Guest Editor's Introduction: Proletarian Arts in East Asia

Proletarian Literature in the World

The proletarian arts movement was an international politico-arts movement that flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. Like other modernist movements, the proletarian arts movement sought to redefine the form and function of literature and art; and like other modernist movements, it held that capitalism was fundamentally changing the ways that people related to each other and to the world in which they lived. But, in contrast, the proletarian arts movement — no matter how much writers disagreed over the details — held that class-based struggle was necessary because capital was controlled by the few at the expense of the many. The essays in this volume remind us of the anguish and optimism that made proletarianism seem not only possible but crucial. As the important Korean literary critic Yoon-shik Kim writes in his essay in this volume, "Literature was no longer to be a sentimental pastime,

positions 14:2 DOI 10.1215/10679847-2006-002

but an active participant in the development of society and the unfolding of history."

Despite the awkwardness of the term to some ears today, self-titled "proletarian" organizations existed throughout the world during the first part of the twentieth century.[1] Michael Denning writes: "The turning point 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."[2] The boom in proletarian literature of the late 1920s and 1930s had been put into motion a decade earlier by tremendous social change and by the organizations formed to deal with that change. As Denning writes:

> 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 . . . which soon became known by the abbreviation "Proletcult." The Proletcult movement reached its peak in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, spawning workshops, journals, and rival groups, and its example resonated around the world. . . .
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> 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.[3]

Two of the three initiatives outlined by Denning are grounded in antiwar and anticolonialist projects. Class struggle in East Asia was unmistakably intertwined with imperialism. Germany, England, and the United States had imperial ambitions and territories in East Asia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; Japan joined the Western imperial powers as a threat to East Asia with its rapid modernization and military successes in

the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One recurring theme in this volume is the special problem posed by Japanese imperialism on the Asian mainland; as is evident throughout these essays, resistance to Japanese imperialism in Korea, Taiwan, and China was given organized support from proletarian organizations originating in those countries, as well as in the Soviet Union and in Japan. Not coincidentally, the origins of proletarian literature in Japan are often attributed to a journal published in 1921 by Komaki Ōmi, recently returned from France, where he was deeply influenced by Henri Barbusse and the *Clarté* movement.[4] In 1923, Komaki and the 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.

This introduction seeks to emphasize both what was specific to proletarian arts — most notably, their relationship to international Communism, labor issues, and the way that they theorized the role of Japanese imperialism in East Asia — as well as what they had in common with their sociohistorical context, such as formal experiments with media to express the changing demands of the age. Together, these essays reinvestigate works by writers and artists who examined the relationships between capitalism, colonialism, class struggle, and nationalism during a period of tremendous industrial development, political unrest, booming mass media, and imminent war. This volume is based on the International Symposium on Proletarian Arts in East Asia held at the University of Chicago in 2002. In the question-and-answer period following the symposium, Yoon-shik Kim announced that he retired in the year 2000 because he feels himself to be a man of the twentieth century, a time when literature was concerned with human dignity. Rethinking proletarian arts and literature offers an opportunity to imagine what it felt like to be a part of a social movement that believed not only that social justice was possible but that the arts and literature were vital to the way that justice would be achieved.

Shanghai

Shanghai — politically, economically, and culturally — offers a spectacular opportunity to reflect on the interconnected and sometimes contradictory

issues that run through this volume: ethnic-national identity, internationalism, imperialism, organized labor, Communism, gender, commodity culture, literature, theater, visual arts, and modernism. 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).

In Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s, as in many metropolitan centers, the confluence of labor struggles, commodity culture, and political struggles provided a fertile site for the development of modernist and proletarian arts movements. Shanghai was, to start, a meeting place for international Communists. In the early 1920s, Japanese radicals met there with Comintern (Communist International) representatives in an effort to found and then maintain the Japanese Communist Party, and they received significant financial support as a result of those visits.[5] Shanghai was the gateway for Japanese radicals seeking to study in Russia.[6] It was the site of the formation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. It was an industrialized, semicolonial city 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."[7]

Shanghai was also the site of the Chinese nationalist Guomindang's betrayal of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927.[8] In 1927, Chinese Communists in the Soviet-designed united front sought to take the lead away from the rightist Chiang Kai-shek by mobilizing thousands of Shanghai workers in general strikes into an uprising they hoped would unseat the warlord Sun Chuanfang before Chiang's army arrived in Shanghai. All three attempts at uprisings failed; the third failed because Chiang's army did arrive and itself squelched the Communists.

