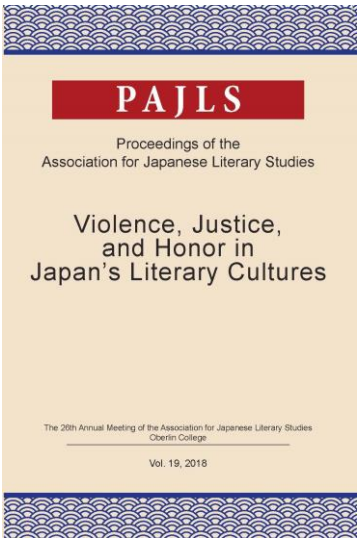
“Toward Comradely ‘Personhood’: Matsuda Tokiko’s ‘Another Battlefront’ Defying Environmental and Sexual Harms, Poverty, and War in the Workplace (1932)”

Norma Field

Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies 19 (2018): 211–223.



PAJLS 19:
Violence, Justice, and Honor in Japan’s Literary Cultures.
Editor: Ann Sherif
Managing Editor: Matthew Fraleigh

TOWARD COMRADELY "PERSONHOOD": MATSUDA TOKIKO'S "ANOTHER BATTLEFRONT" DEFYING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SEXUAL HARMS, POVERTY, AND WAR IN THE WORKPLACE (1932)

Norma Field
University of Chicago (Emerita)

I. WHY THE PRESCIENCE OF "ANOTHER BATTLEFRONT": A QUESTION POSED AGAINST THE CURRENT RAPACIOUS DISREGARD FOR HUMAN WELL-BEING THE WORLD OVER, BUT MOST ESPECIALLY IN THESE UNITED STATES

In April of 2005, good fortune gave me a seat in the large hall where the first meeting to discuss the life and works of Matsuda Tokiko was convened. Tokiko was recently deceased, in December of 2004, at the age of 99. At the time, I was in the middle of a yearlong stay in the once vibrant port city of Otaru in Hokkaido, the home of Kobayashi Takiji (1903–1933), Japan's best-known proletarian writer. It is a city where the Japanese Communist Party has managed to hang on to five out of twenty-seven seats in the city assembly. Living there, however briefly, gave me a glimpse of people associated with a party hated, feared, and above all, avoided. But these people—for the most part members, but also allies, maybe subscribers to *Akahata* (the Red Flag)—were leading a range of ordinary lives. The Tokyo gathering, on the other hand, brought together many of the luminaries of the leftist (not all communist) culture movement dating back to the prewar era. Two moments in particular have stayed with me.

The first comes from a video of Tokiko herself, interviewed days before her death. She was responding to a question on the Iraq War (in 2001, aged 96, she had participated in a women's march against the dispatch of Japanese Self-Defense Forces to Iraq) by recalling how she was targeted by a low-flying fighter plane in the last year of World War II. Close enough to see the faces of those onboard, she had desperately turned her very pregnant belly upward. The aircraft turned away.

The second is a pair of statements made by two men: one a former defendant from the Matsukawa Incident (1949), a train derailment case in which three crew members were killed; the other, her son, Ōnuma Sakundo, a Slavic-language expert in the Party's Central Committee who resided in Prague for a number of years and co-translated *The Three Sources and Three Components of Marxism* in the "Classics of Scientific Socialism" series published by Shin Nihon Shuppansha. The Matsukawa

case was one of several landmark postwar cases occurring under the red purge initiated under the US Occupation. The effective targets were the revived, now legal Communist Party and major labor unions. At the district court level, all twenty defendants, union members, were deemed guilty, with five sentenced to death, five more to life imprisonment. All convictions were eventually overturned, and the defendants would go on to win compensation, but it was Matsuda Tokiko who went straightaway to meet the defendants, urge them to write up their personal statements ("not slogans"), and supported them and their families throughout the years of legal struggle. In no small part, it was her activities that mobilized writers and intellectuals all over the country in their defense. Indeed, one of the former defendants memorialized her as "a mother to all of us." But her son, when it came his time to speak, said, "She might have been a mother to the Matsukawa defendants, but she wasn't around much for us." The audience laughed, but softly. There would have been first-hand knowledge in that room of the domestic costs of a life of political commitment.

