SYNCHRONIZING MOMENTS: RHYTHMS OF LABOR AND DANCE IN JAPANESE MODERNIST AND PROLETARIAN LITERATURE

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Scholarship on Japanese modernism in the 1920s has been attentive to the issues of vision, framing the discussion using the visual shock of the Great Kantō Earthquake and the subsequent reconstruction of Tokyo as well as the rise of cinema. While the special connection between modernity and visuality is unquestionable, privileging vision as the sole lens to analyze modernity tends to leave out other ways in which writers in this period engaged with their changing environment. This paper will highlight two proletarian authors with stylistic affinities with the contemporary modernist literature of Shinkankaku-ha, and examine their use of bodily sensations to contemplate the feeling culture of modernism beyond the visual.

Kataoka Teppei and Okashita Ichirō presented modernity as something that is felt rather than observed. In Kataoka's works, office workers' bodies are in constant motion, in sync with the city's rhythm. In Okashita's works, workers' senses are assaulted by the overwhelming noise and heat of the factory until elements of the machines penetrate their bodies. Shifting away from the visual language premised upon distance (for one cannot see what is immediately in front of one's eyes), Kataoka and Okashita's prose dwells on the body's intimate engagement with its surroundings and invites the readers to share in the direct, physiological sensation of the city and the factory, two loci of modernity. By examining the kinesthetic in Kataoka's works and the interoceptive in Okashita's, this paper aims to understand *kankaku* in Shinkankaku-ha holistically and reconsider the nature of Japanese modernism through its connection with the proletarian movement.

KATAOKA TEPPEI AND KINESTHETIC SHINKANKAKU-HA

Kataoka Teppei occupies a paradoxical position in the discussion of Japanese modernist literature. In the scholarship on Shinkankaku-ha, Kataoka is often brought to center stage as someone who embodied the polemics of the group yet is quickly ushered out without discussion of his literary works (Lippit, *Topographies,* 79–80 and "Melancholic," 228;

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Hayter, 131–133; Shimamura, 111–112). Such dismissals are understandable; Kataoka's multiple ideological conversions and his tendency to spread himself across various publishing venues resulted in a scattered oeuvre too lightweight for sustained literary analyses. However, the gap in Kataoka's treatment as a theorist and a practitioner also reveals a blind spot in our understanding of Shinkankaku-ha's literary projects as a whole.

The exact meaning of the term Shinkankaku-ha has been contested since the critic Chiba Kameo coined it to discuss the coterie journal *Bungei jidai* in 1924. In English scholarship, it is variously translated as New Sensationalist (Donald Keene, 644), New Sensationism (Lippit, *Topographies,* 28), New Perceptionist (Hayter, 126), New Perception School (Gardner, 21), or Neo-Sensationist (Mitchell, 49), reflecting the different understandings of the nature and the significance of the movement.[2] *Kankaku* is usually translated as "senses," "perception," or "sensation;" *kankakuteki* can mean "intuitive" or "instinctive" in addition to "of or relating to the senses." Further, *shinkankaku* can be taken as a single word to mean "new feeling," "fresh sensation," or general novelty. A *Bungei jidai* member raised the last interpretation when he asked if it was *shinkankaku-shugi* or new *kankaku-shugi*, implying that Chiba's term had little to do with senses, sensation, or perception but everything to do with novelty ("Dōjin" 64).

As Kaneko Yōbun later pointed out, the first issue of *Bungei jidai* showed little indication that *kankaku* or *shinkankaku* would be the unifying concept for the group (20). While the word *shinkei* (nerves) appeared across the members' inaugural essays, indicating their shared interest in psychology and neurology, *kankaku* was mentioned only by Kataoka and Ishihama Kinsaku. Yokomitsu, who previously used the phrase "*atarashiki jidai kankaku*" (fresh sensitivity to the times; "Jidai" 7–8) to criticize proletarian writers as old guard, did not reference *kankaku* at all in his essay where he tried to dispel the "misunderstanding" that *Bungei jidai* was antagonistic to Kikuchi Kan and *Bungei shunjū* ("Bungei jidai"). In the later discussion on Shinkankaku-ha, Yokomitsu often favored "Kankaku-ha" over "Shinkankaku-ha," deemphasizing the "new" and putting all weight on the "senses" ("Kankaku"). Given that Yokomitsu was

[2] Dennis Keene, in the first English-language book published on this subject, rejects then-common translations "Neo Sensualist" and "New Sensation School," and uses "Shinkankakuha" throughout (Dennis Keene, x–xi). I follow Keene's example and use the untranslated term in this paper to preserve the notion of "feeling" implicit in the Japanese word *kankaku* and to avoid narrowing down a variety of possibilities in the original term to which the writers responded.

concerned about offending Kikuchi, it is reasonable to see a political consideration in his shifting approach to *kankaku*, redefining the nature of *Bungei jidai*'s revolt.

