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This essay offers an introduction to proletarian arts in East Asia in the 1920s and 1930s. It is based on the introduction to a special edition of positions: east asia cultures critique*, entitled* Proletarian Arts in East Asia: Quests for National, Gender, and Class Justice *(14:2, Fall 2006), which grew out of the international symposium "Proletarian Arts in East Asia," held at the University of Chicago in 2002. [2]*

Proletarian Literature in the World

The proletarian arts movement was an international political arts movement that flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. Like other modernisms, proletarian arts sought to redefine the form and function of literature and art; and like other modernisms, the proletarian arts movement recognized that capitalism was fundamentally changing the ways that people related to each other and to the world in which they lived. But in contrast to other modernisms, the proletarian arts movement—however much writers and artists disagreed over the details—held that class-based struggle was necessary because capital was controlled by the few at the expense of the many. Anguish and optimism made proletarianism seem not only possible but crucial. As the important Korean literary critic Kim Yoon-shik writes, "Literature was no longer to be a sentimental pastime, but an active participant in the development of society and the unfolding of history." [1]

In the last decade, the number of international scholars working on Japanese proletarian literature has grown from a few exceptional scholars like Miriam Silverberg to dozens of students and scholars in fields as diverse as Japanese literature, comparative literature, cultural studies, film studies, gender studies, history and anthropology. Some of this work is beginning to see print in the form of anthologies, translations, scholarly works, and dissertations, and we should expect to see more in the future. In the last five years, there have been a number of international conferences on Japanese and East Asian proletarian literature held throughout the world. In November 2002, I organized an international symposium, "Proletarian Arts in East Asia," at the University of Chicago. In 2003, 2004, and 2005, the Shirakaba Bungakukan-Takiji Library (headed by Mr. Sano Chikara) hosted international symposia on Kobayashi Takiji in Tokyo (2003, 2004) and in China (2005). In April 2006, Orna Shaughnessy organized a small symposium on Japanese proletarian literature at the University of California, Berkeley. In July 2006, Ruth Barraclough and Elyssa Faison co-hosted a conference on proletarian literature, industrial and sexual labor in Korea and Japan at the University of Sydney. In November 2006, Curtis Anderson Gayle convened a symposium on proletarian arts—"Proletarian Culture and Resistance in Pre-War East Asia"—at Leiden University, The Netherlands. In fact, it is tempting to say that we are in the midst of a boom in the international study of Japanese proletarian literature, and it is significant that research *on* proletarian arts shares *with* proletarian arts an emphasis on internationalism.

Kobayashi Takiji,
subject of symposia
in Tokyo and China

This essay offers an introduction to proletarian arts in East Asia in the 1920s and 1930s through a discussion of context and key issues such as modernism, communism, nationalism, imperialism, gender and representation, as well as attention to work on proletarian literature by contemporary scholars from around the world. It is based on the introduction to a special edition of *positions: east asia cultures critique*, *Proletarian Arts in East Asia: Quests for National, Gender, and Class Justice* 14:2 (Fall 2006), which grew out of the symposium at the University of Chicago in 2002. [2]

Despite the awkwardness of the term to some ears today, self-titled "proletarian" organizations existed throughout the world since the nineteenth century. [3] Michael Denning writes,

> The turning point [for the development of proletarian arts] was the world upheaval of 1917-1921. In the wake of the European slaughter, regimes and empires were challenged: there were revolutions in Czarist Russia and Mexico, brief lived

> socialist republics in Germany, Hungary and Persia, uprisings against colonialism in Ireland, India, and China, and massive strike waves and factory occupations in Japan, Italy, Spain, Chile, Brazil and the United States. [4]

Labor uprisings throughout East Asia, anti-colonial movements in Korea and semicolonial China, and the Bolshevik Revolution in Asia's neighboring country brought revolution to the horizon of the thinkable in East Asia.

Image from the Bolshevik Revolution, 1917

The boom in world proletarian literature of the late 1920s and 1930s was put into motion a decade earlier by tremendous social change and organizations formed to deal with it. Denning notes:

> Three initiatives were particularly influential. The first was the formation of the first international writers' association, *Clarté*, in 1919 by Henri Barbusse … which led to a series of international writers' congresses. The second was the emergence of a proletarian culture movement in revolutionary Russia, a loose federation of clubs, education societies, and workers' theaters …
>
> The third initiative was the Baku conference of 1920, which marked the turn by the Communist inheritors of European socialism to the anticolonial movements in Asia and Africa, generating the powerful alliance of Communism and anticolonialism that was to shape the global decolonization struggles of the twentieth century. [5]

Depiction of Lenin sweeping the globe

Two of the three initiatives outlined by Denning are grounded in antiwar and anticolonialist projects. The class-based, internationalist energies of the *Clartè*, Baku and Soviet proletcult movements were developed into study groups, publications, theater guilds and arts movements throughout the world, including Japan, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Korea, China and the United States. [6] Denning writes, “The ‘imaginative proximity of social revolution’ electrified a generation of young writers who came together in a variety of revolutionary and proletarian writers’ groups.” [7]

Photo collage from *Bungei sensen* showing five imperialist nations vying for control of China: Japan, American, England, France and Italy. Headlines read, “Get your hands off China!” and “The stage will be set for WWII in China.” The Chinese header reads “Down With Imperialism.” (July 1929)

The goal of proletarian revolution—and the quest for a just future—brought together people whose lived experience was diverse, and as a result, the art and literature that was produced was also diverse. The proletarian arts movement was built by thinkers, activists, artists and writers whose world resembled ours with war, imperialism, uneven economic growth, and culture wars. It should then come as no surprise that proletarian arts address the most important issues of our day: the transformations of the world through capitalism, the possibilities of democracy, job security, nationalism, imperialism, sweatshops, torture, living wages, child care, relations between the sexes, the social function of the family, the arts and media, war, peace and empire, and so much more.

Shanghai

Shanghai—politics, economics, and culture—offers a spectacular opportunity to reflect on the interconnected and sometimes contradictory issues that confronted participants in the proletarian arts movements: ethnic-national identity, internationalism, imperialism, organized labor, Communism and myriad radical and conservative movements, gender, commodity culture, literature, theater, visual arts and modernism. In Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s, as in many metropolitan centers, the confluence of labor struggles, commodity culture, and political conflicts provided a fertile site for the development of modernist and proletarian arts movements.

Shanghai was, to start, a meeting place for international Communists. Japanese radicals met up with Comintern representatives there in an effort to found and then maintain the Japanese Communist Party in the early 1920s, and they received significant financial support from those visits. [8] Shanghai was the gateway for Japanese radicals seeking to study in Russia. [9] Shanghai was the site of the formation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. It was a burgeoning industrial city of immigrants rife with labor and national problems. S. A. Smith writes, “In this city of 2,700,000 people, there were up to 800,000 working people, including 250,000 factory workers… By March 1927 it [the Communist-

led Shanghai General Labour Union] claimed that 502 labour unions, with 821,280 members, were affiliated to it." [10]

The Bund in Shanghai in the 1920s

Shanghai was also the site of the Guomindang's betrayal of its united front ally, the Chinese Communist Party, in 1927. [11] In 1927, Chinese Communists sought to mobilize thousands of Shanghai workers in general strikes into an uprising capable of unseating the warlord Sun Chuanfang before Chiang Kai-shek's army could arrive in Shanghai during the Northern Expedition. All three attempts at uprisings failed; the third because Chiang's army did arrive and itself massacred workers and Communists.

