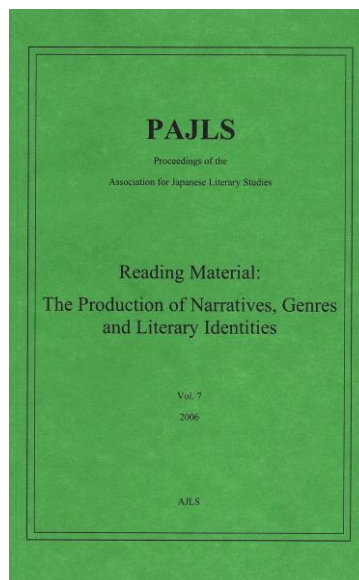


“Japanese Literature in Early Twentieth-Century East Asia: The *Enpon* Boom, the Uchiyama Shoten, and the Growth of Trans-Asian Literary Networks”

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# Japanese Literature in Early Twentieth-Century East Asia: The *Enpon* Boom, the Uchiyama Shoten, and the Growth of Trans-Asian Literary Networks

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The rapid movement of people, ideas, and texts within Japan's colonial and semicolonial imperium (1895-1945) was unprecedented. Peoples throughout East Asia had engaged in cross-cultural exchange for several millennia, but the early twentieth century witnessed the first large-scale contact among East Asian elites as hundreds of thousands of semicolonial Chinese and colonial Koreans and Taiwanese streamed to Japan for a modern education.

<sup>1</sup> Previous accounts of East Asian intellectuals who studied abroad have highlighted their contributions to state formation and economic growth in their homelands. This policy-oriented focus overlooks the rapid and dynamic cultural exchange that took place throughout the entire East Asian region during the colonial period. Japanese literature deserves particular attention because of its role as one of East Asia's most widely traveled and frequently manipulated cultural products.

Most scholarship on Japanese literature in comparative perspective has focused on how this literature has been influenced by, reacted against, or recreated other literatures. There is no denying the tremendous allure of early Chinese literature for premodern, Meiji (1868-1912), and even Taishō (1912-1926) Japanese writers, or their attraction to American and European creative works, beginning in the 1880s. But Japanese literature is far more than a "receiver" of foreign literatures. Works from Japan circulated widely in early twentieth-century East Asia, leaving an indelible mark on the literary cultures of China, Korea, and Taiwan. We no longer can ignore the complex, vibrant, and unprecedented Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese negotiation with Japanese cultural products, particularly literature, that took place in the early twentieth-century throughout the vibrant contact zone that was East Asia. This negotiation was greatly complicated by Japan's dual position as gateway to coveted Western science and culture *and* as colonial oppressor.

Koreans and Chinese read and reconfigured more Japanese literature in the first decade of the twentieth century than they had in the preceding thousand years. Reconfigurations of Japanese literature took two principal forms: explicit (commentary, translation, adaptation) and implicit (intertextual (re)creation). Colonial and semicolonial consumption and reconfiguration

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<sup>1</sup> The term *semicolonial* as used in this article designates the multinational yet fragmented political, economic, and cultural domination of China by Japan, Russia/the Soviet Union, and numerous other Western nations from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.

of Japanese literature increased gradually during the 1910s and early 1920s, as growing numbers of Chinese, Koreans, and then Taiwanese studied in Japan, or, in the case of Koreans and Taiwanese, received a Japanese education in their homelands. Yet the Japanese *enpon* boom (one-yen book boom) of the late 1920s – which made literature easily affordable and readily portable – served as an unanticipated accelerant for intra-Asian literary engagement. The aftershocks of this boom were particularly noticeable in China, where both translations and intertextual reconfigurations of Japanese literature burgeoned with unprecedented alacrity. Increasing literacy in Japanese among educated colonials lessened the need for Korean and Taiwanese translations of literature arriving from the metropole, yet intertextual (re)creations of this literature ballooned in Japan’s colonies after the *enpon* boom, just as they did in China. The onslaught of Japanese literature in the form of *enpon* further complicated the struggles of semicolonial Chinese and colonial Korean and Taiwanese writers as they strove to create new literatures under the darkening thundercloud of Japanese imperialism.