This defeat was important for the development of the Chinese League of Left-Wing Writers in Shanghai, according to 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 as the 'Left League Decade' (Zuolian shinian)."[9] The League of Left-Wing Writers (established in 1930) and League of Left-Wing Dramatists (established in January 1931) fostered proletarian literature and theater in Shanghai and maintained an important relationship with proletarian writers and dramatists in Japan, as Ping Liu discusses in this volume.[10] In addition, the Shanghai Art Drama Society, established in October of 1929, staged productions of 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*. Ping Liu describes how "new techniques were highlighted in the flashback scene in the production of *The Overman*, where they combined stage dialogue with film projection." He also notes that the productions of the Shanghai Art Drama Society attracted an audience of international revolutionaries, such as the American reporter Agnes Smedley and the Japanese reporter Ozaki Hotsumi.[11] As 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."[12]

Last, but not least, Shanghai embodied the conflicts and contradictions of capitalist development. Shu-mei Shih writes: "It 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."[13] Raymond Williams writes that 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."[14] A semicolonial matrix of capital, Shanghai was likewise host to a nexus of engaged and experimental Chinese writers.[15]

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."[16] Perhaps it is no coincidence then that two of the essays in this issue — Brian Bergstrom's and my own — address Yokomitsu Riichi's *Shanghai* (1928–32) in the context of Japanese proletarian novels and short stories set in the fluctuating peripheries of the Japanese empire. Set in Shanghai during the May 30, 1925, demonstrations against foreign capital, *Shanghai* blithely uses the national-labor disorders 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. *Shanghai* is a New Sensationist experiment in representing the effect of capital on selfhood and subalternity amid the nationalisms of international Shanghai. As Seiji Lippit writes, "As a space of abjection, Shanghai is, for the novel's characters, an object of both revulsion and attraction."[17] Sanki, accidentally dumped into raw sewage up to his neck, finds that the scent reminds him of "the smell of a Japanese village," which makes him think of his mother, and then Quilan.[18] Though it is tempting to pin down these associations of filth, nation, mother, and sexual 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 novel most often represents the reduction of human beings to exchange relations 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 same issues as proletarian literature, performs a dialogue with it — one that, as Lippit notes, remains unresolved.[19]

Shanghai and *Shanghai* bring out important issues that run through this volume: 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. 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 widely and to circulate ideas and works with

increased ease. Proletarian literature did not exist in a bubble—either political or aesthetic—and an important task for rethinking proletarian literature in East Asia is to replace it in its sociohistorical context as well as its greater literary context.

How Best to Represent the Proletariat?

The history of proletarian literature in Japan and Korea and of left-wing literature in China has, in the works of literary historians, tended to appear as though it were a discrete literary movement, but it is helpful to think about the literary field having been, as Brian Bergstrom has ably demonstrated, much messier. In his discussion of the way that Nakamoto Takako used the idiom of New Sensationism to write proletarian stories, 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." According to Bergstrom, as Nakamoto Takako experimented with describing what it felt like to inhabit a classed Japanese woman's body, she 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: "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 that proletarian literature seeks to recover from the capitalist discourse that abstracts it into invisibility through the logic of commodity fetishism."

Realism, as discussed by Bergstrom and Yoon-shik Kim, was a highly contested ideological framework and one best understood as another 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. Shit realism seems simultaneously to mock the seriousness of proletarian realism (advocated 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. For example, in his discussion of Yang's "How to Avoid Starving — A Slice of a Day 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." Similarly, Scruggs's discussion of Yang's "Banishing the Ogre" (1936) presents a grotesque vision of a dog who dies because his body is shredded from the inside as he throws up the glass shards that he has been tricked into eating by children who want to reclaim their playground from industrial encroachment. Hiroshi Aramata has argued that proletarian literature is a kind of horror literature, and the gruesome demise of this dog-ogre-monster seems to bear this out.[20] The incident also resonates with both Ch'oe Sŏ-hae's story of Pak Tol, discussed by both Ruth Barraclough and Samuel Perry, and, even more hauntingly, with Chang Hyŭk-chu's "The Hell of the Starving" (1932), discussed by Perry, in which a child unaccustomed to whole grain is given millet by his mother as a treat and, as a result, his stomach implodes.