Thus, the meaning of *kankaku* in the contemporary discussion of Shinkankaku-ha became murky and imprecise, rendering it unproductive as a critical term (Shimamura 112). Nevertheless, the fact that Shinkankaku-ha is not replaced with Bungei jidai-ha (in the mold of Shirakaba-ha) in literary history suggests that this term holds sway beyond *bundan* politics. The consensus is that Shinkankaku-ha *is* a literary movement driven by an idea, not just political motivation, and its title still needs to be parsed, not disposed of. In this regard, the present paper draws inspiration from Irena Hayter's "For the Eyes Only: Sensory Politics of Japanese Modernism," which reveals the primacy of vision in Yokomitsu's *Shanghai* and investigates its ideological ramifications. Hayter's approach to isolating sensory descriptions puts *kankaku* back in Shinkankaku-ha, resuscitating the term as a critical framework.

In other representative works of Shinkankaku-ha, however, the sense of sight is not always dominant. In the second issue of *Bungei jidai*, three writers followed Yokomitsu in demonstrating novel approaches to appeal to the reader's senses. In "Shishūserareta yasai" (Embroidered Vegetables), Nakagawa Yoichi scrutinized the tactile, olfactory, and gustatory sensations in the mundane routine of newlyweds. Kon Tōkō's "Gunkan" (A Battleship) captured the inhumanity of a battleship construction with an emotionally detached catalog of injured and severed bodies, emphasizing their materiality. Kataoka's "Yūreisen" (Ghostship) shocked a contemporary critic as an "explicit" representation of "sexual intercourse, rather than sexual desire" (Tsuchida 63). Those works show that Yokomitsu's exclusive focus on ocular sensation was *unique* among the diverse approaches taken by fellow *Bungei jidai* members, not representative.

According to Tsuchida Toshikazu, Kataoka's theory of Shinkankaku-ha was informed by his interest in the human senses and flesh (*kankaku* and *nikutai*). Comparing Kataoka's 1923 translation of Remy de Gourmont's "physiological" novel *Un cœur virginal* to the original text and its English translation, which Kataoka likely referenced, Tsuchida notes that Kataoka used the word *kankaku* in place of "*le sentiment*" or "feelings," revealing a gap between Yokomitsu and Kataoka's understandings of *kankaku*. If the senses served Kantian *verstand* in Yokomitsu's conception of Shinkankaku-ha, Kataoka approached them as a physiological impetus destabilizing the foundation of rational thinking (68).

Given their different understanding of *kankaku*, it is significant that Kataoka used Yokomitsu's "Atama narabi ni hara" ("Heads and a Belly") to counter the critics of Shinkankaku-ha. Kataoka's frequently cited "Wakaki dokusha ni uttau" ("To the Young Readers") scrutinizes just one sentence that describes the movement of a speeding train: "The small wayside station was ignored like a rock" (Yokomitsu, "Atama" 50). Writing that this sentence activates the reader's sense of motion, Kataoka contends that the word *mokusatsu* (to ignore), with its figurative violence, has an "internal, musical effect" that stimulates the reader's senses ("Wakaki" 5 and 7). In this analysis, Kataoka seems to echo Chiba's assessment that the *Bungeji jidai* writers are "living the exceedingly new sensation of vocabulary, poetry, and *rhythm*" (Chiba 147; my emphasis) and extols Yokomitsu's sentence for its affective power.