## Background

Few outside Japan paid much attention to Japanese cultural products before the late nineteenth century. Japanese literature was particularly neglected, largely because of the linguistic challenges involved in its consumption. East Asian sinocentrism remained intact until after the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when Japan’s political capital and military capability soared and China’s plummeted. Beginning in the 1880s Koreans started going to Japan as learners, no longer as purveyors of culture, and developed a nascent interest in Japanese literature. Similarly, Yao Wendong (1852-1927), a Chinese intellectual who arrived in Tokyo as an attaché with the 1882 diplomatic mission and lived in Japan for six years, was one of several Chinese of his generation who compiled collections of Japanese poetry and prose.<sup>2</sup>

By the turn of the twentieth century, Japan’s economic success and military triumphs had cemented its position as the flourishing prototype of a new Asian modernity. This prompted a tidal wave of hundreds of thousands of Chinese, Korean, and, beginning in the 1920s, Taiwanese students to flood Japanese cities. These young East Asians were determined to learn about the Western social institutions, medicine, science, and technology that the Japanese recently had appropriated with such success. At the same time, while living in Japan many Chinese, Koreans, and Taiwanese also became deeply invested in the study of both Japanese and Western cultural products, particularly literature, and some reconfigured this literature via commentaries, translations, adaptations, and intertextual recastings. East Asian interliterary engagement developed new and intriguing forms as a result of the intellectual ferment that took place among émigrés to Japan at this time.

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<sup>2</sup> Yao Wendong compiled the *Mojiang xiuxi shi* (Poems Composed at the Sumida River, 1883), *Haiwai tongwenji* (Collection of Foreign Literature, 1888), and *Guisheng zengyan* (Words of Encouragement for My Departure, 1889). Moreover, fully ten of his planned twenty-two volume series *Dongcha ershierzhang mulu* (Series on Japanese Studies in Twenty-two Volumes) were to be devoted to Japanese literature. For more on Yao Wendong see Benjamin Wai-ming Ng, “Yao Wendong (1852-1927) and Japanology in Late Qing China,” *Sino-Japanese Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, April 1998, pp. 8-22.

## Literary Consumption in the (Semi) Colonial Sphere

Our understanding of the Japanese empire derives in good part from scholarship that focuses on the doctrines and methods of Japanese state formation as replicated voluntarily or absorbed under duress by early twentieth-century Chinese, Koreans, and Taiwanese. This process of foreign-system integration has been presented as occurring in two modalities: 1) as part of national self-strengthening, Chinese, Koreans, and Taiwanese actively sought out and eagerly incorporated what they regarded as “advanced” ideas, practices, and institutions from Japan, including Japanese medicine, social and political doctrines, and language reform; and 2) Japan – often with the assistance of local collaborators – imposed colonial and semicolonial policies on East Asia to advance its political and economic penetration of the region; these policies led to the exploitation of colonial resources and the attempted assimilation of colonial cultures. Portrayals of both of these modalities posit a hierarchy, either of benefactor/supplicant or of oppressor/oppressed. Today it is now possible, indeed imperative, to move beyond such dyads to a fresh focus on East Asian and particularly Japanese contact zones, social spaces of cultural interchange with diminished hierarchies of authority and enhanced interactivity and reciprocity. Little appreciated before now is that the early twentieth-century mutual contacts among writers from all parts of East Asia stimulated radically new literary output on a scale unprecedented in Asian experience and seldom, if ever, matched in the history of world literatures. The willing and enthusiastic engagement of (semi)colonial readers with Japanese literature is astounding, not only in light of East Asian peoples’ historical disdain for Japanese literature but also in the face of the oppressive cultural, economic, military, and political policies Japan imposed on East Asia starting at the end of the nineteenth century.

Literary reconfigurations are a major yet underappreciated part of the swirling vortex of peoples, ideas, and texts that characterizes many colonial and semicolonial landscapes. They also embody a fundamental characteristic of the colonial and semicolonial experience: the blurring of complicity and resistance. What are the implications of interweaving hundreds of metropolitan texts into the fabric of a colonial or semicolonial literature, whether more explicitly (via critical study, translation, or adaptation) or more implicitly (via intertextual (re)creation)? Does so doing deny the validity of the host culture, and grant the oppressor the final word? Reconfigurations – whatever their form – permanently alter if not significantly violate the landscape of the host culture. They also reconstruct existing cultural products: at the same time that reconfigurations integrate the foreign text, they also rework it, if not tear it apart.

