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Mass Politics and Visual Culture: Proletarian Literature of 1920s and 1930s Colonial Korea

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The dissertation of Kimberly Chung is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, for their love and support.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Mass Politics and Visual Culture: Proletarian Literature of 1920s and 1930s Colonial Korea

by

Kimberly Mee Chung

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

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Professor Jin-kyung Lee, Co-Chair
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With the central role of Marxism as my focus, I examine proletarian literary texts of 1920s and 1930s colonial Korea for their bodily representations of the masses. Amidst the emergence and proliferation of mass culture during the 1920s and 1930s, early socialist literary criticism and proletarian literature was the locus for the "importation" and development of indigenous intellectual, theoretical, and literary movements that reflect and engage with issues of nationalism, colonialism, modernity, and mass subjectivity.

The first chapter, "Politics of the Body: Realism, Sensationalism and the Abject in 'New Tendency Literature' (1924-1927)" analyzes the intersection of socialism and mass literary culture, and begins with an examination of the hybridization of literary tendency, the effect of print culture, and the colonized Korean subject in works by "New Tendency School" writers: Ch'oe Sŏ-hae, Chu Yo-sŏp, Cho Myŏng-hŭi and Kim Ki-jin. Drawing upon the convergence of psychoanalysis and postcolonial theory, I argue that proletarian literary tropes like excess, sensational

language, and lurid descriptions of poverty underwrite a criticism of colonialism through the embodied experience of the abject subject. The second chapter of my dissertation, "The Proletarian Body in Visual Culture," examines political cartoons, films, and film-novels, and the circulation of mass representations of the "proletariat" in the figure of the abject colonial body. I argue that the circulation of the symbol of the starving body, the insane intellectual, and the trope of utopic resolution all present nationalism as "in-between," formulated against sanity, order, and imperial subjecthood.

In the later context of the 1920s and 1930s, "The Liminal Spaces of Discourse" concentrates on KAPF's increasing focus on agrarian space. Yi Sang's and Kim Yu-chŏng's travelogues serve as a comparison point to proletarian and "fellow traveler" literature by Paek Sin-ae, Ch'ae Man-sik, and Yi Ik-sang, which provide what I argue to be temporal and spatial "interruptions" to universal narratives mediated by official Marxism, as well as by logics of modernity. My final chapter "From Artist to Soldier of Culture: The Case of Pak Yŏng-hŭi" addresses the issue of the "conversion" of leftist intellectuals to Japanese nationalism in the mid-1930s at the dissolution of KAPF.

I. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation offers an alternative analysis of the proletarian culture movement during 1920s and 1930s colonial Korea. A highly experimental movement that involved efforts in literature, criticism, theater, film, the proletarian culture movement was spearheaded by the Korean Artist Proletarian Federation, otherwise known as KAPF. During this period, KAPF was responsible for promoting the genre of realism and Marxist theory. KAPF was formed in 1925 and dissolved in 1935 and, over the ten years of its existence, was the main leftist cultural organization and was at the forefront of cultural representations about and for the lower classes.

This dissertation moves away from Western Marxist centered readings of the Korean proletarian culture movement, and instead explores the construction of mass subjectivity through the ways in which KAPF critics and writers mediated, contested, and constituted conceptions of "proletarian," "mass," and leftist "mass culture." Using a postcolonial framework that moves beyond, between, and in the liminal spaces of modernity, Western Marxism, and official nationalisms, I examine literature, literary criticism, film, film novels and political cartoons from the 1920s to 1930s that exemplify the central shift toward mass politics in culture.

I understand the proletarian culture movement as a site of multiple intricate, overlapping, and interacting conditions: Japanese imperialism and associated colonial urbanization and industrialization, and cultural "modernization," in the form of print capitalism, mass culture, and visual culture. In terms of the former, the 1920s and 1930s was a period that spanned what scholars have called two different types of structural Japanese colonial policy, "cultural rule" from the 1920s and the transition to

"total war" period after 1937. Although focusing on Taiwan, Leo Ching's work informs this transition as a shift from *doka*, which, for Japanese imperial subjects, connoted "equality through assimilation"(92), to *kominka*, which meant "to become good Japanese" and also "to die as Japanese" (93). Japanese imperialism, however, was also accompanied by urbanization and industrialization, which provided the material grounds for the resulting cultural "modernization" during the beginning of the 20th century.