I recall these scenes because they attest to Tokiko's extraordinary lucidity and devotion to her principles to the very end of her long life; to the possibility of tracing a history of pre and postwar struggles "for dignity, justice, and revolution" (Bowen-Struyk 2016); and to the inextricability of the personal—especially as a woman—and the political in her life. Tokiko's life is exemplary *and* legible only when grasped as inseparable from a movement. The parts of the movement with which she identified most firmly both before and after the war were affiliated with the Communist Party, which for reasons justified and un-, but most often unexamined, has been at best an unwanted stepchild for leftist cultural intellectuals of the past half-century. Accordingly, this very brief, selective guide to her life (it would be jarring to call it her "career") calls attention to the activities made possible through the comradeship centered on though not exclusively limited to the Party.[1] It also calls attention to the way in which she was never removed from needing and choosing to addressing the injuries of poverty, war, industrial disaster, and the condition of being a woman, most especially, a poor one. After this reflection on her life, I will take up her 1932 short story, "Another Battlefront" and two particular passages added after the war.

[1] I am mindful of American historian and novelist Alexander Saxton's reflecting, in the preface to the reissue of his great American proletarian novel, *The Great Midland*, on the bitter shame he felt in having agreed with his publisher that he could not, in a subsequent novel, portray his leading characters, black and white, as Communists engaged in an antiracist labor struggle in a shipyard.

Matsuda Tokiko (Hana) was born into the wretchedness endemic to the industrializing world—in her case, the misery pervading mining communities. In 1904, the year before her birth, the Russo-Japanese War broke out, and copper from the Arakawa Mines was more than ever in urgent demand, encouraging the Mitsubishi owner-operators to tighten the screws on what were always exquisitely dangerous conditions: "No three days without a funeral," the saying went. Tokiko's birth father died on the job when she was an infant. Mitsubishi would not rent its ever-so-modest company housing to unattached women, so Tokiko's mother, with a three-year-old son and infant daughter to support, found a widower with six children who would marry her. He was dead within a year, his lungs done in by dust from copper tailings. The next husband, boss of a bunkhouse, also worked in the refinery section, a swirl of sulfurous acid fumes. Does that explain his violent disposition, his resourcefulness in coming up with exhausting and humiliating tasks for his daughter, and finally, his attempted assault on her in the middle of the night, when she had been sent to look for two cows that had strayed onto government-held land? Tokiko's unabated loathing for him would be complicated one day when he was dragged into the mine office where she was forced to work as a typist because Mitsubishi had directed him to forbid her matriculating at the Red Cross nursing school where she had won a seat. Covered with blowing snow, he was beaten to a pulp for attempting to chop firewood from ministry-owned lands.[2]

Most girls in Tokiko's position would have left school after four years, but her promise as a learner was spotted and nurtured by sympathetic teachers, leading her to graduate from the prefectural normal school for women. Two years of obligatory teaching at her own elementary school followed, but she chafed under Mitsubishi surveillance, which led to accusations that she had played the "May Day song" on the piano or had kids visit her home during summer vacation, presumably leading to their indoctrination. And she had long wanted to cut loose from her stepfather's tether. With her mother helping to hide her on a horse-drawn sleigh, she left for Tokyo in 1926, aged 21. News of the Russian Revolution had come up in bunkhouse chitchat in 1917, and by the time she left for Tokyo, Tokiko had found her way to "social science" study groups then proliferating around the country, even beyond urban centers.

[2] Much of this account and subsequent details I owe to Matsuda Tokiko no Kai (2014). Tokiko's mother's experiences become the basis of *Orin kuden* (1966), widely recognized as her masterwork.

