Nakano, the act of fulfilling responsibility takes place when the unity of a Japanese subject or "I" falls apart in a dialogue with the Other. For Suh, a Japanese national could release herself from responsibility only by giving up all the privileges associated with her passport. When tearing it up, she would understand its significance and would paradoxically become capable of listening

⁶⁸ Nakano Toshio, *Ōtsuka Hisao to Maruyama Masao: Do'in, shutai, sensō-sekinin*, Tokyo: Seidosha, 2001, 298-299.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 330-331.

and responding to the Other, i.e., beginning to fulfill responsibility toward the Other.⁷⁰

Democratic Citizen

In Suh's view, Takahashi is the Japanese scholar who most clearly adopts the stance of deconstructing (*kaitai-suru*) "Japanese."⁷¹ Suh and Takahashi are primarily concerned about the political effects of such deconstruction. In a series of their public conversations in 1998 and 1999, they both said that taking responsibility as Japanese ultimately meant transforming (*henkaku-suru*) Japanese society into a "different Japan" (*betsu no Nihon*).⁷² Using the same language, however, they envisage different kinds of *betsu no Nihon*. Their difference seems to stem from their different views on ethnicity as partly discussed above.

With the expression of *betsu no Nihon*, Takahashi talks of changing Japan into a democratic society "in a radical sense," envisioning a new social system that promotes mutual respect for Otherness among different kinds of people and stressing the need to deconstruct *Nihonjin* in a political and civic sense as a prerequisite to creating such a system.⁷³ His political goal as a public intellectual seeking "philosophy as political resistance" is to transform Japanese people into citizens capable of changing Japan into a radically

democratic society that will take responsibility for the past. In his pursuit of a civic nation, however, ethnic diversity is appreciated as a universal value, but an inquiry into the privilege of Japanese ethnicity, which is critically important to Suh's vision of creating a different Japan, has little place.

Takahashi is in fact inclined to argue in universalist terms. He sees a universal dimension in the act of taking responsibility. From this perspective, the issue is violence and injustice caused by human beings against other human beings. When assuming responsibility for Japan's colonial past, he argues, Japanese are inevitably exposed to the universal dimension of taking responsibility and may become critical of colonialism in principle.⁷⁴ Conversely, when interrogated by Asian Others, Japanese people not only have universal responsibility but also have responsibility that should be taken as Japanese. Originating in Japanese colonial control, it is political responsibility for crimes committed in the name of the state. Japanese nationals have responsibility to make their government provide compensation and apologize to non-Japanese victims.⁷⁵ Takahashi thus distinguishes two types of responsibility, universal and particular. Particular political responsibility is civic in nature.

Takahashi's primary concern with activism

⁷⁰ Nakano understands responsibility for the colonial past by way of Morris-Suzuki's idea that people are "implicated" in the past wrongdoings. See her "Hihanteki sōzōryoku no kiki," *Seikai*, 683 (2001): 80-92. Nakano's view goes beyond civic responsibility and is similar to Suh's.

⁷¹ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 114.

⁷² Suh Kyung-Sik and Takahashi Tetsuya, *Danzetsu no seiki shōgen no jidai*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2000, 143.

⁷³ Takahashi Tetsuya, *Sengo sekinin-ron*. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1999, 51.

⁷⁴ Takahashi, *Sengo sekinin-ron*, 170.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 38-46.

and universal and civic values seems to limit his encounter with the Other. Nakamasa Masaki suggests that to achieve the political goal of legislating for war compensation, Takahashi, a prominent scholar of Derrida who should be thoroughly aware of the complexity of the notion of the Other, may be choosing to discuss this notion in rather simplified terms.⁷⁶ Takahashi states that to take responsibility as Japanese is to transform the Japanese political community by absorbing memories of the Other into the core of the self and turning them into resources for continuous self-criticism, thereby rebuilding a new relationship with the Other.⁷⁷ Yet, it is not clear whether this Japanese self hears the voice of the Other in its complexity, including the ethnic part. As Maekawa Ichirō notes, in focusing on the legal and political aspects of taking responsibility, Takahashi seems to preclude an inquiry into the reasons and meaning of the Other's historical experiences and dismiss a possibility of responding to the Other over those reasons and meaning.⁷⁸ Suh seems to be pursuing such a possibility.