In the midst of transforming media, how best to represent the proletariat? All of these essays engage this question. Ping Liu 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. Xiaobing Tang emphasizes the successes of woodblock artists: "By the mid-1930s [in China], the woodcut had emerged as the preferred artistic medium for advocating the cause of resisting Japanese military aggression and for voicing political dissent." At stake in these and the other discussions of representation is the modernist concern with representing a newly emerging reality with particular self-consciousness regarding the mode of expression. 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." Graphic, theatrical, realist, expressionist—proletarian writers and artists experimented with different methods of representing proletarian reality.

The Comintern and Japanese Imperialism

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, as Denning has noted, Austria, China, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Poland, and the United States.[21] Significant guideposts of proletarian organizations in East Asia include the development of Soviet-inspired and Soviet-recognized national proletarian literature organizations with Esperanto names, such as 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 Proletaria Federacio) was formed in March 1928 in the aftermath of the widespread arrests of March 15.[22] Late in 1931, NAPF eschewed *arts* and embraced *culture* as the key term, renaming itself KOPF (Federacio de Proletaj Kultur-organizoj Japanaj). Samuel Perry and Emiko Kida tell us that KOPF had a significant number of Korean participants. As Yoon-shik Kim points out, the Korean organization KAPF (Korea Artista Proletaria Federacio) lasted ten years, from 1925–35, thereby predating and outlasting NAPF. Yoon-shik Kim claims that "the name *KAPF* was actually created before RAPP and NAPF." 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 or translated pieces at home. The Shanghai-based League of Left-Wing Writers was founded with support by the Chinese Communist Party.

Many groups who proclaimed themselves a part of the proletarian arts movement relied on the Soviet Union for organizational and financial assistance, solidarity, and inspiration. The Comintern offered international soli-

darity 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.[23] From its beginnings in 1919, the Comintern was committed to fostering international revolution.[24] Fearing that the Russian economy would falter without the support of a revolutionary, economically developed nation-state as an ally, Russian thinkers looked first to the possibility of revolution in Germany in 1919, and then, when that moment 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 strategy for the rest of Asia.[25] 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.

Capitalism and imperialism — the doppelgängers 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 largely 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.[26] For example, Inomata Tsunao, a major theorist in the Japanese organization (Rōnōha) 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."[27]

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."[28] Reminiscent of the optimism of "The Communist Manifesto," Japanese imperialism was said to contain the seeds of its own undoing. Capital-driven Japanese imperialism had created a situation where the continuation of Japanese capital was precariously dependent on China not having a revolution 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 production forces and markets, slow the rate of Japanese economic growth, and thus hasten the demise of Japanese capitalism."[29]

Soviet-devised Communist strategies in China focused on national revolution before socialist revolution. S. A. Smith explains, "The 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]."[30] The alliance between the Communists and Guomindang ended up as a disaster for the Communists, as we have already noted, but until that happened the Chinese Communist Party was urged 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."[31]

The Comintern agreed that Japanese imperialism was aggravating the crises of capitalism although it was not clear to what end. 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 revolu-

tion, on the one hand, and the greatest threat to the security of the Soviet Union, on the other.[32] Comintern analyses of the development of capitalism in East Asia could not ignore the serious security problems posed by Japanese imperialism. In practice, strategy for Asia had to put the threat and fact of Japanese imperialism before other concerns; it was not lost on Russia that, if Japan accomplished its goals in Manchuria, it might only be a matter of time before the Japanese army would march north into Russia's southeastern front. As I discuss in my essay, 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 the Esperanto guideposts, 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, as I argue in my essay in this volume, the international proletariat competed with the nation-state for the privilege of becoming the most significant imagined community for proletarian writers and artists.

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 were a self-evident term, despite the fact that the boundaries of "Japan" were different than they are today. This is not an argument to treat 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."[33] 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?"[34]

Postcolonial criticism has brought considerable attention to dilemmas of global power, cultural hegemony, and nation-states. This volume is itself caught in the postcolonial quandary of seeking to overcome the nation-state as the "traditional investigative modality of history and literature"[35] even while it acknowledges that the "rejection of 'nation' [is] a luxury, mainly for those intellectuals who inhabit powerful or at least populous nations."[36] Within East Asia, Japan was first to be constituted as a modern nation-state vis-à-vis imperialist expansion into Okinawa and Hokkaido in the nineteenth century, as well as victories in imperialist wars in 1894–95 and 1904–5. 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 1985 and then 'Korea' as a colony in 1910)."[37]