This defeat was important for the development of the Chinese League of Leftwing Writers in Shanghai, writes Wang-chi Wong: "The left-wingers, defeated in politics, took refuge in literature. They launched a large-scale revolutionary literary movement in Shanghai, and within a few years, left-wing literature became the dominant element in the literary arena. Thus 1927 has been regarded as a turning point not only in the political history, but also in the literary history of modern China. In fact, the ten years following 1927 are commonly known in Chinese literary circles as the 'Left League Decade' (Zuolian shinian)." [12] The League of Leftwing Writers (established in 1930) and League of Leftwing Dramatists (established in January 1931) fostered proletarian literature and theater in Shanghai, and maintained an important relationship with proletarian writers and dramatists in Japan. [13] In addition, the Shanghai Art Drama Society, established in October of 1929, produced many international dramas such as Romain Rolland's *The Game of Love and Death*, Upton Sinclair's *The Overman,* Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front,* and playwright Tian Han's adaptation of Prosper Mérimée's *Carmen*. Liu Ping describes how "new techniques were highlighted in the flashback scene in the production of *The Overman*, where they combined stage dialogue with film projection." [14] Moreover, the productions of the Shanghai Art Drama Society attracted an audience of international progressives such as "American reporter Agnes Smedley and Japanese reporter Ozaki Hotsumi," each of whom would impinge significantly on the Chinese revolution. [15]

Agnes Smedley
(Chinese postage
stamp)

Last, but not least, Shanghai embodied the conflicts and contradictions of capitalist development. The considerable flow of people, ideas, goods and capital throughout East Asia and the world was enabled by the capitalist-imperialist development of cosmopolitan, urban centers like Shanghai, Tokyo, and Dalian (Dairen). Shu-mei Shih writes: Shanghai "was a semicolonial city integrated with global economy and politics though the efforts of an economy-driven Euro-American imperialism and a territorially and economically ambitious Japanese imperialism; it was a city of sin, pleasure, and carnality, awash with the phantasmagoria of urban consumption and commodification." [16] According to Raymond Williams, the development of European modernism "had much to do with imperialism: with the magnetic concentration of wealth and power in imperial capitals and the simultaneous cosmopolitan access to a wide variety of subordinate cultures." [17] A semicolonial matrix of capital, Shanghai was likewise host to a nexus of engaged and experimental Chinese writers. [18]

Yokomitsu Riichi

For Japanese modernist Yokomitsu Riichi, Shanghai served as an ideal novelistic landscape for representing the anxieties of industrialism, capitalism, nationalism and selfhood. Edward Said has written, "The idea [of empire as a novelistic landscape] is that (following the general principles of free trade) outlying territories are available for use, at will, at the novelist's discretion…" [19] Blithely set in Shanghai during the May 30th 1925 demonstrations against foreign capital, Yokomitsu's novel *Shanghai* (1928-1932) uses the city's labor conflicts as a backdrop for the solipsistic encounters of Japanese expatriate businessmen with Russian prostitutes, Chinese and Japanese bathhouse workers, Japanese dancers, and a stunning Chinese revolutionary named Quilan; just as compelling as any of the characters, however, are the descriptions of filth and mobs. Spokesman for an experimental modernist movement branded Shinkankakuha, or New Sensationism, Yokomitsu was typical of writers and artists who drew influence from the overdetermined conditions of modern life. *Shanghai* is an experiment in representing the effects of capital on selfhood and subalterns amidst the nationalisms of international Shanghai.

Seiji Lippit writes, "As a space of abjection, Shanghai is, for the novel's characters, an object of both revulsion and attraction." [20] Sanki, accidentally dumped into raw sewage up to his neck finds the scent reminds him of "the smell of a Japanese village," which makes him think of his mother, and then beautiful Quilan. [21] Tempting though it would be to pin down these associations of filth, nation, mother and sexual (revolutionary) interest, *Shanghai* revels in the instability of signifiers at the expense of the social struggles so avidly pursued by proletarian literature. Part-tribute to and part-mockery of proletarian literature, the reduction of human beings to exchange relations is represented most often by the frequent mention of bathhouse workers and prostitutes and most spectacularly by the architect/corpse-dealer who looks at people dancing and imagines how much he could get for their skeletons. *Shanghai*, by engaging the very issues of proletarian literature, performs a dialogue with proletarian literature, one that as Lippit notes remains unresolved. [22]

Proletarian internationalism, like modernism, was born out of the context of the new imperialisms of the 1920s and 1930s: developing technology, industry and urbanization enabled writers and activists to travel and circulate ideas and works widely with increased ease. Shanghai and *Shanghai* bring out important issues that run through proletarian literature: proletarianism and modernism; gender and abjection; imperialism, colonialism and semicolonialism; capitalist competition and national identities; subalterns and violence; labor organization and its relationship to national struggle; selfhood, class and nation.

Representation

As literary historians have drafted the history of proletarian literature in Japan and Korea and leftwing literature in China, the proletarian arts movement has tended to appear as though it were a discrete movement, but it is helpful to think about the literary and artistic field having been, as Brian Bergstrom has put it, much messier. Representation—both in the sense of whom to represent and how—was an important issue confronting proletarian writers and artists. Despite general agreement over the need to represent the exploited classes of laborers, and despite attempts by committees to establish the best methods, writers and artists employed a wide variety of techniques: modernism and realism; literature, theater, woodblock prints, mimeograph and painting; socialist masculine and socialist feminism.

Nakamoto Takako, for example, followed the lead of Yokomitsu Riichi in using the idiom of New Sensationism; however, she used the technique to highlight proletarian and women's subject positions. Bergstrom writes: "What sets her early fiction apart, however, is its preoccupation with the body as a volitional, volatile substance, not just an inscriptive surface off of which traces of sensation and exploitation can be read and interpreted. The messy, needy bodies populating these stories push proletarian and New Sensationist regimes of representation to their limit…" Nakamoto Takako, Brian Bergstrom argues, found that the intense emphasis on the body as an organ of sensation advocated by modernist New Sensationists like Yokomitsu had important resonances for proletarian writers as she experimented with describing what it felt like to inhabit a classed Japanese woman's body: "This use of 'female experience' provides her with a language with which to assert the central role bodies play in the two modernist literary discourses she is grappling with: the sensate body around which Yokomitsu's New Sensationism organizes itself, and the laboring body proletarian literature seeks to recover from the capitalist discourse that abstracts it into invisibility through the logic of commodity fetishism." [23]

Realism, too, was a highly contested ideological framework, and one best understood as another modernism. Leading Japanese theorist Kurahara Korehito proposed that bourgeois realism had once been a revolutionary literary perspective, just as the bourgeoisie had once been a revolutionary class; therefore, it was not that realism itself had become bankrupt, because it still uniquely held the promise of exposing the totality of social reality, but realism needed to be re-imagined through "the eyes of the [proletarian] vanguard," to use Lenin's phrase. [24] An advocacy of realism by proletarian theorists was not a naïve investment in transparent art, but on the contrary, a self-conscious experiment with representation.