Once in Tokyo, things moved quickly for Tokiko. Within two months of her arrival, she had participated in a May Day parade—the seventh year for such parades to be held in Japan. Wanting to be self-sufficient, she tried her hand at various jobs, still hungering for study. Unsurprisingly, she found her way to the labor movement and was married to an activist by the end of that first year. And perhaps it is also unsurprising that seven days after they settled into their home, her husband was apprehended by the thought police on the occasion of the emperor's death. And that when she delivered their first child, he had been arrested again and then detained. She, too, would find herself going to the police station with her baby on her back to submit to questioning. Amid piecework, a rush of writing—poetry, short stories—poured out, finding new venues for publication, proletarian venues. In need of money to knit body and soul together for herself and her still nursing son, she opted to sell her breast milk to the sickly scion of a leading clock maker. It proved to be an excruciating sort of fieldwork in the practices of hygiene and nutrition deployed by the wealthy as they alienated her, not to mention her son, from her breast milk. (The job description decreed that she be milked, not that she suckle the sickly child.) She gained urgently needed money along with acquaintance with the veneer of high culture and science adorning the bourgeois life-support system, which would be transformed into a story of bristling observations: "Chichi o uru" (Selling Her Milk, 1929), published in *Nyonin Geijutsu* (Women's Arts).

All this meant that Tokiko was also finding new companions, including women writers as mentors, women who were increasingly forthcoming about their investment in issues concerning labor, oppression, and destitution. *Nyonin Geijutsu*, a journal not only for but by women, was turning steadily leftward since its launch in 1928. Members overlapped with the Japan Proletarian Writers Association, established that same year. In her 90s, Tokiko would write movingly and in fine detail of the warmth and stimulus of a proletarian literature study group for newcomers like herself—new not just as a writer but new as a country girl still betrayed by her unfashionable northern accent—held at the home of Wakasugi Toriko, herself worried that the comfortable circumstances marriage had brought her might disqualify her as a "proletarian writer" (Matsuda 2006, 353–70). Needless to say, it was a qualitatively different exposure to bourgeois life.

These writing companions, it must be emphasized, shared multiple arenas. Necessity combined with commitment: the daycare organized at settlement houses; the proletarian birth control movement; the women's arm of the consumer movement; the "hand over the rice!" movement. And we need to see these activities linked arm-in-arm with the organizations

established for proletarian theater, film, music, art, photography, Esperanto, science, education, libraries, and militant atheism—all part of the Japan Federation of Proletarian Culture (KOPF, established 1931). The organization promoting birth control was, in fact, an official affiliate. Art and knowledge and the conditions for their production as inseparable: this was a recognition operationalized by Tokiko and her many comrades even as they fled the police, weathered long and short-term detentions (involving torture for many, death for some), and the constant need to feed and house themselves and their families.

The war years intensified familiar challenges and brought new ones. The proletarian organizations were shut down by the mid-thirties, but many stalwart comrades, Tokiko among them, continued to band together to create new venues for publication. Recantation abounded. In 1942, writers were forced to join the single, national patriotic union or not write at all. Tokiko, to be sure, needed to earn money, but writing was by then central to her notion of who she was. She traveled to Manchuria and wrote about settlers from Akita, her home prefecture. She wrote about childrearing. She didn't, not explicitly, affirm the war effort, but then again, she didn't, not explicitly, criticize it: a stance that would lead to anguished self-criticism after the war. Her marriage cracked, her family split. In time, her husband was taken into "preventive custody." Tokiko roused herself to secure his release. In May 1945, while she was away at a sister-in-law's funeral, an air raid destroyed her home in Tokyo, the flames swallowing all household goods, manuscripts, and diaries.