On the one hand then, we *must* overcome the nation 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, as Hoston notes, "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."[38] Ping Liu writes in this volume that "the

leaders of the Chinese left-wing 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." Many Chinese and Korean intellectuals at home translated and adapted Japanese proletarian articles and creative works. Many of the essays in this volume highlight the significant exchange throughout East Asia. Ping Liu discusses the significance, for example, of Japanese proletarian theater on the development of anti-imperialist left-wing theater in China. Emiko Kida examines the relationship between Japanese proletarian visual artists and Korean visual artists, both in Japan and in Korea.

Both Yoon-shik Kim and Samuel Perry mention the relationship that Japanese poet and activist Nakano Shigeharu had with Korea. Nakano's poem "Rain Falling on Shinagawa Station" ("Ame no furu shinagawa eki," 1929) is 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."[39] 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, sayōnara; Kim yo, sayōnara," 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;[40] 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."[41] As noted in Yoon-shik Kim's essay, Korean poet Im Hwa responded with a poem promising "to support the Japanese proletarian struggle against the emperor and imperialists." The position of Korean subalterns 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 Yoon-shik Kim and one that will surely be useful as we continue to think through these issues.[42] 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 perhaps we might add, not just Tokyo) had an impact on the movement. Samuel Perry writes in his essay that "by 1933 more than one-half of Zenkyō, the underground communist labor party in Japan, was made up of resident Koreans," and he points out in a note that "Scalapino and Lee also suggest that one-half of the Communist Party in Japan may also have been made up of resident Koreans, although exact figures are not available." What was the significance of this diaspora on the proletarian arts movement in Japan? Samuel Perry, Bert Scruggs, and Emiko Kida have argued that there were impediments for colonial subjects who shared in the Japanese proletarian organization despite the fact that, as I have argued, anti-imperialist internationalism was vital to the Japanese organization. Most of these essays are focused on national boundary-crossers and, by appearing together, perform the important work of overcoming the nation.

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.[43] For example, Emiko Kida's essay on the relationship between Korean and Japanese visual arts organizations demonstrates the difficulties Korean artists faced 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." 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.' " But, of course, critics and writers who identified themselves as Japanese were at greater liberty to eschew ethnic-nationalism because they were not under colonial rule.

Xiaobing Tang's essay describes the way that the idioms of the proletarian arts — "of the disenfranchised and underrepresented, and of desolate rural and urban lives and landscapes" — 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." Samuel Perry similarly notes that Korean writer Chang Hyŏk-chu used the idiom of proletarian literature to represent the exploitation of Korea. Kida notes, "It seems that, within Korea, proletarian art theory was understood to be very nearly a type of nationalism."

The parameters of the national problem continue into the present. It is significant that while most of the essays in this volume emphasize the exchange and solidarity among colonial proletarian writers and Japanese proletarian writers, Yoon-shik Kim's essay does not mention Japanese influence on Korean proletarian literature — even in the case of the discussion of the debates over form and content that were also occurring in Japan — nor does it address essays or fiction written by Koreans in Japanese or published in Japanese journals. It seems a palpable omission that is strategic in its desire to recreate an autonomous Korean proletarian tradition despite significant exchange and, indeed, influence.

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 Seizaburō, 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.[44] Kawamura Minato writes:

> There 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.[45]

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 despite the way that the other colonies suffered harsher repression than on the Japanese archipelago: 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." Emiko Kida 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 was a different meaning for the same works 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?

Nearly all of the essays deal with the national question and its relationship to class. 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. Yoon-shik Kim 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 Chosŏn as their priority)." 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. The question asked by many of these authors was whether these two communities were mutually exclusive.

The essays in this volume examine the works of writers, artists, and playwrights who imagined themselves to be a part of an international revolutionary arts movement. The issue of imperialism was crucial to the way they imagined an international proletarian community—inescapably so for colonized Korean and Taiwanese thinkers, as Kida, Perry, and Scruggs argue, but also, as we have discussed, for Japanese thinkers attempting to understand the possibilities of revolution for Japan. It was through proletarian organizations that Asian mainlanders often looked to Japanese leadership for a means to resist Japanese imperialism, as we see in the essays by Scruggs, Liu, Kida, and Perry, and it was through proletarian literature, as I argue, that Japanese writers voiced solidarity with anti-imperialist movements. Nevertheless, Pan-Asian proletarianism threatened to play the role of farce to the tragedy of Japanese imperialism. These essays reexamine the cultural production of those who believed that if the logic of internationalism mimics the logic of global capitalism perhaps that need not have fore-

stalled the development of an international community grounded in the shared experience of oppression.