Yang Kui

In the spirit of investigating realism as a modernism, Bert Scruggs argues that Taiwanese Yang Kui's proletarian writings are "narrations of discomfort," and he introduces Nishikawa Mitsuru's idea of "shit realism" as a way of reading the graphic and abject poverty in Yang's fiction. For example, in his discussion of Yang Kui's "How to Avoid Starving: A Slice of the Free Laborer's Life" (1927), Scruggs writes, "In this peculiarly sensuous passage, the narrator as well as the reader are nearly overwhelmed by the maddening buzz of mosquitoes, the stench of soured, sweaty work clothes hanging on every hook, the funk of unwashed bodies, and the stink of tatamis gray with grime." [25] "Shit realism"

seems simultaneously to mock the seriousness of "proletarian realism" (advocated by Kurahara from 1929) or "socialist realism" (from 1932) even as it embraces with its own kind of seriousness the excessively or sublimely abject, like the "messy" bodies discussed by Bergstrom—female, colonizer, lover, laborer.

Reflecting the contestation over method and media during the proletarian movement, scholars of the period also disagree. Liu Ping argues that in China it was in the field of theater that proletarian literature was to have its greatest successes in transforming its form and content to meet the needs of the working masses. By contrast, Xiaobing Tang emphasizes the successes of woodblock artists in China: "By the mid-1930s, the woodcut had emerged as the preferred artistic medium for advocating the cause of resisting Japanese military aggression and for voicing political dissent." [26] Tang writes that one of the most significant attributes of the woodblock print,

> …was its epistemological commitment to representing the underrepresented, to reorganizing the contemporary visual order and consciousness by bringing back what had been excluded or erased therefrom. This commitment directly led the first generation of woodcut artists to populate their prints with peasants, beggars, prisoners, rickshaw pullers, boat trackers, famine victims, war refugees, industrial workers, and political protestors. On this level, "biaoxian" [expression] was to give visual as well as political representation to subaltern groups whose presence and demands had not been acknowledged. [27]

Among Japanese proletarian theorists, the question of representation tended to focus on the literary arts, most notably on the question of whether proletarian literature had anything to learn from the undeniable popularity of commercial literature. At stake in these and the other discussions of representation is the concern with representing a newly emerging reality with particular self-consciousness regarding the mode of expression.

If the proletarian arts movement was about the shared experience of oppression, that does not mean that "proletarian" was a homogenous space, nor that writers and artists sought to represent it that way. The "who" of proletarian arts was just as contested as the "how." Gearing up for what in fact turned out to be a dire onslaught of government repression, the democratically elected central committee of NAPF (Japanese Proletarian Arts Federation) determined that writers should focus on organized laborers [in Japan] in heavy industry in order to make visible the challenges and accomplishments of the labor and arts movement. Despite this proscription, however, proletarian writers and arts persisted in representing the diversity and variety of proletarian existence: rural and urban, male and female, old and young, colonized and colonizer, piece-work and large-scale factory worker.

Representations of women laboring in colonial factories in Korea, for example, reveal the dynamics of sexual harassment inflected by sexual and colonial inequality. For many Korean proletarian writers, Ruth Barraclough compellingly argues, female factory workers in colonial Korea symbolized the failures of the transition from traditional patriarchal society to a rapidly changing industrializing society in which women are "free" to be used as laborers and as sexual objects, "how authors of proletarian literature depicted factory girls as the sexual victims of capitalism, in a searing critique of the costs of Japan's industrializing project." [28] Barraclough emphasizes the limitations of these proletarian treatments of the female factory worker which failed to imagine them as capable of leading themselves into consciousness in contrast to the work of a woman writer, Kang Kyong-ae's *The Human Predicament* (Ingan Munje). [29] In a provocative challenge to feminist recuperations of female factory workers as female subjects, as women rather than infantilized "girls," Barraclough prefers the historicity of the term "factory girls," "precisely because of its 'bitterness to modern ears.'": "The term 'factory girl' draws attention to the very contradictions that working-class women seemed to embody, labouring in factories where so many lost their youth." [30] Also worthy of further discussion, Barraclough argues that the significant sexual harassment and violence suffered by "factory girls" was figured as a "trope of seduction" in the literary imagination of masculinist socialism: "In suggesting the usefulness of the trope of seduction to analyze this literature I am not attempting to valorize seduction in a way that reinforces an unambiguous distinction between seduction (nice) and rape (bad). Rather I seek to explore the irresolvable ambiguities of seduction – in relationships that thrive in circumstances of inequality and collaboration." [31]

Attention to the way that women's experiences were narrativized also reveals something about "the construction of a socialist masculinity," as Barraclough puts it. Similarly, Samuel Perry pays attention to the way that women's experiences constitute a secondary narrative of tragedy that feeds into the collective masculine protagonist of a story by a Korean proletarian writer: "what Chang does is transfer the horror and anguish on the part of the impoverished widow, through the flow of the narrative, into the collective emotions of the men who work at the construction site." [32] Perry is sensitive to the costs of using women's experience to transform men's but not women's consciousness, but he sees this as utilizing dominant ideologies to best affective result: "It might be argued that the workplace uprising of the male farmers, as well as the earlier village uprising, comes largely at the expense of these poor women… In this sense, at least, proletarian literature shared something in common with most other contemporary Korean fiction. One might simply say that it is the suffering of those considered society's weakest—enfeebled old men, hungry children, uneducated widow, those least susceptible to racist charges of violence or sloth—that works in its very repetition to aesthetically assail the reader's sensibilities." [33]

The Comintern and Japanese Imperialism

Germany, England and the United States had imperial ambitions and territories in East Asia in the 19th and early 20th centuries; Japan joined the Western imperial powers as a threat to East Asia with its rapid modernization and military successes in the late 19th and early 20th century. An issue that shaped the proletarian movement in Asia is the special problem posed by Japanese imperialism on the Asian mainland. In Korea, Taiwan, and China, resistance to Japanese imperialism received organized support from proletarian organizations originating at home, in the Soviet Union, in Japan, and in other parts of Asia. The origins of proletarian literature in Japan are often attributed to a journal published in 1921 by Komaki Omi, recently returned from France where he was deeply influenced by Henri Barbusse and the *Clarté* movement. [34] In 1923, Komaki and Japanese radical Sasaki Takamaru published a Japanese translation of *Clarté*. Antiwar and anti-imperialist projects were fundamental to the proletarian arts movement in East Asia.

