

Ikaino's Afterlives: The Legacies of Landscape in the Fiction of Kim Yujeong

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This article examines the works of Kim Yujeong as a contemporary response to Ikaino literature, a subgenre of Zainichi Korean literature that flourished from the 1950s–1980s. Ikaino is the old name of the neighborhood of Osaka that was and remains the area of Japan with the largest population of Zainichi Koreans. Ikaino's origins as a settlement of Korean migrant laborers in the 1920s and its official erasure from Osaka city maps in 1973 have often been mythologized within Zainichi Korean fiction and poetry. I read Kim Yujeong's short stories "Tanpopo" (2000), "Murasame" (2002), and "Tamayura" (2015), which feature working women protagonists traversing Ikaino's borders, as contemporary works of Ikaino literature that interrogate the Zainichi community's cultural and historical understandings of the entangled geographies of Japan and the two Koreas. I argue that Kim portrays Ikaino landscapes as spaces constituted through their residents' collective imaginings of Jeju Island and North Korea. Kim also subverts our expectations of multilingualism in Zainichi literature through the use of local dialect in her representation of Japanese residents of Ikaino. Throughout her work, she seeks to both shed light on the multiple structures of oppression that face Zainichi women living in the Ikaino area today, and critique the way those women have been represented in prior works of Zainichi literature.

Keywords: Gender politics, Jeju Island, Ikaino, Kim Yujeong, Zainichi Korean literature

Introduction

The deeper one delves into the history and cultural production of Zainichi Koreans, the more the place name Ikaino 猪飼野 appears. Settled in the 1920s by Korean laborers who migrated to Japan under the Japanese Empire (1868–

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