The Richness of Storytelling and the Passion for Social Justice

Through these essays we are introduced to the institutional and sociohistorical conditions for the development of proletarian arts in East Asia, but just as importantly, we are introduced to the richness of storytelling and the passion for social justice — national, colonial, class, and gender — that characterizes proletarian arts. If intervening analyses have largely focused on the *failures* of proletarian arts (to convene and then mobilize a proletariat for revolution, or, more modestly, to cultivate arts by and for the working classes), then these analyses focus on the *accomplishments* of proletarian arts. These essays recognize that literary, visual, and theatrical art necessarily exceed party-line critiques of capitalism. Moreover, they recognize that 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. Through the essays in this collection, we are introduced to the diversely peopled worlds of proletarian fiction: female factory workers and farmers, colonial subjects and settlers and mainlanders, elites and autodidacts, infantrymen and officers, arms dealers, bandits, child laborers, and drug addicts.

The contributors of these essays are likewise diverse — in age, sex, institutional affiliation and rank, nationality, place of residence, degree and kind of political sensibility, and academic style. Four of the articles offer valuable surveys and background of the development of proletarian arts in East Asia in the 1920s and 1930s: Ping Liu offers a survey of the left-wing drama movement in China with attention to the influences from Japan; Emiko Kida offers an analysis of proletarian Korean visual artists caught between longings for Korean colonial-nationalist independence and Japanese-led internationalism; Yoon-shik Kim offers a survey of Korean proletarian writers focused within the context of modern Korean literature; and I introduce the landscape of nation and imperialism in Japanese proletarian

literature with close readings of work by Kobayashi Takiji, Kataoka Teppei, and Kuroshima Denji. Five of the articles offer intimate portraits and close readings of the creative work of proletarian writers: Samuel Perry introduces the nearly forgotten Korean writer Chang Hyŭk-chu; Ruth Barraclough presents an analysis of the Korean female factory worker by focusing on the work of Kang Kyŏng-ae; Bert Scruggs reinscribes proletarian concerns in the foreground of Taiwanese writer Yang Kui's early works; and Brian Bergstrom offers a whirlwind tour of Nakamoto Takako's modernist experiments in representing women's proletarian experience.

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 even sought to represent it that way. As we have already discussed, the ethnic-nation was one mitigating factor and the disparities in power within the international movement were felt acutely by Korean and Taiwanese activists. And while most of the essays in this volume deal with men's writings, two of the essays treat issues of sex/gender in writings by women and another deals with gender in a work by a male writer. Ruth Barraclough compellingly describes the way that 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. As she makes clear, the "authors of proletarian literature depicted factory girls as the sexual victims of capitalism, in a searing critique of the costs of Japan's colonial industrializing project." Barraclough also emphasizes the limitations of many proletarian treatments of the female factory worker, which failed to imagine women as capable of leading themselves into consciousness, and compares those treatments to the work of a woman writer, *The Human Predicament* (*Ingan munje*) by Kang Kyŏng-ae.[46] 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.'" As she argues, "The term *factory girl* draws attention to the very contradictions that working-class women seemed to embody, laboring in factories where so many lost their youth." Also worthy of further discussion, Barraclough argues, is the way in which 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 unresolvable ambiguities of seduction — in relationships that thrive in circumstances of inequality and collaboration."

As Barraclough points out, attention to the way that women's experiences were structured into narrative also reveals something about "the construction of a socialist masculinity." And indeed, Samuel Perry pays attention to the way that women's experiences constitute a secondary narrative of tragedy that feeds into the collective masculine protagonist: "Instead, 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." 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 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 widows, those least susceptible to racist charges of violence or sloth — that works in its very repetition to aesthetically assail the reader's sensibilities." We might note that these three essays that take special care to analyze gender are no less concerned with class, the national problem, or literary style, but, perhaps coincidentally, they all share a passionate engagement with the material that makes these essays especially energizing to read.