The Comintern (Communist International) offered international solidarity as well as institutional support in the form of leadership and financial assistance while it posed revolutionary strategy based on developments throughout East Asia and the world. [35] From its beginnings in 1919, the Comintern was committed to fostering international revolution. [36] Fearing that the Russian economy would falter without the support of at

least one revolutionary, economically developed nation as an ally, Russian thinkers looked first to the possibility of revolution in Germany in 1919, and then when that passed, decided that the revolution was most likely to arise from the decolonizing world. The Comintern theorized that Asia, in particular China, represented the best chance for revolution. As a result, the Comintern's pursuit of revolution in China was a major factor in its strategizing for the rest of Asia. [37] The Comintern's Theses on East Asia, which spelled out strategy for revolution, represented a significant horizon of awareness for anyone interested in the possibility of revolution in East Asia.

Comintern poster

Significant guideposts of proletarian organizations in East Asia include the development of Soviet-inspired and recognized national proletarian literature organizations with Esperanto names, like the Soviet organizations VAPP (All Union Association of Proletarian Writers, until 1928) and RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, after 1928). In Japan, NAPF (Nippona Artista Proleta Federacio) was formed in March 1928, in the aftermath of the widespread March 15th arrests. [38] Late in 1931, NAPF eschewed "arts" and embraced "culture" as the key term, renaming itself KOPF (Federacio de Proletaj Kultur-organizoj Japanaj). KOPF had a significant number of Korean participants. The Korean organization, KAPF (Korea Artista Proletaria Federatio), lasted ten years, from 1925-1935, thereby predating and outlasting NAPF. Kim Yoon-shik argues: "The name KAPF was actually created before RAPP (*Rossiskaia assotsiatsiia proletarskikh pisatelei*) and NAPF (*Nippona Proleta Artista Federacio*)." [39] There was no Chinese version of these Esperanto-named organizations, although NAPF played an important role in China as many Chinese intellectuals studied in Japan and/or translated pieces at home. The Shanghai-based League of Leftwing Writers was founded with support by the Chinese Communist Party.

Capitalism and imperialism—the doppelgangers of internationalism—crossed national and colonial borders with the assistance of workers, settlers, entrepreneurs, politicians and militaries, and they threatened to undermine proletarian solidarity. Japanese imperialism figured large in Comintern theorizing as well as in reactions to it. Marxist analysts had to decide whether Japanese imperialism was really, as Lenin had argued, the highest stage of capitalism, by which he meant not so much colonization as the development of finance capital. [40] For example, a major theorist in the Japanese organization (Rounouha) that resisted Comintern analyses argued for the already thorough interpenetration of capitalism and imperialism into the economies of Japan and China. Germaine Hoston summarizes Inomata Tsunao's argument:

> China was the site of 90 percent of Japanese foreign investment, which was concentrated in the pivotal Chinese commercial centers of Shanghai, Qingdao, Hankou, and Tianjin. In turn, Japanese capital had an enormous impact on the Chinese economy. Japanese capital controlled about 25 percent of the 25 million tons of annual Chinese coal production, over 90 percent of the 1 million tons of iron ore produced annually in China, and 60 percent of the Chinese spinning industry, the only sphere in China to have achieved "modern industrial development." [41]

According to Inomata, this economic interdependence was helping to set the stage for proletarian revolution throughout East Asia: "The nationalist revolution in China threatened the very existence of Japanese capitalism, which would perish if it could not expand." [42] Reminiscent of the optimism of "The Communist Manifesto," Japanese imperialism was said to contain the seeds of its own undoing. Japanese capital was precariously dependent on a non-revolutionary China even while Japanese imperialism created the conditions—increasing dependence on Japanese capital and exploited, disenfranchised workers—that would foster revolution: "The Chinese revolution threatened to aggravate the gap between Japanese productive forces and markets, slow the rate of Japanese economic growth, and thus hasten the demise of Japanese capitalism." [43]

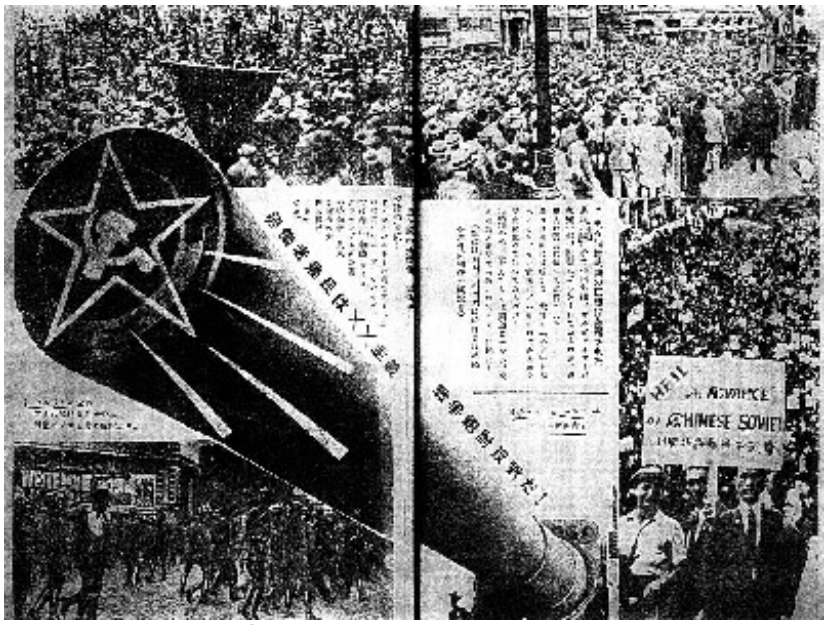
Soviet-devised Communist strategies in China focused on national revolution before social revolution: "[T]he Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party… calculated that China faced not a socialist revolution, but a national revolution against imperialism and warlordism, and that the GMD [Guomindang] was the main force capable of achieving this… From 1923 the Politburo poured massive amounts of military, financial and organizational aid into the GMD and the NRA [National Revolutionary Army]." [44] The alliance between the Communists and Guomindang, which initially gave the former access to the worker and peasant masses, ended in disaster for the Communists, as we have noted, but until that happened the Chinese Communist Party was pressed by Soviet strategists to maintain a united front with the nationalists in a joint effort to reunite the country and repel Japanese imperialism. S. A. Smith writes, "The CCP [Chinese Communist Party] and left GMD used the Northern Expedition to carry out a remarkable political and ideological mobilization of the rural and urban masses. By spring 1927 more than fifteen million peasants were organized into peasant associations which fought to reduce rents and interest rates; whilst in urban centers workers launched strikes and joined labour unions." [45]

National Revolutionary Army forces enter the British Concession, Hubei, 1927.