Kataoka's focus on motion and rhythm is apparent in the "explicit" depiction of sex in "Yūreisen" from the perspective of a moribund steersman peeking through a lighthouse window:

> The interior scene with the man and the woman emphasized the rhythm of passion and dynamism with every passing moment. Each beat of that rhythm resounded within the steersman's heart; the life he regained momentarily instead became confused, gradually getting weaker, thinner… (*Kataoka* 21)

Here, the steersman's arousal and diminishing life are framed by the rhythm of the sexual intercourse that is synchronized with his heartbeat. Similarly, in "Kanson" ("Deserted Village"), a woman becomes titillated by the drunken chants of village men and retreats to a dark warehouse to see her lover, but instead finds a newcomer to the village:

> The chant swirled in her ear, like a faraway voice but with increasing speed. The carpenter's bluish face floated in the lantern flame and disappeared. His arms heaved like the tentacles of an octopus. Hey, ho, hey. Her heart gradually hastened to the violent, rapid tempo…
>
> ? ? ? ? ? ?
>
> ? ? ! !! !!! (*Kataoka,* 44)

The centrality of rhythm in Kataoka's Shinkankaku-ha works shows his distinct approach to sensation; it also indicates that his interest in the

human body was not limited to depicting a sensual flesh. When Kataoka writes that he wants to depict "human flesh that is fully equipped with nerves and senses" ("Tōan," 18), he appears to be interested in the process of the body's interaction with stimuli rather than the resultant sensation as the subject perceives them. In a rudimentary way, bodies in Kataoka's work may remind us of the processual philosophy of Brian Massumi: where the body becomes a site where senses and desire intersect in an affective process.

LIVING PUPPETS AND THE RHYTHM OF THE CITY

Massumi's *Parables for the Virtual* begins with a deceptively simple statement about the body:

> When I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that name, two things stand out. It moves. It feels. In fact, it does both at the same time. It moves as it feels and it feels itself moving. Can we think a body without this: an intrinsic connection between movement and sensation whereby each immediately summons the other? (1)

Having initiated what some call the "Affective Turn" in critical theory with his 1995 essay "The Autonomy of Affect," Massumi suggests that "movement, sensation, and qualities of experience couched in matter in its most literal sense (and sensing) might be culturally theoretically thinkable" (4), giving us an opening to take seriously Kataoka's kinesthetic Shinkankaku-ha, often dismissed as too literal and naïve. When we investigate the trajectory of Kataoka's thoughts on *kankaku*, starting from thinking about it in connection with feeling, emotion (*le sentiment*), and the flesh, "Wakaki dokusha ni uttau" emerges as a moment where he makes an "affective turn" to the sense of motion to resolve the mind-body dualism in *kankaku*, closing the conceptual gap between "sensation" and "perception" (Massumi 15). Kataoka employed rhythm as a catalyst for the body to become one with the environment in his creative works, and repeatedly used it as a key term in his critical writings and roundtable discussions.

If *Shanghai* represents the culmination of his Shinkankaku-ha writing for Yokomitsu, Kataoka's *Ikeru ningyō* (*Living Puppets*) serves as a fulfillment of his sustained investment in the kinesthetic body. Serialized in *Asahi shinbun* in 1928, the fast-paced novella follows the misadventures

of an ambitious office worker, Segi, who is introduced to the reader as he steps out of the elevator to walk towards his office:

> On the seventh floor, from the elevator to the corridor, Segi started walking.
>
> Then, it occurred to him: "My way of walking is a bit peculiar."
>
> In his hips, he felt his toes stepping on the corridor; it was a youthful, agile sensation—the fresh way of walking befitting a modern office worker. The rhythm of the shoes tapping as if to repeat, "Being busy is a pleasure in itself," traveled up to his shoulders.
>
> Segi walked briskly, consciously. He walked pretentiously, cheerfully. (Kataoka, *Ikeru,* 199)

This opening defines the protagonist as a man whose actions are dictated by the pleasurable rhythm of modern life as he dissects the kinesthetic sensation of walking. Before we learn of his ambitious mind, we meet Segi as a body compelled to move by his environment. In *Philosophy of Walking*, Balzac wrote: "The extension, greater or less, of one of our limbs [...] these spring out of our will, and are stamped with meaning. It is beyond speech; it is thought in action" (9). If Balzac used gait to *reveal* the characteristics of people through the way they move—their social class, history, and personality—Kataoka uses gait to *conjure up* a character. Just like Segi's job at the credit bureau produces value out of nothing, he is brought into existence by the way he moves.