The literary arts, in particular prose fiction and critical essays, assumed a privileged position in the proletarian movement, which called itself an arts movement until late 1931 and a culture movement thereafter. Emiko Kida notes that, in Japan and Korea, visual artists within the movement struggled to be considered as vital to the movement as literary artists as they developed from an early role as supportive (with an emphasis on illustrations and post-

ers) to a boom period when approximately one-third of Fine Arts Academy students were striving to produce proletarian arts.[47] By contrast, Tang argues that, in China, the woodblock movement gained a prominent position by the mid-1930s. Literary arts dominated the proletarian arts movement in Japan, and despite chronic concerns that the proletariat was not actually choosing to read proletarian literature, according to the nearly 100 percent literary rates, they could have if they had chosen to. In contrast, the movement in China and Korea faced an uneven level of literacy. Barraclough writes: "The high rate of illiteracy among lower-class women [in Korea] and the grueling nature of their work in the factories made reading itself a pastime beyond their compass." Elsewhere, Markus Nornes has discussed the development of the proletarian film movement, Purokino, and its impact on the development of documentary film in Japan, but this, too, presumed a modicum of technological expertise as well as equipment.[48] It is significant therefore that Ping Liu argues that it was in the drama movement in China and Xiaobing Tang argues that it was in woodblock prints that proletarian activists were able to successfully popularize — a key term — proletarian arts. In the midst of rapidly evolving technology and mass media, it was perhaps not yet clear which media would be most able to help transform burgeoning media consumers into revolutionary agents.

Taken together, these essays perform the important function of reimagining the internationalist environment of the 1920s and 1930s. In the course of this introduction, I have tried to share glimpses of the insights contained in these essays as they have captured something of the vitality and complexity of proletarian arts in East Asia. These essays have their own investments, but some common themes appear and reappear, such as the importance of style in a project imagined by many to be about a class that did not yet have its own art; the recognition that even within "proletarian," there are significant differences such as gender and nationality that imperil the achievement of social justice; the question of whether revolutionary ideas were native or foreign; the recognition that exploitation is not just an individual experience; and the quest for a more satisfying, less exploitative imagined community than the nation.

Acknowledgments

Preparing this volume has taught me a lot about who I want to be as a scholar, as it has pushed me to make connections with new scholars already doing the kind of work across national boundaries that seems so valuable. Ultimately, editing this volume has enabled me to imagine myself in an international community that cares about art and politics.

This volume grew out of the International Symposium on Proletarian Arts in East Asia held at the University of Chicago in 2002. 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. To my knowledge it is the first time that scholars from China, Japan, Taiwan, and Korea have gathered together to discuss proletarian arts in East Asia.

The symposium involved many people and resources. For the purpose of the symposium, papers needed to be translated into English: the initial translation of Ping Liu's paper was begun in the workshop "China's Long Twentieth-Century" by Krista Van Fleit Hang, Hyun-jeong Lee, Kevin Lawrence, and Valerie Levan; Minato Kawamura's paper was translated by David Rosenfeld; Emiko Kida's paper was translated by Brian Bergstrom; and Yoon-shik Kim's paper was initially translated by Yoon Sun Yang and Heek-young Cho. During the symposium, Norma Field, Kyeong-Hee Choi, Krista Van Fleit Hang, and Brian Bergstrom all served as interpreters during question-and-answer sessions.

The onerous administrative tasks of organizing the symposium (compiling and distributing papers, reserving the room, recording the sessions, even ordering food!) were carried out with an air of effortlessness by Justin Jesty. Both he and I relied heavily on the sage logistical advice of Theodore Foss at the Center for East Asian Studies. The original poster and Web site were designed by Keyang Tang. The symposium was financially supported by the Norman Wait Harris Memorial Fund and the Committees on Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Studies at the Center for East Asian Studies.

My debts do not end with the symposium however. I thank the final translators of three of these essays — Krista Van Fleit Hang, Yoon Sun

Yang, and Brian Bergstrom — for the tedious work involved in finalizing translations, adding explanatory footnotes, and attempting to standardize transliteration. Justin Jesty, Samuel Perry, Ruth Barraclough, and Brian Bergstrom read over the essays and translations, offering suggestions. Over the course of preparing these essays for publication, the authors have shared their work and ideas; thank you to the authors for being open to rethinking and rewriting. Two anonymous readers at *positions: east asia cultures critique* provided much-appreciated feedback — feedback that not only helped strengthen the essays but also helped us imagine who our reading audience might be.