The Comintern agreed that Japanese imperialism was aggravating the crises of capitalism. Lenin and Bukharin saw Asia as the most unstable link in the capitalist chain—and therefore alternately the most likely locus for the start of an international revolution on the one hand, and the greatest threat to the security of the Soviet Union on the other. [46] Comintern analyses of the development of capitalism in East Asia could not ignore the serious problems posed by an expansive Japanese imperialism. It was not lost on Russia that if Japan prevailed in Manchuria it might only be a matter of time before Japanese forces marched north into Russia. Comintern analyses were subject to the contradictions inherent in seeing Japanese capitalism as both underdeveloped and overdeveloped.

"We've Just Started Making National Histories, and You Want Us to Stop Already?"

Just as important to proletarian literature as Comintern support, although much more difficult to outline succinctly, were the individuals and groups who came together—both formally and informally—across metropolitan and colonial borders. East Asian histories of proletarian arts have been written in relation to Soviet histories or as national histories, but not in relation to other East Asian national literary histories—despite the fact that the international proletariat competed with the nation-state for the privilege of becoming the most significant imagined community for proletarian writers and artists. [47]



Internationalist Imagined Community. Photo collage of protesting masses in New York (featuring a man with a Chinese Soviet sign), California, and Berlin, as well as a five-country (Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, and Japan) demonstration, united by a large canon bearing the insignia "Worker-Farmers resolutely oppose the XX-ist war." (XX is best read "imperial"-ist), *Bungei sensen*, Oct. 1930.

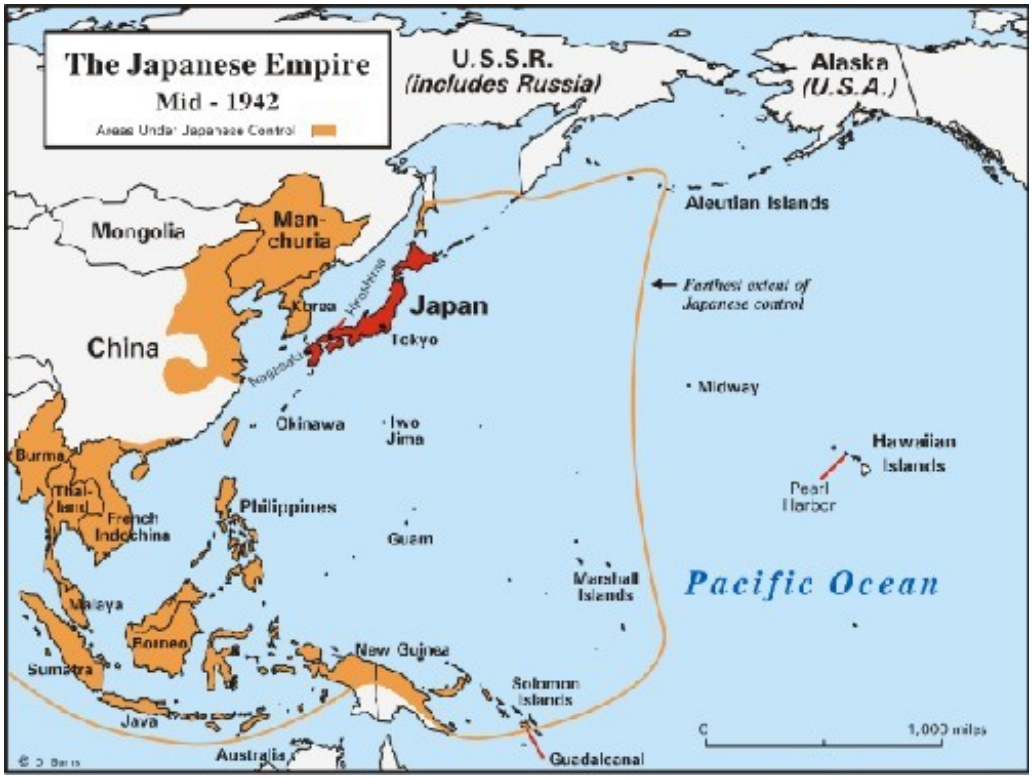
The history of proletarian literature in Japan, for example, was written as though the issue of imperialism were peripheral and as though "Japanese" proletarian literature was a self-evident term, despite the fact that the boundaries of "Japan" were different than they are today. This is not an argument for treating Korean or Taiwanese writers as "Japanese"—not even if they wrote in Japanese or published in Japanese journals—because there are differences that may be more or less important depending on circumstances, not least of which may be the retroactive privileges and pleasures of national belonging. Antoinette Burton writes:

> Why the need for nation?—a question posed, significantly, by the contemporary black British cultural critic Kobena Mercer—is not, therefore, simply rhetorical. Those who need it tend to require that their historical subjects be national at heart—not only fixed by borders, but equally unfragmented and coherent, as stable as the rational post-Enlightenment subjects that postcolonial studies, feminist theory, and postmodernism together have revealed as a kind of self-interested, if historically

intelligible, modernist Western fantasy. [48]

Korean and Taiwanese historians might join Australian historian Ann Curthoys when she writes, "We've Just Started Making National Histories, and You Want Us to Stop Already?" [49]

Postcolonial criticism has brought considerable attention to dilemmas of global power, cultural hegemony, and nation-states. Contemporary scholarship is itself caught in the postcolonial quandary of seeking to overcome the nation-state as the "traditional investigative modality of history and literature" [50] even while it acknowledges that the "rejection of 'nation' [is] a luxury, mainly for those intellectuals who inhabit powerful or at least populous nations." [51] Within East Asia, Japan was first to be constituted as a modern nation-state as evidenced by its imperialist expansion into Okinawa and Hokkaido in the 19th century, as well as victories in wars with China in 1894-1895 and Russia in 1904-1905. Mark Driscoll has written, "I put scare quotes around 'Korean' to flag the fact that it was not yet a nation-state [in the 1930s], but only became one through the process of colonialism and decolonization. The same should be done for 'Japan,' because the 'Japanese' nation-state did not preexist imperial extension that began in the 1870s in Okinawa (then went on to take 'Taiwan' as a colony in 1895 and then 'Korea' as a colony in 1910)." [52]



Map showing Japanese empire, mid-1942

On the one hand then, the nation *must* be overcome as the "traditional investigative modality of history and literature": simply put, the nation is inadequate for understanding proletarian arts in East Asia because, as we have already noted vis-à-vis Shanghai, there was a significant flow of ideas, people, resources, goods and capital throughout East Asia and the world. It was common for Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean intellectuals and revolutionaries to follow the developments of proletarian literature in Tokyo, looking to Japanese proletarian thinkers for a means to resist Japanese imperialism. Even before the Bolshevik revolution, "Chinese socialists, even those who felt acutely the humiliation of China in the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War, looked to Japan for an example of successful nation and state building." [53] Liu Ping writes, "the leaders of the Chinese leftwing literature movement were largely returned students from Japan, for example people like Xia Yan, Zheng Boqi, Feng Naichao, Shen Yechen, Tian Han, and Guo Moruo." [54] Many Chinese and Korean intellectuals at home translated and adapted Japanese proletarian articles and creative works. There was significant exchange throughout East Asia.

