



## White Badge: A Novel of Korea

*By Ahn Junghyo, Chong-Hyo An, Junghyo Ahn*

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Han Kiju is an executive in modern Seoul, a Korean intellectual who has never adjusted to his postwar existence. When an old comrade-in-arms, a coward who crumpled in battle, begins to follow him, Han Kiju must finally deal with the ghosts of the past haunting his present.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This 1983 war novel by Korean journalist Ahn was a sensation in his native land, but will hold less interest for Western readers. A gritty, brutal account of the horrors of combat, told retrospectively by a man who lived through the Korean and Vietnam wars and now scouts foreign manuscripts for a publishing house, the narrative will startle readers by its familiarity. ("In my childhood war, everybody around me was in the same war," he writes. "But in Vietnam, we fought alone, by ourselves.") Ahn's depiction of war is evocative and relentless, but his hastily sketched characterizations rob his story of emotional vitality; as in old war movies, the members of the platoon depicted here are distinguishable only by their nicknames. An equally serious drawback is the author's rickety translation of his own work, which often strikes awkward notes.

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### About the Author

Ahn Junghyo was born in Seoul in 1941, where he still resides. He studied literature at Sogang Jesuit University, then worked as reporter, columnist, and editor at the English-language *Korea Times* and *Korea Herald*. He has published three novels in Korea and has translated nearly a hundred books into his native language.

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