The transformation of Japanese writing from a body almost entirely ignored outside the archipelago to the principal source of intra-Asian textual reconfiguration began several decades before the *enpon* boom, with the Korean intellectual Yu Kilchun’s (1856-1914) immensely popular *Sōyu kyōnmun* (Observations of a Journey to the West, 1895), an adaptation of his teacher Fukuzawa Yukichi’s (1834-1901) bestselling *Seiyō jijō* (Conditions in the West, 1866-1870).<sup>3</sup> Explicit reconfigurations of Japanese fiction and drama soon followed. Just as the

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the ties between *Sōyu kyōnmun* and *Seiyō jijō* see Chōn Bong-dōk, “*Seiyū kenmon* [*Sōyu kyōnmun*] to Yu Kitsushun [Yu Kilchun] no hōritsu shisō,” *Han*, vol. 6, no. 5, May 1977, pp. 10-68; Kim Ūnchōn, “Hanil yangguk ūi sōgu munhak suyong e kwanhan pikyo munhakchōk yōngu,” in *Kihōn Son Nakpōm sōnsaeng hoekapkinnyōm nonmunchip*, ed. Kihōn Son Nakpōm Sōnsaeng Hoekapkinnyōm Nonmunchip Kanhaeng Wiwōnhoe (Seoul: Kihōn Son Rakpōm Sōnsaeng Hoekapkinnyōm Nonmunchip Kanhaeng Wiwōnhoe, 1972), pp. 221-297; and

Japanese for centuries had adapted countless Chinese and more recently European creative works, so too did early twentieth-century Chinese and Korean writers adapt Japanese texts. These latter rewritings are particularly intriguing because they appeared in a volatile political and social context: the 1910 annexation of Korea, increasing economic pressures on China, and active hostility of Japanese toward Koreans and Chinese living in Japan. Adaptations in Korean or Chinese usually established instant links with a Japanese literary work, referring to their source text on the cover or in the preface and/or sporting a title that coincided closely with their predecessor's. But they also often separated themselves from the Japanese text, deleting offensive passages and adding questions of specific concern to Chinese or Koreans. For instance, in his early adaptation of Shiba Shirō's (1852-1922) political novel *Kajin no kigū* (Chance Meetings with Beautiful Women, 1897), the Chinese intellectual Liang Qichao (1873-1929) deletes Shiba's diatribe against the Qing rulers of China and reconstructs Shiba's attacks on Chinese policy toward Korea and Japan; Liang Qichao makes many other minor changes, creating a text with political views more tolerable to Chinese audiences.<sup>4</sup>

Interest in more contemporary literature blossomed as the numbers of Chinese and Koreans studying in Japan increased. Tokutomi Roka's (1868-1927) best-selling *Hototogisu* (The Cuckoo, 1900) became a favorite target of textual reconfiguration in China; Chinese drama troupes in Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, and elsewhere also repeatedly adapted this novel for the stage. In the years leading up to the May Fourth Movement (1919) the Chinese adapted dozens of Japanese dramatic works, futuristic novels, adventure novels, detective stories, and large quantities of science fiction. Naturally, not all Chinese were excited about Japanese literature; many saw it as a simple derivative of Western literature and not worth examining in its own right. But there is no denying the pull of Japanese literature on scores of early twentieth-century Chinese readers and writers. Koreans too embraced contemporary Japanese literature in the years leading up to the March First Independence Movement (1919). Multiple adaptations of such runaway Japanese bestsellers as Tokutomi's *Hototogisu*, Kikuchi Yūhō's (1870-1947) *Ono ga tsumi* (My Sin, 1900), and Ozaki Kōyō's (1867-1903) *Konjiki yasha* (The Gold Demon, 1903) met with popular acclaim. Similarly, in the 1900s and 1910s small numbers of Taiwanese at home and in Japan became involved with Japanese literature and adapted *Konjiki yasha*, *Hototogisu*, and other Japanese novels for the stage, often with the assistance of Japanese and Chinese theater figures. Concurrent with the beginning of literary adaptations was that of intertextual recreations. Liang Qichao's political novel *Xin Zhongguo weilaiji* (The Future of New China, 1902) is one of the first Chinese fictional works to include significant intertexts from Japanese literature; this text reconfigures Suehiro Tetchō's (1849-1896) political novel *Setchūbai* (Plum Blossoms in the Snow, 1886), as well as various *miraiki* (accounts of the future),