Xia Yan

Nakano Shigeharu

Nakano Shigeharu's poem "Rain Falling on Shinagawa Station" (Ame no furu shinagawa eki, 1929) is often cited as a reminder of the opportunities and limitations of Japanese metropolitan solidarity with the Korean independence movement. The poem begins: "Sayonara Sin / Sayonara Kim / You board the train as rain falls on Shinagawa Station / Sayonara Lee / Sayonara to the other Lee / You return to the land of your parents." [55] Significant as it may be for the poem to begin with Korean comrades Sin and Kim, it seems that they appear in order to disappear. The rhythm of the opening words, "Sin yo, sayonara; Kim yo, sayonara," nicely evokes the chugging of the train as it pulls away from the station. The poem renders Koreans visible, but visible as people who return home to Korea. And, as Miriam Silverberg has written, that is not the main point of the poem; [56] rather, the emphasis of the poem seems to be on the parts elided by censorship, a practice that as often as not served to emphasize unwriteable politics. In this case, the force of the last stanza, with its enigmatically censored yet nevertheless violent imagery, summons up Koreans apocalyptically to return to Tokyo having "cause[d] the dammed up waters to gush forth" in Korea to be the "Front and rear shield of the Japan proletariat." [57] Korean poet Im Hwa responded with a poem promising "to support the Japanese proletarian struggle against the Emperor and imperialists." [58] The position of Koreans in this significant poem seems like a metaphor for the way literary and art history has remembered them: they appear at the beginning of the poem, as comrades, but as comrades who return to their native land rather than making significant imprints on the erstwhile country of residence.

Hotei Toshihiro has discussed the impact of the numerous Korean proletarian writers and activists who published in Japanese on the movement in Japan, a paradigm he acknowledged was suggested by Kim Yoon-shik and one that will surely be useful as we continue to think through these issues. [59] Studies of proletarian literature in East Asia tend to recreate Japan and Japanese proletarian organizations as a center that then influences the peripheries, so that, like Sin and Kim in Nakano's poem, colonial subjects have the greatest impact upon their return. Hotei argued helpfully that we need to think more about the way that the large numbers of Asian residents living, working and studying in Japan (and, we might add, not just Tokyo) impacted the movement. Samuel Perry writes that "by 1933 more than one-half of Zenkyou, the underground communist labor party in Japan, was made up of resident Koreans," and he notes that "Scalapino & Lee also suggest that one half of the Communist Party in Japan may also have been made up of resident Koreans, though exact figures are not available." [60] What was the significance of this diaspora on the proletarian arts movement in Japan? There were impediments for colonial subjects who shared in the Japanese proletarian organization despite the fact that anti-imperialist internationalism was vital to the Japanese organization.

On the other hand, the appeal of proletarian internationalism in the 1920s and 1930s was very different for those whose imagined nations did not yet have the luxury of a modern nation-state. [61] For example, Korean artists faced numerous difficulties when they tried to articulate a pro-Korean independence position within an ostensibly anti-imperialist Japanese proletarian organization: "That within the ranks of the Japanese activists there were some who explicitly criticized their Korean colleagues for emphasizing the issue of national independence simply makes clear the extent to which the Japanese side failed to understand the complexities of the Korean position." [62] Samuel Perry describes how Japanese proletarian writer and critic Miyamoto Yuriko was critical of writers who emphasized ethnic-national difference: "According to Miyamoto, ethnicity (*minzokusei*) had to be taken up in 'concrete situations' and only 'in the spirit of strengthening the international class struggle and invigorating and facilitating collective action.'" [63] But of course, critics and writers who identified unproblemmatically as Japanese were at greater liberty than, for example, Vietnamese or Filipinos, to eschew ethnic-nationalism because they were not under colonial rule.

In fact, "proletarian" was often used metaphorically to represent national or colonial exploitation in a revolutionary vernacular. Xiaobing Tang describes the way that the idioms of the proletarian arts—"of the disenfranchised and underrepresented, and of desolate rural and urban lives and landscapes" [64]—were mobilized to call into being a new, collective Chinese national subject: "The imperative *Roar, China!* makes it clear that the image not so much depicts or represents a vociferous nation as it issues an urgent order that the nation must cry out." [65] Kida notes, "It seems that within Korea, proletarian art theory was understood to be very nearly a type of nationalism…" [66]

The parameters of the national problem continue on into the present. It is significant that while the scholarly trend is to emphasize the exchange and solidarity among colonial proletarian writers and Japanese proletarian writers, Professor Kim Yoon-shik prefers not to mention Japanese influence on Korean proletarian literature. It seems a palpable omission that is strategic in its desire to recreate an autonomous Korean proletarian tradition despite significant exchange and, indeed, influence.

Hayama Yoshiki

Further research might also investigate the production of Japanese proletarian writers and erstwhile proletarian writers (e.g. Tokunaga Sunao, Nogawa Takashi, Hayama Yoshiki, Kakimura Hiroshi, Yamada Seizaburou, and Shimaki Kensaku), who, having more or less been forced to renounce their political beliefs, sought refuge in what is said to have been a relatively lenient political atmosphere, at least until the early 1940s, in Japanese colonial Manchukuo. [67] Kawamura Minato writes:

> [T]here was another important reason for the travel to Manchuria of many of the proletarian writers and communists. This was the fact that in Manchukuo the repression of Communism by the Army and the police authorities was actually milder than in Japan itself. Authority figures such as the military man who was the power behind the Manchukuo puppet state, Ishihara Kanji, and Amakasu Masahiko, director of the Manchurian Film Association, welcomed converts from the left to Manchuria, and allowed them to settle, treating them relatively kindly. Further, the Manchurian Railroad's Survey Division hired a number of former communist party members and scholars who held socialist or communist views. It was an unprecedented and odd phenomenon that many writers, artists, scholars, and journalists who had been unable to make a living in Japan found a foothold in Manchukuo. [68]

This is the kind of instance that troubles neat divisions between right and left, internationalist and nationalist. Further research might look at how colonial Manchukuo offered a haven for Japanese Communists and proletarians during the mid to late 1930s: what were the possibilities for resisting Japanese imperialism while being a settler in a Japanese colony, and what opportunities were available for internationalist collaboration with resident Manchurians and Chinese?

Ruth Barraclough examines the work of a Korean writer who similarly moved to Manchukuo: "Korean migration to Kando had begun in the early nineteenth century as large numbers of farmers, ruined by bad harvests, migrated to Manchuria in search of a better life. Following Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 political exiles joined the economic migrants and Kando became a regional headquarters of the anti-Japanese independence movement." [69] Kida Emiko suggests that Japanese proletarian art displayed in Korea was potentially more dangerous there because of the suggested alliance between the Japanese and Korean proletariat—thus, there the same works took on different meanings by virtue of different context. Does *proletarian* or *Communist* mean something potentially different in the colonies than in the imperial metropole? How and why might this have played out differently in Manchukuo, Taiwan, Korea or any of the other Japanese colonies?