Of course none of this would have been possible without the generous support of the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Chicago: first of all because of the generous resources available, and secondly, because it was during my tenure as a postdoctoral fellow there that I encountered an open and engaged community of scholars interested in proletarian literature. This volume might not have come into existence had Xiaobing Tang not casually suggested over lunch that I should organize a symposium on proletarian literature in East Asia. As busy as he is, I wonder if he even remembers that this was his idea. Thank you to Xiaobing Tang for making this project seem natural for me to do, for suggesting the artwork on the cover of this volume, for helping me make connections in China, and for those conversations in our Arts and Politics in East Asia Workshop at the University of Chicago (2001–3). Thank you to Kyeong-Hee Choi for embracing the symposium and for helping with the task of translating Yoon-Shik Kim, and, especially, for introducing me to Yoon-shik Kim, Emiko Kida, and Toshihiro Hotei. Above all, thank you for your always warm and cheerful collegiality.

To Norma Field, for modeling a kind of intellectualism that is caring, inspirational, and optimistic that social justice is within reach if enough people care to reach for it. And, for giving me the courage — in this endeavor and others — to think beyond my comfort zone.

And to Sam, Xander, and Sophie.

Heather Bowen-Struyk, Guest Editor

Notes

1 *Proletarian* is the umbrella term I am using for *left-wing*, *KAPF*, and *proletarian* — the terms chosen by the authors of these essays to construe their subjects — and we might think more about how these terms are constructed. 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.'"

2 Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (London: Verso, 2004), 57.

3 Ibid., 57–58.

4 See, for example, Hōjō Tsunehisa, *Tanemaku hito: Komaki Ōmi no seishun* (*The Sowers: The Spring of Komaki Ōmi*) (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō , 1995).

5 Sandra Wilson describes how, in an effort to found the first Japanese Communist Party, Japanese 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," in *International Communism and the Communist International, 1919–43*, ed. Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 287.

6 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.

7 S. A. Smith, "The Comintern, the Chinese Communist Party and the Three Armed Uprisings in Shanghai, 1926–27," in Rees and Thorpe, 255.

8 Ibid., 254–57.

9 Wang-chi Wong, *Politics and Literature in Shanghai: The Chinese League of Left-Wing Writers, 1930–1936* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 6.

10 With the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, the term *proletarian* has exercised many duties in the past half century as well. In this volume, Ping Liu therefore discusses not "proletarian" drama in China, but "leftwing" drama — which, he explains, is a smaller subset of "proletarian."

11 Agnes Smedley, whose autobiographical *Daughter of the 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 along revolutionaries and chronicled their struggles. When Chinese left-wing writer Ding Ling was arrested by the Guomindang in 1933, Smedley collected some of her translated writings and published them to bring an international public spotlight on her arrest. See 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; this book also includes a detailed bibliography of Smedley's work, "Bibliography of Primary Sources," 389–404.

12 Denning, *Culture*, 57. The phrase "imagined proximity of social revolution" is from Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," *New Left Review*, no. 144 (1984): 104.

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

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

15 See works by Wang-chi Wong, Shu-mei Shih, Leo Ou-fan Lee, Tani Barlow, Xiaobing Tang, etc.

16 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 74.

17 Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism*, 77.

18 Yokomitsu Riichi, *Shanghai*, trans. Dennis Washburn (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2001), 207.

19 Lippit writes, in *Topographies of Japanese Modernism*: "On the level of ideological content, the novel's central conflict, between Sanki's nationalism and Quilan's revolutionary Marxism, is never resolved" (104).

20 Hiroshi Aramata, *Puroretaria bungaku wa mono sugoi!* (*Proletarian Literature Is Awesome!*) (Tokyo: Heibonsha Shinsho, 1990). Aramata writes that when he read Kobayashi Takiji's *The Factory Ship* (*Kani kōsen*, 1929) he was reminded of splatter-horror flicks *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Friday the 13th* because of the horrifying representations of filth and degradation that threaten to overwhelm the men (30–31).

21 Denning, *Culture*, 57.

22 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: Hōsei University Press, 1964). In Japanese, see Yamada Seizaburō, *Puroretaria bungakushi* (*A History of Proletarian Literature*), vols. 1 and 2 (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1967), and Kurihara Yukio, *Puroretaria bungaku to sono jidai* (*Proletarian Literature and Its Era*) (1971; repr., Tokyo: Inpakuto Shuppankai, 2004).