Many historians believe that Japanese people changed how they walked in the early Meiji period (Amato, 15). Kataoka's time also saw changes in how middle-class bodies engaged with the city. The appearance of the one-yen taxi in the mid-1920s made personal transportation more accessible (Katayama, 600). Dance clubs proliferated in Tokyo in the early 1920s, then in Osaka after the earthquake, making social dance a pastime for the middle class (Tamaki, 184 and 188). In a contemporary guidebook on social dance, a dance instructor observed that "the healthy steps, the maneuver of plump curvy lines, and the well-proportioned bodies" of modern boys and girls on the Ginza pavements represented the emergence of "healthful beauty" born out of social dance, and gave pointers to novice dancers to correct the distinctive Japanese walk, such as walking with bent knees and on their toes (Takahashi, 319 and 349). It is in this context that

Kataoka presents Segi who is captivated by the sensation of his bipedal locomotion.

In the story, Segi concocts an extortion plot against his benefactor while romancing two women. What propels Segi, romantically or professionally, is not a systemic plan but a series of spur-of-the-moment reactions to his immediate environment. Even his rare moment of introspection comes as a physiological response to trudging through wet and muddy unpaved suburbia, which leads him to ponder how his scheme will ultimately plunge thousands of working-class depositors into poverty (Kataoka, *Ikeru,* 208).

Segi's plot ends abruptly when his boss hijacks his scheme. Having lost everything at once, Segi steps out into the city, "hunched over under the weight of his hopeless body" (Kataoka, *Ikeru,* 254). As he tells himself to fight for his last paycheck, he suddenly hears a clamor from a May Day parade:

> The crowd on the street shouted joyously to welcome the parade. The trams stopped. Amid the people's uproar that challenges all the schemes by landowners and capitalists, Segi stood lonely, gazing at the procession.
>
> "I…"
>
> Segi felt sentimental.
>
> "I want to jump in the line!" (Kataoka, *Ikeru,* 254)

Contrasting a dejected middle-class man with the marching proletariat in its conclusion, *Ikeru ningyō* reads as a trite didactic novel. However, it is notable that Kataoka encapsulates the plight of the petit-bourgeoisie in Segi's inability to "jump in the line," to be in sync with the proletariat and march with them, not in his limited understanding of the issues of class struggle. Here, Kataoka seems to suggest that the middle class needs to take a leap of faith, surrendering the body to the rhythm of the rising class.

ADORING, FEARING, AND BECOMING: MACHINE AESTHETICS AND PROLETARIAN LITERATURE

One of the topics that connected the avant-garde, modernist, and proletarian literature and art in the 1920s was the fascination with machines. Mori Ōgai's prompt translation of "The Manifesto of Futurism"

(1909), which famously declared that "a roaring automobile […] is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*," introduced machines and industrial structures as aesthetic objects to the Japanese audience (Mori, 14; Marinetti, 51). Marinetti's fevered declaration was echoed in some Japanese avant-garde poems published around 1920, such as Kanbara Tai's "Jidōsha no rikidō" ("Dynamism of the Automobile") and Hagiwara Kyōjirō's "Sōkō danki" ("Armored Vehicle"), depicting speeding cars and powerful military tanks cutting through the cityscape. Hirato Renkichi, a self-proclaimed Japanese Futurist, plainly expressed his adoration of machines in one of his poems: "Irritated electric animals / … / I like machines" (137).

In the mid-1920s, industrial machines were seen as the hostile destroyers of the worker's body. In Ernst Toller's expressionist play *Die Maschinenstürmer* (*The Machine-wreckers*), translated into Japanese in 1924, the machine is described as a monster that devours the workers and reduces them to mere body parts while enchanting their children with its power (*Kikai*, 48 and 51). In Hayama Yoshiki's "Sementodaru no naka no tegami" ("A Letter in a Cement Barrel"), a concrete mixer dictates the worker's motion and alienates him from his body, and a crusher pulverizes another worker's body and turns it into construction material. Hagiwara Kyōjirō's poem "Tsūkasuru isshunji no yoi" ("A Passing Moment of Intoxication") portrays an unemployed man with "a pale and heavy motor" for a brain and viscera blackened by the smoke from the factory in his stomach, symbolizing the dehumanization of workers under industrial capitalism. Elsewhere, Hagiwara urged his readers to destroy the internal machines that pollute them from within, just like the "foolish" Luddites ("Kikai," 92).