The national question was important for proletarian writers, just as it is important for us to address today. I argue that both the nation and the proletariat were imagined communities that promised to alleviate some of the suffering of modernization, and that proletarian writers were aware of the allure of the nation even as they posited a class-based international community as the antidote to capitalist exploitation. Kim Yoon-shik discusses a debate by Korean intellectuals concerning whether class and nation were incompatible interests: "These debates were undertaken in the hope of exploring the possibility of a common front among nationalists and socialists against Japanese imperialists, for no matter how different they were there was the possibility of a general agreement (insofar as they both had the liberation of Choson as their priority)." [70] Bert Scruggs and Samuel Perry sort out the reception history of a Taiwanese writer and Korean writer, respectively, whose proletarian works have failed to register in nation-centered literary studies.

Proletarian writers, artists and playwrights imagined themselves to be a part of an international revolutionary arts movement. The issue of imperialism was crucial to their framing of an imagined international proletarian community—inescapably so for colonized Korean and Taiwanese thinkers but also important for understanding the possibilities of revolution for Japan. Through proletarian organizations Asian mainlanders often looked to Japanese leadership for a means to resist Japanese imperialism, and it was through proletarian literature that some Japanese writers voiced solidarity with anti-imperialist movements.

Conclusion

Proletarian arts in East Asia were motivated by the possibility of revolution amidst glaring inequality. Until recently, there was a trend to dismiss proletarian arts on the basis of its failures to convene and then mobilize a proletariat for revolution, or more modestly, to cultivate arts by and for the working classes. However, scholars working on proletarian arts in East Asia are rediscovering the richness of storytelling and the passion for social justice—national, colonial, class, and gender—that characterizes the best of the proletarian arts. If intervening analyses have largely focused on the *failures* of proletarian arts, then perhaps the time has come to focus on the *accomplishments* of proletarian arts. Our discussion has suggested some of the ways in which literary, visual and theatrical art necessarily exceeded party-line critiques of capitalism. Moreover, even the party-line deserves intellectual scrutiny for what it enabled as much as for what it limited, because the characters and stories presented were caught in the webs of modernization/modernity/modernism, nation/empire/colony, and sex/gender as well as class in ways that speak to current interests in arts and politics.

Heather Bowen-Struyk is the guest editor of the Fall 2006 positions: east asia cultures critique special issue, Proletarian Arts in East Asia: Quests for National, Gender, and Class Justice. This article is a revised version of the introduction to that special issue. Bowen-Struyk is currently working on a manuscript on gender and politics in Japanese proletarian literature. Posted at Japan Focus on April 16, 2007.

Notes

[1] Yoon-shik Kim, "KAPF Literature in Modern Korean Literary History," special edition of *positions: east asia cultures critique*, *Proletarian Arts in East Asia: Quests for National, Gender, and Class Justice* 14:2 (Fall 2006), p. 412.

[2] The original paper presenters were Yoon-shik Kim, Emiko Kida, Samuel Perry, Minato Kawamura, Ping Liu, Bert Scruggs and me; in addition, Norma Field, Xiaobing Tang, Kyong-Hee Choi and Mark Anderson participated in a panel discussion. The special edition of *positions* has essays by Samuel Perry, Brian Bergstrom, Ruth Barraclough, Yoon-shik Kim, Bert Scruggs, Ping Liu, Xiaobing Tang, Emiko Kida, and me.

[3] “Proletarian” is the umbrella term I am using for “leftwing,” “KAPF”, and “proletarian” as the authors of these essays have chosen to construe their subjects. My phrase “the awkwardness of the term to some ears today” is a nod to Ruth Barraclough’s essay, in which she calls the female factory workers, “factory girls,” as she writes, “precisely because of its bitterness to modern ears.” See footnote later for this reference

[4] Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), 57.

[5] Ibid., 57-58.

[6] Ibid., 57.

[7] Ibid., 57. The phrase “imagined proximity of social revolution” is from Perry Anderson, “Modernity and Revolution,” *New Left Review*, no. 144 (March-April 1984), 104.

[8] Sandra Wilson describes how, in an effort to found the first Japanese Communist Party, anarchist Osugi Sakae “went to Shanghai in 1920 and made contact with the Comintern, returning with the considerable sum of 2,000 yen and a promise of more funds… In 1921 Kondo Eizo also received money from Comintern representatives in Shanghai for Communist activities in Japan—this time 6,500 yen.” Sandra Wilson, “The Comintern and Japanese Communist Party,” *International Communism and the Communist International 1919-43*, edited by Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 287.

[9] Wilson writes, “Between 1923 and 1926, for example, some forty-three young Japanese Communists first traveled to Shanghai, where they made contact with a Soviet representative, then were smuggled aboard Russian freighters bound for Vladivostok, from where they continued to Moscow on the Trans-Siberian Railway to begin studying for periods of two to three years at KUTV [Communist University of the Workers of the East].” Ibid., 292.

[10] S. A. Smith, “The Comintern, the Chinese Communist Party and the three armed uprisings in Shanghai, 1926-27,” *International Communism and the Communist International 1919-43*, edited by Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 255.

[11] Ibid., 254-57.

[12] Wang-chi Wong, *Politics and literature in Shanghai: the Chinese League of Left-Wing Writers, 1930-1936* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991), 6.

[13] With the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, the term “proletarian” has exercised many duties in the past half century as well. Liu Ping therefore discusses not “proletarian” drama, but “leftwing” drama in China, which he explains is a smaller subset of proletarian.

[14] Liu Ping.

[15] Agnes Smedley, whose autobiographical *Daughter of Earth* (1929) has been called the first American proletarian novel, traveled the world addressing injustice and is perhaps best known in China where she fought alongside revolutionaries and chronicled their struggles. When Chinese Leftwing writer Ding Ling was arrested by the Guomindang in 1933, Smedley collected some of her translated writings and published them to bring an international spotlight on her arrest. Janice R MacKinnon and Stephen R. MacKinnon, *Agnes Smedley: The Life and Times of an American Radical* (University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1988), 159.

[16] Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China*, 1917-1937 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 232.

[17] Raymond Williams, *The Politics of Modernism* (London: Verso, 1989), 44; cited in Seiji Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (New York: Columbia University, 2002), 81.

[18] See work by Wang-chi Wong, Shu-mei Shih, Leo Ou-fan Lee, Tani Barlow, Xiaobing Tang, etc.

[19] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (Vintage Books, a Division of Random House, Inc.: New York, 1994 (1993), 74.

[20] Lippit, 77.

[21] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Shanghai,* translated by Dennis Washburn (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2001), 207.

[22] Seiji Lippit writes, “On the level of ideological content, the novel’s central conflict, between Sanki’s nationalism and Qiulan’s revolutionary Marxism, is never resolved.” Lippit, 104.

[23] Ibid., p. 313-314.

[24] "The Path to Proletarian Realism" (Puroretariariarizumu e no michi, 1929), forthcoming in English translation by Brian Bergstrom in *Literature for Revolution: An Anthology of Japanese Proletarian Writings*, co-edited by Norma Field and me.

[25] Bert Scruggs, p. 433.