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Tsukiashi Tatsuhiko, "Chōsen kaika shisō no kōzō – Yu Kitsushun [Yu Kilchun] *Seiyū kenmon* [*Sōyu kyōnmun*] no bunmeironteki rikken kunshu seiron," *Chōsen gakuho*, no. 159, April 1996, pp. 111-144.

<sup>4</sup> Numerous scholars have discussed Liang's manipulation of *Kajin no kigū*. See, for instance, Ōmura Masuo, *Chōsen kindai bungaku to Nihon* (Tokyo: Ryokuin Shobō, 2003), pp. 244-251, and Ōmura, "Ryō Keichō [Liang Qichao] oyobi *Kajin no kigū*," *Waseda Hōgakkai jinbun ronshū*, no. 11(1973): 103-133; and Wang Zhongchen, "Xushuzhe de bianmao: shixi Riben zhengzhi xiaoshuo *Jingguo meitan* [Keikoku bidan] de zhong yiben," *Qinghua Daxue xuebao*, vol. 10, no. 4 (1995): 38-43.

which proliferated in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Japan.<sup>5</sup> Yi Kwangsu's (1892-1950?) novel *Mujǒng* (Heartless, 1917), often labeled Korea's first "modern novel," contains numerous intertexts from Japanese literature.

Simultaneous with Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese consumption and reconfiguration of Japanese books in the early decades of Japan's empire were the efforts of Japanese entrepreneurs such as Uchiyama Kanzō (1885-1959), who in 1917 opened the Uchiyama Bookstore in Shanghai. Targeting the resident Japanese community, the thousands of Chinese intellectuals living in Shanghai who had returned from studies in Japan, and Koreans who had found refuge in China, the Uchiyama outlet quickly developed into China's largest Japanese-language bookstore outside Manchuria. It also was one of China's principal sites of East Asian cultural exchange; Chinese, visiting Japanese, and occasionally Korean writers enjoyed socializing and debating literature and politics in the comfortable salon on the second floor of Uchiyama's facility.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Enpon* as Accelerant**

Despite increasing (semi)colonial interest in Japanese textual production, Japanese books – and literary works in particular – did not begin spilling off of shelves in Japan's (semi)colonies until the *enpon* boom of the late 1920s. It is well known that the *enpon* boom in Japan transformed reading into a national obsession. The publisher Kaizōsha, plagued at the time by economic woes, kicked off this boom in 1926 with the first installments of what would become its sixty-three volume *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* (Complete Works of Modern Japanese Literature). This compendium was followed by several hundred other collected works on a variety of subjects.<sup>7</sup> An increasingly literate Japanese populace embraced this new publishing format, and subscriptions numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Wide circulation of translated and indigenous texts enriched Japanese perceptions of national identification.

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<sup>5</sup> For more on the relationship between *Xin Zhongguo weilaiji* and the Japanese political novel see Shimizu Ken'ichirō, "Ryō Keichō [Liang Qichao] to 'teikoku kanbun' – 'shinbuntai' no tanjō to Meiji Tōkyō no medeia bunka," *Ajia yūgaku*. no. 13, February 2002, pp. 22-37; and Wang Hongzhi, "Zhuanyu fabiao ququ zhengjian: Liang Qichao he wanqing zhengzhi xiaoshuo de fanyi ji chuanguo," in *Fanyi yu chuanguo: Zhongguo jindai fanyi xiaoshuo lun*, ed. Wang Hongzhi (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2000), pp. 172-205.