My understanding of "culture" is informed by Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd's description of the contested space of "culture" as a "terrain in which politics, culture, and economics form an inseparable dynamic" (2), amidst globalization, capitalism, and associated theories of capital development. Lowe and Lloyd reformulate "cultural sites" as alternative formations, not "outside to" but emergent alongside modernity: "The subordinated culture's difference and incommensurability with the economic and political operations of the colonial power, along with the hybridities, damages and recalcitrances that are produced by colonization, make spaces for alternative practices, alternative public spheres, unofficial countercultures" (7). As such, I understand the hybridities within the proletarian culture movement—the lapses of literary tendency, affective depictions of the proletarian body, representations of liminal spaces--as reflections of slippages and contradictions within Japanese colonial, political and economic structures, and, even within its adoption of and departures from epistemological structures, challenges to the presumed fixities of official nationalisms, modernism, and Western Marxism.

In particular, though "Marxism" in this dissertation of course calls upon the basic foundation of "Western Marxism" in revolutionary "proletarian class consciousness," at the same time, I understand "Marxism" in the Korean context to be a fluid concept, which not only evolved within the decade from the mid 1920s to the mid 1930s, but also had heterogeneous foundations. Some scholars call Korean Marxism a form of Marxist-Leninism or "Bolshevism", for its adaptation to the majority agricultural peasant population, but its development involved the contestation of Marxism through strands of anarchism as well. [1] This formulation is comparable to the fluid formation of Marxist thought in other locations;[2] as Raymond Williams points out through the example of the Russian Revolution and the Chinese Revolution, socialist writers should be broadly defined by their "emphasis on creative impulses 'rooted in the people and the proletariat,' and a corresponding opposition to creative impulses arising from other classes and ideologies" (Williams 203). Along the same lines, I broadly understand the development of Marxism in the Korean case as a reactive movement that rose in opposition to bourgeois literature that focused on the intellectual and upper classes; the proletarian culture movement represents the new focus on the lower classes: peasants, farmers, laborers, etc.

My dissertation is composed of 4 chapters that are roughly organized chronologically around the development of the Korean Artist Proletarian Federation, from its beginnings in "New Tendency Literature" in 1924 until its dissolution in 1935.

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[1] The main KAPF literary critic who was a proponent of anarchism was Kim Hwa-san. Although his understandings of anarchist aesthetic principles were unclear, Kim's main reason for advocating anarchism was to criticize the "innate" foreign influence within KAPF's adoption of Marxist theory. For more on Kim Hwa-san and anarchism, see Y. Kim, chapter 3.

[2] Examples of scholarship on other Marxisms, refer to Barlow, T., Tadiar, N., Silverberg, M.

Although following the ideological shifts of KAPF, this dissertation departs from readings formulated within official nationalisms and Western Marxism, and travels between the "political" spaces outlined by these epistemological structures. The first half of the dissertation focuses on representations of the affective and affected proletarian body in literature and mass culture. The second half of the dissertation focuses on two liminal sites; my formulation of "liminal" is informed by postcolonial scholar Homi Bhabha's understanding of "liminal space" as "in-between the designations of identity:" "the interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (4). In chapter three, I examine representations of the alternative space and temporalities as liminal to modernity and Marxism, but central to the specificities of realities of Korean populations; as such, these liminal spaces represent the negotiation and contestation of identity and belonging that disrupts narratives that prioritize a linear history and contour of the nation-state. In chapter four, I examine the contradictory site of leftist ideological "conversion" to understand the contradictions within state nationalisms of Japanese imperialism and present Korean state formations.

BRIEF HISTORY OF KAPF, 1925- 1935

The development of the proletarian culture movement can be characterized by critical ideological shifts and changes in structure, called "shifts in direction" (*Panghyangchŏnhwan*). I focus on these shifts in direction because they signify moments of structural stress, which usually centered on disagreements over the

organization of politics and culture. This argument, spearheaded by the question of how best to apply Marxism, is mediated through the oppositional concepts: bourgeois literature vs. proletarian literature. Although KAPF was formed in August of 1925, it began under the alliance of two leftist cultural groups, Paskyula and Yŏmgunsa. Paskyula was a literature focused leftist group, which was reactionary to bourgeois literature's "art for art's sake" aesthetics, and instead advocated "art for life." In contrast, Yŏmgunsa was more concerned with class politics, and positioned culture as being part of a larger social movement. After these two groups were united, the beginning development of the proletarian culture movement under KAPF was led by two main figures, Pak Yŏnghŭi and Kim Ki-chin.

In 1925, key members of KAPF published a feature in Kaebyŏk magazine called "Discussion on Proletarian Literature" (*Kyegŭp Munhak Sibiron*) which described the ideological foundations of proletarian literature. Within this feature, Kim Ki-jin's article "Purifying the Blood-stained Proletarian Soul" (*P'it'usŏngi toen p'ŭro honŭi p'yobaek*) aligns with previous Paskyula positions on the oppositional relationship between proletarian and bourgeois literature: "In bourgeois literature, one's view of life, philosophy of living, ethics, is based in bourgeois consciousness, while in proletarian literature [it] is based in proletarian consciousness" (K. Kim 198). In the same feature, Pak Yŏnghŭi wrote "The Common Good of Literature" (*Munhaksang Kongnijŏk Kach'i Yŏha*), in which he detailed the importance of literature in inspiring class consciousness to resist the domination of the modern capitalist system (205).