[26] Xiaobing Tang, p.478.

[27] Xiaobing Tang, p. 476-477.

[28] Barraclough, p. 346.

[29] An English translation of this novel has already been prepared by Samuel Perry.

[30] Barraclough, p. 346

[31] Ruth Barraclough, footnote 11.

[32] Perry, p. 296.

[33] Perry, p. 298.

[34] See, for example, Houjou Tsunehisa, *Tanemaku hito: Komaki OUmi no seishun* (The Sowers: The Spring of Komaki Oumi) (Chikuma Shobou: Tokyo, 1995).

[35] Wilson, 187-192.

[36] Germaine Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 56. The following discussion is indebted to Hoston's discussion of Marxist debates and developments in *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* and in *The State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[37] Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 56.

[38] For a detailed chronicle of proletarian literature in Japan, see G. T. Shea's *Leftwing Literature in Japan: A Brief History of the Proletarian Literary Movement* (Tokyo: Housei University Press, 1964). In Japanese, see Yamada Seizaburou, *Puroretaria bungakushi* (*A History of Proletarian Literature*), vol. 1 and 2 (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1967), and Kurihara Yukio, *Puroretaria bungaku to sono jidai* (*Proletarian Literature and Its Era*) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1971; reprint Inpakuto Shuppankai, 2004).

[39] Kim Yoon-shik, footnote 5, p. 422.

[40] In *Essential Works of Lenin: "What Is to Be Done?" and Other Writings*, ed. Henry M. Christman (Dover Publications, Inc.: New York, 1987).

[41] Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 202.

[42] Ibid., 202.

[43] Ibid., 203.

[44] S. A. Smith, 256.

[45] S. A. Smith, 254.

[46] Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 56-57.

[47] This argument is developed in my essay "Rival Imagined Communities."

[48] Antoinette Burton, "Introduction: On the Inadequacy and the Indispensability of the Nation," *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation*, edited by Antoinette Burton (Duke University Press: Duke and London, 2003), 6.

[49] Ann Curthoys, "We've Just Started Making National Histories, and You Want Us to Stop Already?" *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation*, edited by Antoinette Burton (Duke University Press: Duke and London, 2003), 85.

[50] Burton, 2.

[51] Curthoys, 85.

[52] Mark Driscoll, "Introduction," in Katsuei Yuasa, *Kannani and Document of Flames: Two Japanese Colonial Novels*, translated and with an introduction by Mark Driscoll, (Duke University Press, 2005), 28.

[53] Hoston, *The State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan*, 179.

[54] Liu Ping, p. 454.

[55] *Nakano Shigeharu, Sata InekoshÅ«* (Nakano Shigeharu and Sata Ineko Collection), *Gendai bungaku taikei* vol. 57 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobou, 1970), 21. Originally published in *Kaizou*, February 1929.

[56] Miriam Silverberg, *The Changing Song of Nakano Shigeharu* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 162.

[57] Translation from Silverberg, 161.

[58] Translator Yoon Sun Yang's note in Kim Yoon-shik's essay.

[59] Paper presented at the University of Chicago in the Workshop on "Art and Politics in East Asia," March 2004. Hotei provided a list of the following Korean proletarian writers who published in Japanese: Kim Chung-saeng, Kim Hui-myong, Kim Yak-su, Chong Yon-gyu, Yi Yang, Kim Ki-jin, Han Sik, Yi Pung-man, Han Sor-ya, Im Hwa, Kim Hwang, Sin In-ch'ul, Kim Kun-yol, Kim Kwang-uk, Paek Ch'ol, Chang Hyok-chu, Pak Yong-je, An Mak, Kim Tu-yong, Pak Sok-chong, Yi Cho-myong (Yi Pung-myong), Kang Kyong-ae, Hyon Min (Yu Chin-o), Yi Hyo-sok, Hong Chong-u, Kim Kyong-su, Kim Sa-ryang, Kim Kwang.

[60] Samuel Perry, p. 383. Perry refers to the following works: Pak Kyong-sik, *Zainichi chousenjin undoushi 8 .15 kaihoumae* (*The Resident Korean Movement in Japan: Before the August 15 Liberation*) (Tokyo: San'ichi shobou, 1979), 221. Robert A. Scalapino and Chong-sik Lee, *Communism in Korea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 188-189.

[61] This is a reference to Benedict Anderson's idea of the nation as an "imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign," an idea that has influenced this discussion and has catalyzed discussions of modern nation states in immeasurable ways. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition. (Verso: London and New York, 1991), 6.

[62] Kida, p. 520.

[63] Samuel Perry, "Korean as Proletarian: Ethnicity and Identity in Chang Hyok-chu's 'Hell of the Starving'" p. 303; Miyamoto Yuriko citation from Miyamoto Yuriko, "Puroretaria bungaku ni okeru kokusaiteki na shudai ni tsuite" ("International Themes in Proletarian Literature"), *Yomiuri Shinbun*, October 16,17,20~22, 1931. Reprinted in *Miyamoto Yuriko zenshÅ«*, vol. 10 (Shinnihon Shuppansha: Tokyo, 1980).

[64] Tang Xiaobing, p. 468.

[65] Tang Xiaobing, p. 473.

[66] Kida, p. 520.

[67] At the Symposium upon which this volume is based, Kawamura Minato presented on the leftwing farmer-poet Nogawa Takashi, who produced poetry while living in Manchukuo before his incarceration in 1942, which led to his death. See also Funo Eiichi, "Nihon no puroretaria bungaku ga egakaita 'ManshÅ«'," and Ino Mutsumi, "Kakimura Hiroshi no 'kantou paruchisan no uta': puroretaria kokusaishugi to rentai," both from *Shokuminchi to bungaku*, edited by Nihon shakai bungakukai (Orijin shuppansha senta-: Tokyo, 1993). This important volume, based on a conference exploring literature during the Japanese empire, closes with an afterword reflecting on the significance of Japan sending its so-called Self-Defense Forces as a Peace Keeping Organization (PKO) to the former President Bush's war on Iraq. Nishida Katsu reflects that the ambivalence of intellectuals to Japan's remilitarization might be likened to the atmosphere following the Manchurian Incident in 1931 (Nishida, 269).

[68] Kawamura Minato, “One View of the History of Japanese Proletarian Literature: On Nogawa Takashi,” translation by David Rosenfeld, paper delivered at the Proletarian Literature in East Asia Symposium, University of Chicago, 2002. We should note that Amakasu Masahiko was responsible for murdering Socialist Osugi Sakae in the wake of the Great Tokyo Earthquake (1923).

[69] Ruth Barraclough, footnote 25. Barraclough cites the following sources: See Carter Eckert, et al, *Korea Old and New*, Seoul: Ilchokak, 1991, pp. 185, 243, 273. See also Yi Yi-hwa (ed.), *Hanguk Kunhyondaesa Sajon* [Dictionary of Modern and Contemporary Korean History], Seoul: Karam Kihoek, 1990, pp.90-93.

[70] Kim, p. 411.

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