<sup>6</sup> Japanese writers who passed through Uchiyama's store include Satō Haruo (1892-1964), Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965), Noguchi Yonejirō (1875-1947), and Kaji Wataru (1903-1982). For more on Uchiyama, his close relationships with Chinese writers including Guo Moruo (1892-1978), Lu Xun (1881-1936), Tian Han (1898-1968), and Yu Dafu (1896-1945), and his bookstore as a principal center of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange, see Koizumi Yuzuru, *Ro Jin [Lu Xun] to Uchiyama Kanzō* (Tokyo: Tosho Shuppan, 1989); Mitsui Hiromi, *Ro Jin [Lu Xun] kaisōroku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1972); Paul Scott, "Introduction," *Chinese Studies in History*, vol. 30, no. 4, Summer 1997, pp. 56-70; and Yoshida Hiroji, *Rojin no tomo: Uchiyama Kanzō no shōzō, Shanhai Uchiyama Shoten no rōpei* (Tokyo: Shinkyō Shuppansha, 1994). Uchiyama himself kept very detailed records of his experiences; see, among others, his *Kakōroku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1981).

<sup>7</sup> Edward Mack, "The Value of Literature: Cultural Authority in Interwar Japan," pp. 174-175 (Doctoral Dissertation. Harvard University, 2002).

Yet the aftershocks of the *enpon* boom extended far beyond the shores of the Japanese archipelago. They reached not only untold numbers of Japanese residents abroad but also thousands of the semicolonial Chinese and colonial Koreans and Taiwanese who had studied in Japan, learned Japanese in their homelands, and/or read creative works that reconfigured Japanese texts. Japanese publishers had actually overestimated the domestic demand for *enpon*, and unsold *enpon* filled warehouses in Japan. Entrepreneurs such as Bandō Kyōgo (1893-1973) sold these books in China (particularly Manchuria), Korea, and Taiwan, and private collectors and Japanese libraries and bookstores throughout East Asia stockpiled vast quantities of *enpon*.

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Uchiyama Kanzō's close relationship with Kaizōsha and other major publishers smoothed the export of *enpon* to his store, and Uchiyama speaks of the monthly deliveries of *enpon* as "piling up like mountains" in the road; his store received 1,000 copies of the *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* and hundreds of copies of other collections.<sup>9</sup> These numbers pale in comparison with the many thousands of *enpon* in Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of *enpon* marketed in Japan. Yet *enpon*, which frequently sold for only a fraction of their original price, were an instant success among Uchiyama's Chinese clientele, many of whom proceeded to translate them into Chinese.

One frequently overlooked consequence of the easy access to Japanese literature made possible by *enpon* was the tremendous increase in reconfigurations of Japanese literature that ensued throughout Japan's colonial and semicolonial realm. In the case of China, Uchiyama notes with pride his role in the translation of more than eight hundred titles of Japanese literature and criticism into Chinese, the majority of which appeared after the *enpon* boom: "[Chinese translators] obtained most of these books from my store . . . I was good friends with many of the translators, including Lu Xun, Guo Moruo, Tian Han . . . Zhang Ziping [and more than thirty others] . . . and most of the Chinese translators of Japanese literature were my customers."<sup>10</sup> Chinese had been translating Japanese creative works since the turn of the twentieth century, but their engagement with Japanese literature accelerated rapidly after 1926; Chinese translations of Japanese literature increased six-fold by 1930.<sup>11</sup> Translations of Japanese literature, most of which were published in Shanghai – the site of the Uchiyama Shoten – continued to flourish until the outbreak of total war between Japan and China in 1937. As the Japanese proletarian writer Eguchi Kan (1887-1975) commented in 1934, "It is truly astonishing how Chinese translations

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<sup>8</sup> Kawahara Isao, *Taiwan shinbungaku undō no tenkai: Nihon bungaku to no setten* (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1997), pp. 260-264. For more on the adventures of Bandō Kyōgo, see Edward Mack, "Marketing Japan's Literature in its 1930s Colonies," *Bulletin of the Bibliographical Society of Australia & New Zealand*, vol. 28, nos. 1, 2 (2004): 134-141).

<sup>9</sup> Uchiyama Kanzō, *Kakōroku*, p. 145.

<sup>10</sup> Uchiyama Kanzō, *Kakōroku*, pp. 193-194.