23 See Wilson, "Comintern and Japanese Communist Party," 187–92.

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

25 Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 56.

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

27 Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 202.
28 Ibid., 202.
29 Ibid., 203.
30 Smith, "Three Armed Uprisings," 256.
31 Ibid., 254.
32 Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis*, 56–57.
33 Antoinette Burton, "Introduction: On the Inadequacy and the Indispensability of the Nation," in *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation*, ed. Antoinette Burton (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 6.
34 Ann Curthoys, "We've Just Started Making National Histories, and You Want Us to Stop Already?" in Burton, *After the Imperial Turn*, 85.
35 Burton, "Introduction," 2.
36 Curthoys, "We've Just Started," 85.
37 Mark Driscoll, "Introduction," in Katsuei Yuasa, *Kannani and Document of Flames: Two Japanese Colonial Novels*, trans. and with an introduction by Mark Driscoll (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 28.
38 Hoston, *State, Identity, and the National Question*, 179.
39 *Nakano Shigeharu, Sata Inekoshū* (*Nakano Shigeharu and Sata Ineko Collection*), *Gendai bungaku taikei*, vol. 57 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1970), 21. Originally published in *Kaizō*, February 1929; my translation.
40 Miriam Silverberg, *The Changing Song of Nakano Shigeharu* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 162.
41 Translation from Silverberg, *Changing Song*, 161.
42 Essay 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 Hŭi-myŏng, Kim Yak-su, Chŏng Yŏn-gyu, Yi Yang, Kim Ki-jin, Han Sik, Yi Pung-man, Han Sŏr-ya, Im Hwa, Kim Hwang, Sin In-ch'ul, Kim Kŭn-yŏl, Kim Kwang-uk, Paek Ch'ŏl, Chang Hyŏk-chu, Pak Yong-je, An Mak, Kim Tu-yong, Pak Sŏk-chŏng, Yi Cho-myŏng (Yi Pung-myŏng), Kang Kyŏng-ae, Hyŏn Min (Yu Chin-o), Yi Hyo-sŏk, Hong Chong-u, Kim Kyŏng-su, Kim Sa-ryang, Kim Kwang.
43 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*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 6.
44 At the symposium upon which this volume is based, Minato Kawamura presented on the left-wing farmer-poet Nogawa Takashi, who produced poetry while living in Manchukuo

before his incarceration in 1942 led to his death. See also Funo Eiichi, "Nihon no puroretaria bungaku ga egakaita 'Manshū' " ('Manchuria' in Japanese Proletarian Literature"), and Ino Mutsumi, "Kakimura Hiroshi no 'kantō paruchisan no uta': puroretaria kokusaishugi to rentai" ("Hiroshi Kakimura's [first name, family name] 'Song of a Kando Partisan': Proletarian Internationalism and Solidarity") both from *Shokuminchi to bungaku* (*Colonialism and Literature*), ed. Nihon shakai bungakukai (Tokyo: Orijin shuppansha senta, 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 former President George H. W. 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, "Ketsugo — nihon bunka no mazushisa" (Conclusion — The Poverty of Japanese Culture," in Nihon shakai bungakukai, *Shokuminchi to bungaku*, 269).

45 Minato Kawamura, "One View of the History of Japanese Proletarian Literature: On Nogawa Takashi," trans. David Rosenfeld, essay delivered at the Proletarian Literature in East Asia Symposium, University of Chicago, 2002. It should be noted that Amakasu Masahiko was responsible for murdering socialist Osugi Sakae in the mass confusion following the Great Tokyo Earthquake (1923).

46 An English translation of this novel has been prepared by Samuel Perry.

47 In Emiko Kida's essay, the translator settled on "visual arts" rather than "fine arts" as a translation for *bijutsu* because it is descriptive without bringing in the implications of a class aesthetic inherent in "fine arts." But, as we can see, proletarian *bijutsu* was practiced by students in the Fine Arts Academy, revealing the way that bourgeois or privileged art institutions and forms were both co-optable by the proletarian movement even as they threatened to reduce proletarianism to yet another artistic style.

48 Abé Mark Nornes, "The Innovation of Prokino," *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003). See also the digital archive Nornes has created with prokino clips, handbills, and an essay by prokino archivist Makino Mamoru at www.umich.edu/%7eiinet/cjs/pubs/cjsfaculty/filmpro.html.