The end of the war initiated a flurry of activity, many endeavors prefixed, no, crowned by the expression "New Japan," vigorously proclaimed by the revived, now legal Communist Party (1946)—along with attempts to nip that bud in the form of the Red Purge. Tokiko, then 42, joined, immediately busied herself in campaigns, even standing as a candidate herself in 1947. She was, needless to say, active in writers' and women's groups. There was a new baby, born at the end of the war, fifteen years after the birth of the second son, Sakundo, the one who would rue her unreliable maternal presence in their lives. Back in 1927, she was reprimanded by the thought police when she appeared with a baby on her back for questioning—ya think you can belong to a movement like this with a kid on your back? Now, she would take her still nursing daughter on her back, at times with Sakundo as baby-sitter, on her journeys to sites of disaster and injustice.

Her postwar work included large-scale pieces of fiction and reportage. For both, she required first-hand knowledge—straight from the horse's mouth—for her imagination, analytical bent, and writerly skills to be

activated. With the Matsukawa rail derailment case, she was visiting not only defendants but their families. There emerged, under the Red Purge, additional cases charging conspiracy to sabotage that required the formation of aid committees. And the massive antinuclear movement started by Suginami (Tokyo) housewives after the 1954 US test in Bikini led to the formation of the Japan Mothers' Congress, another arena of sustained commitment. One particular site deserves singling out: the Hanaoka mine, also in Akita, where Chinese forced laborers, in response to horrifying treatment that began with their sea passage to Japan, rose up and fled, to be captured and massacred in the summer of 1945, almost at the end of the war. Tokiko repeatedly returned to that summer, in fiction and in reportage. She headed the first group to journey to China for the return of retrieved bones. Her deeply felt experience of that cruel history led to involvement in Japan-China friendship activities, culminating in a memorial erected in 1966, clearly ahead of the national normalization of diplomatic relations in 1972.[3]

And often, during those postwar years, life was still a hand-to-mouth affair.

II. "ANOTHER BATTLEFRONT" (ARU SENSEN) AND ITS TWO NEW PASSAGES

"Another Battlefront" was first published in a movement publication, *Proletarian Literature*, in 1932. The setting is a factory engaged in rubber production, which is essential to the war effort. (The Manchurian "incident" had been unrolled just the previous fall.) Two oppressive forces are immediately apparent: supervisors' surveillance and noxious chemicals. Hands perhaps pausing, perhaps accentuating fragments of conversation—real or imagined, anything could provoke rebuke from a manager who flits noiselessly across the factory floor. The machines, on the other hand, "roar" as they stir the "suffocating stench of the gas that was beginning to turn into a pale-yellow haze." Pounding rain forces the windows to be shut, so that "[w]ith all escape routes blocked, the gas became more concentrated by the minute, filling the space from the dirty-white concrete floor, covered with rubber scraps, sulfuric acid, glue, and dust, all the way to the ceiling of the vulcanization division" (Bowen-Struyk 267).[4]

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[3] See stunning woodblocks produced by local artists in Minear 2015.

[4] Translating terms specific to rubber processing was a formidable challenge. This is an industrial process quite different, of course, from mining, but Tokiko's respect

The two forces develop quickly. The supervisors are not only interested in enforcing speedups but in flushing out the source of flyers critical of war-generated speedups as well as the poisonous work environment. The fumes, especially in the vulcanization division, are hard on all the workers, but especially on pregnant Auntie Takai and Sabu-chan, still a boy. Both, in fact, have to quit, Auntie Takai forced to choose between her baby's health and money to care for the infant after birth, and Sabu-chan because he is no longer "quite right in the head." These strands will come together beautifully at the story's conclusion, attesting to the young Tokiko's insight and skill. Management hits upon the scheme, couched as a "suggestion," of having workers donate a portion of their pay to send to "our Japanese army … braving the brutal cold of Manchuria and Mongolia as it crushes the enemy for its barbaric deeds" (273). For convenience's sake, the sums would be deducted directly. Management reasons that anyone objecting to this scheme should be deemed suspect. Members of the opposition, who had been acting in great secrecy, decide to go public in a magnificent payday showdown. As the workers line up for their meager pay, one of them, Sugii, turns to address them, proposing that they make a donation to two fellow workers who couldn't be present: Auntie Takai who had had to quit, had a rough delivery, and was now bedridden without income and Sabu-chan who was reduced to "babbling." Yoshioka, a low-level foreman, objects furiously, arguing that the workers had ignored management's proposal to donate to the army. Sugii asks if Mr. Yoshioka doesn't feel sorry for the two, to which he retorts, "Who said I didn't feel sorry for them—but how about the troops in Manchuria? Don't you feel sorry for them?"