<sup>11</sup> For lists of twentieth-century Japanese texts translated into Chinese see Wang Xiangyuan, *Ershi shiji Zhongguo de Riben fanyi wenxueshi* (Beijing: Beijing Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2001), pp. 407-494; and Kondō Haruo, *Gendai Chūgoku no sakka to sakuhin* (Tokyo: Shinsen Shobō, 1949), pp. 103-193.

and introductions of modern Japanese novels, plays, and criticism keep coming out, almost every month.”<sup>12</sup>

Another outgrowth of the *enpon* boom was increasing Chinese scholarly interest in Japanese literature. Lu Xun’s (1881-1936) brother Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967) had opened the field of Japanese literary studies in China with his April 1918 lecture “Ribei jin sanshinian xiaoshuo zhi fada” (The Development of Japanese Literature in the Last Thirty Years).<sup>13</sup> But not until the *enpon* boom did the Chinese publish their first monographic work of criticism on Japanese literature: Xie Liuyi’s (1898-1945) hefty *Riben wenxueshi* (History of Japanese Literature, 1929), which discusses Japanese literature from the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, eighth century) to contemporary texts and urges Chinese to study Japanese literature on its own terms:

Japanese literature of the last twenty years already has become an important part of world literature . . . In recent years our own literature also has been influenced to some degree by Japanese literature. With each passing day the number of Chinese translations of works by Japanese writers is increasing tremendously . . . There are many Chinese who still look down on Japanese literature and language, wrongly thinking they’re the same as Chinese . . . These mistakes need to be corrected.<sup>14</sup>

Korean and Taiwanese critics also began publishing more on Japanese literature after the *enpon* boom.

Japanese creative works were hoisted onto the East Asian cultural landscape (as *enpon*) and explicitly grafted onto this landscape (as translations and commentaries) in unprecedented quantities in the late 1920s and 1930s. Even more significant, however, is their intertextual reconfiguration – after the *enpon* boom – in hundreds if not thousands of colonial and semicolonial literary works. Not all the Japanese intertexts that appear in Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese creative texts come from literary works published in *enpon*, but the onslaught of Japanese literature brought about by the *enpon* explosion made negotiating with this literature a far more urgent task. Colonial and semicolonial writers were captivated by creations from the metropole, but they ultimately refused to allow their Japanese counterparts to have the final word, instead struggling with and reworking their texts in myriad ways.

Naturally, the target of an implicit rewriting need not come from a country that has colonized one’s own, nor need it come from abroad. Literary rewritings occur not only across borders but also inside them, and often within the oeuvre of a single writer if not a single text.

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<sup>12</sup> Eguchi Kan, “Nihon puroretaria bungaku no Shinayaku to sono yakusha,” *Bungaku hyōron*, vol. 1, no. 10, October 1934, pp. 62.

<sup>13</sup> See Zhou Zuoren, “Ribei jin sanshinian xiaoshuo zhi fada,” *Xin qingnian*, July 1918, pp. 27-42. In this essay Zhou Zuoren encourages Chinese to emulate Japanese literature. He maintains that if the Chinese wish to “cure” their fiction and create a new literature of their own for the twentieth century, they must “imitate” foreign works – including those from Japan.

<sup>14</sup> Xie Liuyi. *Riben wenxueshi*, p. 1 (Shanghai: Beixin Shuju, 1929).



Yet the radically new circumstance of unprecedented cultural interaction among metropolitan Japanese, semicolonial Chinese, and colonial Korean and Taiwanese writers in the early twentieth century presents a rare opportunity for groundbreaking literary analysis. By teasing out transnational colonial and semicolonial networks of intertextual mediation and allusion, we can begin to appreciate the crucial function of literature in capturing the anxieties and the hopes of societies plagued by both inner turmoil and foreign oppression. During three years and many summers of research in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, I unearthed several hundred Japanese literary texts that were implicitly reconfigured by Chinese, Koreans, and Taiwanese, writing in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. I suspect there are many more. An astonishingly broad range of Japanese authors and genres is implicated: everything from Japanese political novels, drama, and *shintaiishi* (poems in the new style) of the late nineteenth century to the “I-novel” of the 1900s and 1910s, the proletarian and modernist poetry and prose of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and wartime propaganda texts of the late 1930s and early 1940s. After the *enpon* boom, Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese writers actively engaged with virtually every form of modern Japanese literature.