Suh also expresses interest in the universal value of peace and hopes to create a new universal framework for interethnic collaboration.⁷⁹ Yet, he is concerned about the frequent use by Japanese of the rhetoric that responsibility belongs to human beings in general.⁸⁰ He is afraid that many of those concerned

about the issue of "comfort women," like Ueno, can see it only as a universal issue of sexual violence, not as an issue for which they are held responsible as *Nihonjin*.⁸¹ Indeed, Takahashi's thesis of universal responsibility may end up reinforcing the universalist orientation among liberals. They may dismiss his call for taking responsibility as Japanese nationals, let alone Suh's call for doing so as ethnic Japanese. Given the role of universal values in orienting progressives toward obscuring Japanese responsibility, as demonstrated in Ueno's and Hanazaki's case, Takahashi seems to run the risk of falling prey to this established pattern. As Catherine Lu argues, a universalist approach to colonial responsibility is likely to obscure "structural injustice," both in colonized and colonialist societies, and to allow unjust social structures to persist.⁸² Takahashi needs to pay closer attention to Suh's critique of national and ethnic privilege in order to grasp the complexity of colonial responsibility beyond its civic and universal aspects. Suh's critique of privilege is a powerful tool for analyzing how unjust social structures of colonial domination have persisted in postcolonial Japan.

Conclusion: Taking Colonial Responsibility in Multiethnic Japan

In arguing for the fulfillment of Japanese responsibility for the colonial past, Suh discussed

⁷⁶ Nakamasa, *Posuto-modan*, 212-214.

⁷⁷ Takahashi, *Sengo sekinin-ron*, 58.

⁷⁸ Maekawa Ichirō, "Rekshigaku toshite-no 'shokuminchi-sekinin,'" *Jinbun ronsyū* (Soka University), 20 (2008): 5-24, 17.

⁷⁹ Suh, *Han-nanmin*, 362; Suh and Takahashi, *Danzetsu*, 150-152.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 107-110. Suh notes that some victims of the Holocaust, including Primo Levi, see it as a human crime and feel responsibility for it.

⁸¹ JWRC, "Paneru Disukasshon," 65.

⁸² Catherine Lu, "Colonialism as Structural Injustice: Historical Responsibility and Contemporary Redress," *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 19:3 (2011): 261-281.

colonizers' privilege as well as colonized people's predicament and problematized the notion of *Nihonjin*. Discussing Englishness, Simon Gikandi argues that "colonized peoples and imperial spaces were crucial ingredients in the generation and consolidation of a European identity and its master narratives."⁸³ Before the symposium, what was largely missing in studies of Japanese national subjectivity was such a relational perspective, an Asian perspective in the context of the Japanese empire. In the debates on responsibility generated at and by the 1997 symposium, it became clear that the persisting Occupation-era discourses and the notion of transcending nationalism were discouraging studies of colonizers' identification in relation to Asian Others. In their elaborations of Suh's arguments, however, Oka and Nakano delved into the question of Japanese subject formation, pointing to its imperialist nature.^e

Pointing out the relational nature of identity formation, Koschmann suggests that under the effect of Katō's "Since Defeat," which discussed national subject formation based on the unification of conservatives and progressives, "domestic political opposition would have been projected onto a foreign Other, creating a new binary between insiders and outsiders."⁸⁴ I think that the domestic unity against Asian Others has long been in place, not in the form of the unanimity that Katō seeks, but in a complementary form. As conservatives have extolled the supremacy of the Japanese as an ethnic group, progressives have asserted a democratic peace-seeking national subjectivity. The assertions of the two groups are not

in conflict but are supportive of each other. Together, they have strengthened the identity position of *Nihonjin* as ethnic and civic against Asian foreigners. Herein lies the need to look into both ethnic and civic aspects of Japanese identification in relation to Asian Others. Such a research need has long been pointed out by resident Korean intellectuals, including Suh, Yoon and Lee, but has not received due attention from Japanese scholars.

If it is true, as Koschmann suggests, that the role of Asian Others has become important in Japanese self-perception, then, the question of responsibility for Japan's aggression and colonial domination in Asia, both in thought production and activism, should remain critically important. The majority of foreign residents in Japan are Asians whose personal and familial trajectories are mostly traced back to the history of the Japanese empire. In continuing to tackle the question of colonial responsibility, scholars and activists need to look into the national and ethnic privilege of *Nihonjin*, the privilege that was first formed through Japan's colonial domination in Asia. Above all, they should pay attention to both the universal and particular kinds of responsibility, not to the call for "multicultural living together" that ignores the history of the Japanese empire and lets the question of responsibility dissipate into the embrace of the universal values of cultural diversity and human rights.

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⁸³ Gikandi, Simon, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, 5.

⁸⁴ Koschmann, "National Subjectivity," 133.