Yoshioka has given Sugii the perfect opening: "I do feel sorry, definitely, for the troops in Manchuria. They're fighting night and day, now, without even having time to sleep. They're getting hurt in explosions, they're getting burns. Their hands and feet are rotting from frostbite. And just like Sabu-chan, they're getting demented from the poison gas. They're a *lot* like us" (278). Sugii, in an inspired move, says he will apologize to the company for not having communicated this alternative plan in advance and proposes to negotiate with the company for medical fees and medical expenses for the two. The crowd, now united, begins to move as a single mass to "ne-go-ti-ate."

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for the specifics of the laboring life meant that she interviewed a rubber factory worker (personal communication to Field from daughter Hashiba Fumiko) in preparing to write this story.

Sugii's speech reveals the twin goals of the workers' struggle: to resist the war and secure safer working conditions. The two, in fact, are one, for it is none other than the war effort that is harming the workers' and soldiers' bodies, and the injuries themselves overlap. But to put it so starkly does injustice to the emotional richness provided by another strand of discovery running through the work. The narrative of "Another Battlefront" is focused through the consciousness of Sadayo, a female factory worker, and it is she who is given the last word, of tender, warm aspiration as the crowd surges forward. Sadayo, still a young woman, is self-conscious about her buckteeth, and some of the men, including Yoshioka, don't miss an opportunity to bring it up.

We know just how much Sadayo is conscious about her teeth because Tokiko has written another story about her, published but three months earlier in January of 1932. Its title is odd, and I don't know how to translate it other than literally, including punctuation: Teeth—Woman・Woman (歯−女・女). There, we don't read about noxious fumes, not only because Sadayo has yet to be transferred to the vulcanization section, but because Sadayo is utterly consumed with her own perceived unattractiveness. She is reluctant to join the secret meetings her buddy Michiko keeps inviting her to on the grounds that no matter how many times the comrades get together, they can't possibly come up with a solution to the source of all her misery, her "ugly features." She knew the wife of a wealthy man with buckteeth worse than hers who'd had them pulled and replaced with dainty porcelain and now was a stunning beauty. If she'd been presented with such a proposition, she probably wouldn't have gone along with it; in any case, she could never, in her whole life, earn the requisite sum.

The Sadayo of "Teeth" is an assembly of body parts. Two sets, actually. If the terms censored in "Another Battlefront" are "military" (as in "No to ~~military~~ management of the factory!") and "imperialist" (as in "No to ~~imperialist~~ war!" Bowen-Struyk 275), in "Teeth," they are restored ("uterus") and unrestored references, perhaps both allusive and graphic, to sex. The earlier story opens with the onset of Sadayo's period on the shop floor, for which she's unprepared. Her trusty buddy Michiko comes to the rescue. At the lunch hour, the manager asks her to buy him a pack of cigarettes. When she comes back, she has to fumble for them from the same package holding her sanitary napkins. Her unruly mind travels back to the ever-so-brief sexual encounter with the manager: she had just been an animal providing momentary pleasure to him, unlike the young and pretty Oshige now commanding his attention, who would be held in his arms as a "whole woman." The thought causes her to clench her teeth, whereupon she becomes aware of her front teeth pressing against her lips.