Machine aesthetics became a hot topic in 1929, coinciding with the release of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* in Japan (Tsunekawa, 6). Leading this boom was the art critic Itagaki Takao, who published multiple articles on the topic which culminated in his book *Kikai to geijutsu to no kōryū* (*The Interaction between Machines and Art*). Juxtaposing Le Corbusier's rational and pragmatic architectural philosophy with "the romanticism of the machines" in avant-garde art and criticizing the latter, Itagaki nevertheless focused on the optics of the machines in his analysis, dismissing, for instance, the experimental noise music by Futurists (89). The philosopher Nakai Masakazu's "Kikaibi no kōzō" ("Structure of Machine Beauty") examined the machine's impact on aesthetics not as an object but as a structure or organization, contrasting the nineteenth-century French Philosopher Jean-Marie Guyau's vitalist machines with the mathematical order of Le Corbusier. When Nakai writes, "[Corbusier] is

interested not in concrete life itself but the field of relations that constitutes that life. […] He attempts to discover the order of 'numbers' in the world of 'things,'" the concrete machine is replaced with an abstract mechanism, consisting of relations alone without the connected objects (145). In this way, Nakai's discussion of machine aesthetics connects with his contemplation on the logic of the organized collective.

Kurahara Korehito discusses the meaning of machine aesthetics for the proletarian movement in "Shin geijutsu keishiki no tankyū e" ("Towards the Exploration of a New Art Form"). A leading Marxist critic, Kurahara maps the development of machine aesthetics onto the rising social classes: Italian Futurists' machine fetish comes from the rentier class; Expressionists' fear of machines represents the petit-bourgeois reaction of the merchant class; the romantic and utopian view of the machine arose in post-revolutionary Russia among the intelligentsia disconnected from production. Finally, Kurahara identifies Russian Constructivists as representing the technical intelligentsia engaged in production as engineers and architects (45). With Constructivism, Kurahara argues, machine aesthetics have come to address the psychology of the working class, which strives towards simplicity and accuracy, not decoration (54). The Constructivist interpretation of the machine as a structure of relations would develop into the understanding and portrayal of the masses as an organized—or organizable—force. Kurahara asserts that proletarian art reached its zenith in Socialist Realism *through* machine aesthetics, which revealed the kinship between the machine and the masses and their common force and organization (48–49).

At the end of his thesis, Kurahara called upon proletarian writers in Japan to explore a new proletarian style engaging with machines (65). A few years later, Kubokawa Ineko, who wrote works based on her experience as a young factory worker, lamented that the call from the NAPF leadership to depict the scenes of production was still unfulfilled. In particular, Kubokawa criticized the depictions of factory machines in Kobayashi Takiji's "Kōjō saibō" ("Factory Cells") and Murayama's "Shojochi" ("Virgin Land") as mere "depictions of landscape" which carried the "odor of exoticism" (372). Praising Tokunaga's depiction of factory workers as "a lived expression coming from within" (*uchigawa kara no seikatsuteki na hyōgen*), Kubokawa criticized Kobayashi and Murayama for casting "astonished eyes looking in from the outside" (*sotogawa kara no kyōi no me*). However, Kubokawa also admitted that she was unable to find a depiction of the factory and its machinery that suited the workers' feelings (*rōdōsha jishin ga kanjiru mono*), because

most workers still submitted to the ideology and culture of the bourgeoisie (373).

Kubokawa's criticism points not only to her fellow writers' limits as intellectuals but also to the limits of seeing. The machine was an enticing subject for proletarian writers, but it also revealed a fundamental weakness of the movement led by the intellectuals disconnected from labor. The writers might observe and research, but the lack of visceral experience—not just the experience of labor but also of labor as an integral part of one's existence—was undeniable. In this way, it is suggestive that Kubokawa turns to "feelings" after criticizing that the intellectual writers only "see." With this small gesture of "affective turn," I would like to bring in Okashita Ichirō, not just because he meets the qualification as a working-class writer with a strong interest in describing machines, but also because of his focus on *feeling* them.