### Rectifying Colonial Discourse

Many (semi)colonial reconfigurations of Japanese literature rectify Japanese portrayal of peoples from other parts of Asia. For instance, the Korean writer Im Hwa’s (1908-1953) poem “Usan patūn ‘Yokkohama’ ūi pudu” (Yokohama Pier Under the Umbrella, 1929) deconstructs the Japanese proletarian writer Nakano Shigeharu’s (1902-1979) poem “Ame no furu Shinagawa eki” (Shinagawa Station in the Rain, 1929).<sup>15</sup> Written within seven months of each other by poets familiar with each other’s writing, both poems discuss the deportation of Koreans living in Japan immediately before the enthronement of Emperor Hirohito in 1928. But the Korean poem challenges many of the assertions made in “Ame no furu Shinagawa eki”: it not only accentuates Korean humanity but also redefines personal ties between Japanese (the colonizing) and Koreans (the colonized) as more equal relationships.

“Ame no furu Shinagawa eki” portrays Koreans as “disappearing shadows” with “frozen hearts” who are to serve as the “advance shock troops and rear guards” of Japanese revolutionaries; Nakano’s poem also calls on these supposedly insensate Koreans to murder the Japanese emperor while the Japanese revolutionaries cheer from a distance. In contrast, the Korean poem “Usan patūn ‘Yokkohama’ ūi pudu” argues that Koreans are in fact just as “human” as the Japanese: the narrator states that, far from frozen, his heart “burns” at the moment of departure. The Korean poem also argues that the Japanese revolutionaries must fight together with their Korean comrades. Im Hwa’s implicit reconfiguration of Nakano’s poem redefines Korean-Japanese relationships as mutually beneficial, with neither party abjected at the expense of the other.

Similarly, the Chinese writer Ah Long (1907-1967) rectifies Japanese fictional depictions of Chinese. His novel *Nanjing xueji* (Nanjing Blood Sacrifice, 1939), one of the few Chinese literary works on the Nanjing massacre (1937), explicitly rewrites Japan’s four major

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<sup>15</sup> See Nakano Shigeharu, “Ame no furu Shinagawa eki,” *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū*, vol. 1, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1976), pp. 529-530; and Im Hwa, “Usan patūn ‘Yokkohama’ ūi pudu,” *Im Hwa chōnjip*, vol. 1 (Seoul: Pakichōng, 2000), pp. 68-70. Im Hwa lived and studied in Japan and published in Japanese literary journals.

wartime novels: Ishikawa Tatsuzō's (1905-1985) *Ikiteiru heitai* (Living Soldiers, 1938) and Hino Ashihei's (1907-1960) *Mugi to heitai* (Wheat and Soldiers, 1938), *Tsuchi to heitai* (Earth and Soldiers, 1938), and *Hana to heitai* (Flowers and Soldiers, 1938). In the postscript to *Nanjing xueji*, Ah Long expresses anger that the Japanese have translated the atrocities of Nanjing into "great works of art," and states that he wrote *Nanjing xueji* to challenge the portrayal of Japanese atrocities in China found in texts by Ishikawa Tatsuzō and Hino Ashihei.<sup>16</sup>

Not surprisingly, *Nanjing xueji* contains longer and more graphic depictions of the destruction wrought by the Japanese in China than do its Japanese literary predecessors. But the Chinese novel also goes out of its way to depict China, and particularly the Yangzi River area, as more than just another battleground, and the Chinese people as more than just faceless bodies methodically slaughtered by the Japanese. For instance, while Ishikawa's novel several times refers to the Yangzi River delta as the "next battlefield," as just another place on the map, *Nanjing xueji* pays considerable attention to the history and geography of the area. Similarly, whereas Ishikawa's and Hino's novels portray the Chinese as a homogeneous and faceless collection of people, Ah Long's novel looks closely at Chinese heroism and pacifism and at the psychological impact the destruction of their cities has had on the Chinese; it also exposes the hypocrisy of the Nationalist Chinese government and military.