Perhaps seeking relief from her obsessions, Sadayo consents to go with Michiko to a meeting, where she tries above all to avoid having to speak. But the men—including Sugii who plays such a prominent role in "Another Front"—are unpretentious and welcoming. They appreciate more women coming to the meeting. And they even bring up the problem of the manager being a harasser … maybe something they couldn't do anything about, but then again, maybe they could address it, along with all the other shop floor issues.

As luck would have it, the meeting is broken up by police, with descriptions of their violence suppressed in the text. Sadayo is startled into miserable awareness of herself, straining to resist being dragged, ugly teeth bared. But she also feels, and later recalls, the soft sensation of a body embracing hers. It was Michiko, weeping.

Sex in the workplace comes up in "Another Battlefront," too, where the manager and Oshige are observed as missing at the same time. In fact, Sadayo and her friends think Oshige might be pregnant. The beleaguered Auntie Takai is envious, imagining that Oshige will be taken care of by the manager. Sadayo responds that Oshige would probably be sent away when her time came. She is passing on words she has heard from the organizer Sugii, but she realizes that she herself now feels sorry for Oshige. Her obsession with her teeth and her own brief moment with the manager are falling into the background as she involves herself with circulating the secret flyers, all the while paying sympathetic attention to the struggling Auntie Takai and Akino, a young coworker who has no psychic wherewithal to worry about anything other than the possibility of a fraction of her meager pay being taken away and sent to the soldiers in Manchuria.

But sex and teeth are still foregrounded in foreman Yoshioka's head when he accuses Sadayo of involvement with the flyers. This is where the first of the "new" passages occurs. The x x's and o o's of suppression and notations of deletion are familiar markers of prewar censorship, for the most part preemptive and defensive on the part of publishers. If the works were deemed important enough to reissue, the deleted passages were supplied where possible in postwar versions. Writers also modified and added words and passages, for a variety of motivations, including repair of inconsistencies and literary infelicities, removal of views they no longer wished to be associated with, expression of views they now felt free to voice, and a combination of the above. Tokiko's first addition to "Another Battlefront" was probably made at the time it was published in a collection titled "Selling Her Milk" in 1972.[5]

[5] It is the text in this collection that was used as a base for the two current

As he accuses her of harboring copies of the flyers passed out that morning, Yoshioka grabs Sadayo and "presse[s] and squeeze[s] her two or three times. 'All excited, aren't you, bitch'" are his words as he pushes her so hard that she falls at the feet of Auntie Takai, who cannot for the life of her understand "why this bucktoothed girl who'd been transferred from the ball division … had to be treated like this by Yoshioka. But for Yoshioka, it was precisely at these moments that he found Sadayo a hateful nuisance" (Bowen-Struyk 269). In the first published version, this sentence is immediately followed by a description of Yoshioka emerging from the bathroom, straightening his attire after his scuffle with Sadayo, then walking to a meeting with a superior who has tasked him with identifying the subversive elements in the factory.

In the 1972 and subsequent editions (forty years after the original), Tokiko has added the following:

> *It's all because she had the manager of the ball division fooling around with her for a while. And with those looks. Terada and Sugii helped her out then. So she feels like she owes them. If it'd been anybody but the manager, I'd sure as hell whip the skin off her bucktoothed mug ….* (Bowen-Struyk 269)

This is not yet Sadayo's understanding, but the narrator's, and presumably, author Matsuda Tokiko's, analysis of Yoshioka's abusive behavior. His reasoning, a jumble of resentment of his male superior's sexual privilege—he can have any woman he wants, why did he pick that ugly bitch—as well as that creature's unjustified sense of protection just because she had been toyed with by the manager, cannot register the solidarity developing between Sadayo and Terada and Sugii. By adding this passage, Tokiko has clarified the dynamic of sex and power that traps a male in frustration within an organizational hierarchy, and how such frustration, in turn, supports, in this case, militarization for imperial ends. The dynamic is implicit in the original version, but Tokiko's extending her imagination to Yoshioka's psyche—after all, it is only one of two passages she makes the effort to compose anew—is interesting in itself as well as useful in illuminating the forces at work.