FEELING THE MACHINE: OKASHITA ICHIRŌ'S FACTORY LITERATURE

Though not mentioned by Kurahara or Kubokawa, Okashita Ichirō prominently featured the image of industrial machines in his works. His omission may not seem surprising given that he is now generally forgotten despite his unique position as a working-class writer with an affinity for avant-garde and modernist literature. However, in his time, Okashita was well-recognized as a writer with a bona fide working-class background, having worked on steam engines as a cleaner and a stoker and then taken on various temporary jobs, including working at a powerplant ("Jiden"). After making his debut in *Shinkō bungaku* in 1923, Okashita joined *Bungei sensen* in 1926 and had a very productive few years, publishing nearly every month in 1927. Given Okashita's visibility at the time, his omission appears to be a serious oversight, if not intentional, by Kurahara who parted ways with *Bungei sensen* to form NAPF in 1928. In 1929, Okashita belatedly joined NAPF, but stopped publishing in proletarian magazines after publishing only two essays in *Senki*, NAPF's literary organ (Sofue, 494).

Drawing from his experience as a worker but writing with the exhilaration of Italian Futurism and the manic anxiety of German Expressionism, Okashita did not fit Kurahara's historical narrative. "Haguruma to ningen" ("Cogwheels and a Human") exemplifies Okashita's affinity with avant-garde and modernist literature. Featuring alternating voices of the motor, the cogwheel, and the worker, the story portrays the suffering not only of the human workers but also of the machines. The machines scream in pain; the motors spin helplessly at the

worker's hands, and the cogwheels bite into one another until they become worn and replaced. In the end, the exhausted worker loses his focus and has his arm chewed up by the cogwheels, joining the cacophony of pain that fills the factory. Combining anthropomorphism reminiscent of Yokomitsu's "Atama narabi ni hara" and a blunt depiction of the brutal working environment as in Kon's "Gunkan," the story is a better fit for *Bungei jidai* than *Bungei sensen* in its literary approach.

Even in less allegorical works, Okashita's prose grants some sentience and life to the machines he depicts. His debut work, "Haguruma" ("Cogwheels"), opens with an explanation of how an electrician was critically electrocuted when he touched a busbar that was "alive" (*ikiteita*) thinking it was "dead" (*shindeiru*) (74). In another incident, a drowsy machine operator touches a shaft to check if it is overheating, and his hand is caught in the rapid revolution of the cogwheels:

> Indifferent, the cogwheels continued their struggle to bite into each other's crevices, dozens of times per second. Each time, a new pain—the pain of more flesh and bones getting crushed—scattered under the grisly light of a pilot lamp, which reflected the light from the motor panel. His arm was pulled in. There was nothing he could do. He lost consciousness completely.
>
> The cogwheels, having suddenly bitten into a human body, nevertheless continued their agonizing revolutions with persistent cruelty. [Their movement] was like a cruel capitalist. The conveyor struggled to move just like a dying animal, intermittently gasping for air. (81)

Although the cogwheels' movement is likened to a "capitalist," interspersing the worker's disembodied pain with the cogwheels' agony blurs the boundary between the worker and the machine and unites them in suffering. Foregrounding the machine's struggle, Okashita moves away from the Futurist adoration of machines but refuses to see them as the workers' enemy, even when they are directly injurious to the workers' bodies.

In presenting the mercilessness of the workers' environment, Okashita emphasizes the loud noises, heat, and fumes of the factory and the steam engine. Noting the diminished visibility in the factory, Okashita focuses on the interoceptive sensation connected to the nerve-wracking concentration of hazardous labor. In his works on powerplants, Okashita describes the noise as affecting the workers cranially. In "Haguruma," the

noise of rotating cogwheels is described as "the noisy sound that pierces the flesh on our head" (78). Elsewhere, the sound of cogwheels is described as chewing off or crushing the worker's cranial nerves ("Zugaikotsu," 46 and "Aru," 19). From his experience as a stoker, Okashita describes the heat of the firebox and the quickening of the heart, in addition to the blasting sound of the steam engine. In "Ido wa saru" ("The Well Leaves"), another work reminiscent of Shinkankaku-ha writing, a parched stoker's heart is "pierced" at the sight of wilting potato fields and silvery ocean waves, and his senses sharpen as he passes by a small stream (42–43). In "Kikansha, ningen" ("Steam Engine, Human"), a stoker works at top speed to prevent the boiler from bursting as he pushes his heart to its limit. In other works, the industrial materials invade the workers' bodies, such as a worker choking to death on coal or molten copper burning through a worker's flesh and charring his viscera ("Haguruma," 88 and "Kumiaiki," 68).