### Differentiating from Colonial Discourse

While "Usan patūn 'Yokkohama' ūi pudu" and *Nanjing xueji* thoroughly transform Japanese depictions of Koreans and Chinese, other (semi)colonial texts differentiate themselves from their Japanese predecessors by replacing the landscape of the Japanese text with the that of the (semi)colony. For instance, Yang Kui's (1905-1985) commissioned short story "Zōsan no kage ni: nonki na jiisan no hanashi" (Behind Increased Production: The Tale of an Easygoing Old Man, 1944) differentiates itself from the Japanese writer Natsume Sōseki's (1867-1916) novel *Kōfu* (The Miner, 1908).<sup>17</sup> Early in "Zōsan no kage ni" the narrator declares that he read *Kōfu* to get an idea of what he might find in the mines in Taiwan, which are run by the Japanese, but that he discovered that the mines in Taiwan are not nearly as gruesome, and the miners not nearly as callous, as the horrific mines and the "savagely" Japanese miners portrayed in Sōseki's novel. Later in the story, the narrator highlights the intelligence and the humanity of the Taiwanese miners, who indeed have little in common with their Japanese counterparts in *Kōfu*. However, contradicting his opening claims, he also reveals that conditions in Taiwanese mines actually are far more treacherous than those in the Japanese mines described in Sōseki's novel.

In one sense, "Zōsan no kage ni" reconfigures *Kōfu* by underlining both the hardships Taiwanese must endure on account of increasing Japanese demands and the astuteness and

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<sup>16</sup> See Ah Long, *Nanjing xueji* (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1987); Hino Ashihei, *Mugi to heitai*, in *Chikuma gendai bungaku taikai*, vol. 46 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1978), pp. 183-260, *Tsuchi to heitai* (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1938) and *Hana to heitai* (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1939); and Ishikawa Tatsuzō, *Ikiteiru heitai*, in *Chikuma gendai bungaku taikai*, vol. 50 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1976), pp. 140-218.

<sup>17</sup> See Natsume Sōseki, *Kōfu*, in *Sōseki bungaku zenshū*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1973), pp. 211-467; and Yang Kui, "Zōsan no kage ni: nonki na jiisan no hanashi," in *Yang Qui quanji*, vol. 8 (Taipei: Guoli Wenhua Zichan Baocun Yanjiu Zhongxin Choubeichu Chuban, 1998), pp. 1-47.

kindness of ordinary Taiwanese. But the narrator's explicit evocation of *Kōfu* in the opening pages of his story, which initially comes across as an argument for the irrelevance of metropolitan discourse, ultimately reveals the Taiwanese intellectual (that is to say, Yang Kui's narrator) as misusing and misreading this discourse. Although knowledge of the existence of *Kōfu* suggests familiarity with a broad range of Japanese literature,<sup>18</sup> this very subjective text is hardly a documentary or testimonial on mines and mining. The aftershocks of this exposure – the colonial misuse, or misunderstanding of the Japanese narrative – are felt throughout the Taiwanese story and highlight the multilayered negotiations with metropolitan culture that take place in the colonial context.

### Concluding Thoughts

The Dai Tō-A Bungakusha Taikai (Greater East Asian Writers Conferences) of the early 1940s often are seen as forming an East Asian literary sphere centered on the Japanese cultural and literary tradition and coterminous with the Japanese empire.<sup>19</sup> Yet such a literary sphere had been in place for decades; Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese readers were independently consuming and reconfiguring Japanese creative works as well as those of their (semi)colonial counterparts long before these symposia. The early twentieth-century East Asian literary landscape was a terrain of remarkably nuanced, sometimes subtle, sometimes trenchant, but always sophisticated negotiation, critique, and struggle, as Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese artists overwrote the textual products of the colonial hegemon. Discovering how texts use other texts, how those produced by the colonial power become targets of rewriting by intellectuals from elsewhere in the empire, and how metropolitan writers respond to these textual attacks, opens new vistas on the function of literature as a site of cultural negotiation. Only by appreciating polyintertextuality (multi-intertextualities) can we gain a clearer picture of the world's cultural landscape and a sharper image of each of the literatures within it that have intertwined so deeply to create an absolutely fascinating textual topography.

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<sup>18</sup> *Kōfu* was one of Sōseki's least popular works and not widely known.

<sup>19</sup> Faye Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun: Japanese Colonial Literature of Taiwan and the South* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), p. 2.

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