It also calls attention to the contrast with the Sadayo of "Teeth." For Sadayo has been freeing herself of obsession with her teeth both through

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anthologized editions. Editor of *Matsuda Tokiko jisenshū* and Matsuda Tokiko scholar Ezaki Jun and Matsuda's daughter Hashiba Fumiko concur in this supposition (personal communication to Field).

the anxiety-producing but thrilling stimulus of struggle and the warmth of camaraderie, of men and women, both those who support her and those whom she needs to protect. How is that shown in the conclusion of "Another Front"? The original concludes as follows:

> "I really can't give no donation ….."
> Grasping Tat-chan's tiny left hand, buffeted from front and back, Sadayo murmured in a low voice (Matsuda 1932, 64).

Somewhat ambiguously, and certainly incongruously, the "murmured" words are attributed to Sadayo. The 1972 conclusion has been clarified and significantly augmented:

> "I really can't give no donation. I've gotta get home. I'm worried about my folks ..."
> This was Akino. Beside her, buffeted from front and back but hanging on to Tat-chan's tiny left hand, Sadayo murmured, "Things are hard for you right now, aren't they, Miss Akino … But be sure to come back, all right? And bring your dad. We'll do our best together.
>
> *We're just like the soldiers. We breathe in poison gas while they make us produce weapons for murder. But if we stick together like this and make our demands, we should be able to stick with our opposition to this war ….* This was the hope Sadayo poured into the empty right hand with which she now firmly clasped Akino's (Bowen-Struyk 279–80).

What has Tokiko done here? She has, in the first instance, sorted out the original puzzling conclusion. The murmured words could have been attributed to Tat-chan, whom we know has heard about the mandatory donation, but Sadayo herself has not been dwelling on the money part of the scheme. It is her workmate Akino who has only worried about the money, and in the added passage, the words are logically attributed to her. Sadayo tries to comfort her, not only by acknowledging her concerns, but by leading by example to look ahead, not through abstraction but the imagination of shared struggle, encompassing the father who is after all the reason Akino can only think about money. And to that struggle, Sadayo gives full expression in her thoughts—to be sure, she'd heard Sugii make the links at the payday meeting, but she has absorbed and made them her own guiding principle.

The conclusion to "Teeth" had Sadayo worrying about her co-workers in the punching section getting their fingers lopped off. So great was the concentration required to punch out thirty balls per minute that they could not let their eyes stray, talk to each other, or think. "You watch out for yourselves," she wanted to say to them, in an extension of the "watch out" she wanted to say to Michiko and other comrades about the police and internal surveillance.

"Another Battlefront" opens with the word "hands!" barked out by the manager—the hands of production ordered to move ceaselessly without regard for the bodies they are attached to. The conclusion also foregrounds hands, but this time, they are affectionately connected to other bodies, the connection emanating from Sadayo's consciousness, expanding through its own connection to the consciousness of others experienced in speech and action for the sake of collective well-being. Tokiko's addition clarifies and elaborates what was suggested in the original version. Perhaps she didn't know, didn't have time to imagine fully in 1932, how far her heroine could travel, from "Teeth" to open struggle with management and, behind it, the imperialist state, a struggle humanized and made credible to us because she is becoming whole before our eyes, whole through embracing and being embraced by others.

"Another Battlefront" boldly dramatizes the imbrication of the destructive forces of war, poverty, toxic production, and sexual harassment and the resistance informed by growing recognition of their intertwining, a recognition developed through care for other bodies, proximate and distant: a care expanding the circle of comradeship. Written early in what would become the "Fifteen-year War," Tokiko's short story addresses issues as pressing today as then, demanding a comparable yearning for and realization of comradeship. And like Tokiko, but in a period of heightened, desperate urgency—the summer of 2020—I am compelled to add, our very survival depends on such comradeship.

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