From the beginning of Okashita's short career, he portrayed deadly machines with empathy. Still, there was also a subtle shift in his portrayal of machine-worker interaction. The capitalist behind the machines becomes obscure as the worker empathizes and identifies with the machines. The stoker in "Kikansha, ningen" recalls the sight of a train crossing a bridge on a moonlit night, carrying the red light of the firebox:

> Seeing how long the red light lasted, I thought the stoker was using a poker.
>
> Now, I remembered that red light.
>
> "Riding on the steam engine, I cannot see the brightness of the red light I saw from the riverbank. Yet, I am giving birth to those red lights on a corner of this earth."
>
> I felt the joy of being the creator of the red light.
>
> "My red bloodstream creates it." (27)

In "Kōjō bungaku no teishō" ("A Proposal for Factory Literature"), Okashita explains that the "grotesque beauty" of the machine resides in its material force capable of killing the workers. Recalling how he "lived intimately with the steam engine as a stoker" and "lived together with generators and motors as a mechanic," Okashita discusses the ecstatic

moment of complete identification with the machines amid the deafening noise they make:

> I clearly remember how I was entirely elevated to the same height of the motor's beauty and power. When I was on the steam engine, I became ecstatic with its ferocious sound of its blast…and the steam engine's speed and the earth's rumble.
>
> Those are masculine sounds; no, they are superhuman sounds, enormous poetry, grotesque sights, and grotesque power. (38)

Three years later, after he failed to integrate himself into NAPF membership, Okashita published another piece on machine beauty in the modernist magazine *Bungaku jidai*. Describing the tense moment of working with a 300-horsepower machine, Okashita writes that his body became one with the machine:

> The feeling of extreme tension is a state of selflessness. May I say it is like the completely clear moon of enlightenment? Whatever it is, the tense feeling we get when we expose ourselves to danger has a masculine taste.
>
> The moment K yells out, blinding sparks fly out!
>
> …
>
> My entire body, at the height of tension, and the whirling sound and movement of the motor touch one another and fuse into one existence. ("Kyōryoku naru," 39)

From 1930 to 1931, Kanbara Tai wrote a series of essays asking why machines are beautiful only to the proletariat in *Shi-genjitsu*. The journal halted in 1931, leaving Kanbara's series incomplete without answering the question he posed or even verifying the premise of his question (are machines really beautiful to the proletariat?), just as both Kurahara and Kubokawa failed to show exactly how to reclaim machine aesthetics for the proletariat. Okashita's works on machines and machine beauty may be the missing puzzle piece to Kanbara's enticing question. The violent intimacy between the worker and the machine in Okashita's works is ambivalent and controversial, but it is nevertheless grounded in his experience; whether we embrace or reject it, it deserves a spot in the

discursive space of the proletarian movement, machine aesthetics, and modernism at large.

CONCLUSION

Kataoka's kinesthetic and Okashita's interoceptive sensations are just two examples of the variety of sensations that writers in the 1920s attempted to enliven in their prose. Proletarian writers' use of the olfactory, for instance, may serve as a more obvious counterpoint to the ocular modernism of Yokomitsu. Yet, Kataoka's and Okashita's approaches to sensation involve more than just activating different senses. The depiction of odor in proletarian works often represents an abject condition from which the working class needs to be rescued, as the narrator in Hayama's "Inbaifu" ("A Prostitute") misguidedly thinks of the diseased woman. In Kataoka's and Okashita's works, sensation is deeply intertwined with and inseparable from the process of subject formation; their characters cannot be removed from the environment because the environment is what makes them. The only salvation, then, is to commit to the rhythms of production and consumption as an active participant.

Kataoka and Okashita were both writers of action, however frivolous or reckless they seemed ideologically. If Yokomitsu's prose was "emptied of affect" (Hayter 142), Kataoka and Okashita sought out affect to the extreme, in the sensations that were inseparable from the subjects' agencies. Their ideological precarity, which made them seem unworthy of serious investigation, is precisely why it is worthwhile to revisit their works through affect. The messiness of Japanese literary modernism, full of factional rivalries, personal politics, and arbitrary polemics, is difficult to tackle otherwise.

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