Although in the beginning Pak and Kim were aligned by their similar advocation of proletarian literature, ideological differences on "form" (*hyŏngsik*) and "content" (*naeyong*) later split the two into different camps. This division is identified as the first ideological shift of KAPF. This shift occurred in two ways: first, in 1927, there was a push toward addressing the proletarian culture movement as a subdivision of the larger socialist movement. In 1927, the New Korea Society (*Sin'ganhoe*), an umbrella organization for Korean independence, was formed that combined the efforts of nationalists and socialists. Scholars have acknowledged the shift toward politics within KAPF as reflective of this overall united effort and concentration on mass organization for independence by Communist and Nationalist groups.

This focus is reflected in Pak's "The Ideological Shift of the Art Movement*"* [*Munye Undong Panghyangchŏnhwan*]. In this article, Pak addresses New Tendency Literature, its naturalist tendency and exacting depiction of poverty, the needs, and marginalization of workers and peasants, as not "inspiring proletarian class consciousness" (250). Pak proposes a "shift" toward writing with political "purposeful consciousness" from the foundation of "class relations" (250). This focus on the masses was also accompanied by KAPF interest in agrarian literature as a way to better reach the Korean masses, who were mostly farmers and peasants.[3]

The second crux of this first "shift" is Kim Ki-jin's opposing emphasis on popular novels (*T'ongsok sosŏl*) as a paradigmatic form for mass literature. Kim Ki-jin's "On Popular Literature" [*Taejungsosŏlron*], written in 1929, is a representative

[3] For a representative criticism on agrarian literature, see C. Paek " The Problem of Agrarian Literature."

criticism exhibiting this argument. In the series of articles released in 1929 advocating popular culture, Kim discusses the problematic "importation" of Marxist ideology, which essentially is "foreign to Chosŏn laborers and peasants" (378). In this way, although Pak and Kim both address the significance of proletarian literature to the masses, they were divided in terms of what they thought was most important in "mass literature." Kim conceded the importance of other forms of popular culture and blurs the lines between bourgeois and proletarian literature, while Pak stressed the political purpose of the writer.

Pak's argument is comparable to Georg Lukács' criticism of bourgeois modernism in its "exaggerated concern with formal criteria, with questions of style and literary technique" (Lukács 142). Pak criticizes Kim's proposal of bourgeois modern form, and mirrors Lukács criticism of modern literature's emphasis on form as a "false polarization, which, by exaggerating the importance of stylistic differences, conceals the opposing principles actually underlying and determining contrasting styles" (Lukács 142). Pak stresses that the opposing principles of modern literature, realism and bourgeois aesthetics such as romanticism, are determined by "writer's intention." Pak's use of "intention" can be paralleled to Lukács' emphasis on "perspective," and Lukács' similar criticism of naturalism as technique without perspective, or without "social matter" (154). Like Lukács, Pak stresses the importance of writer's intentions as the "formative principle underlying the style of a given piece of writing" (Lukács 143).

This division between Kim and Pak is revisited repeatedly throughout KAPF's development from 1927, and, though on the surface it seems to deal with "form and

content," the depth of this discussion covers many foundational issues of the proletarian culture movement and the application of Marxism in 1920's and 1930's Korea. This discussion not only deals with the relationship between culture and the socialist movement, but also the contradictory "international" aspect of Marxism, which remains an issue until KAPF's demise; in other words, this discourse addresses the ways in which representations of the local and global became polarized within the topic of mass culture and structures of Marxist theory.

Alongside the increasing political and economic emphasis in the proletarian culture movement, the beginning of the 1930's in KAPF development is punctuated by the increased surveillance by the Japanese government. In 1931 and 1934, mass arrests (*kŏmgŏ sagŏn*) of KAPF members were made and capped further growth of the proletarian culture movement. Although most of the members were released shortly after in 1931, the arrests were followed by a shift in leadership, and KAPF was regrouped in 1932 under Kim Ch'ang-sul, Im hwa, An Mak, Kwŏn Hwan, Pak Se-yŏng, while previous central leaders Pak Yŏnghŭi and Kim Ki-jin were retired (Kwŏn 283). The beginning of the 1930's is typified as the second "shift" of KAPF because of this change in leadership, but is also called a "shift" because of ideological "Bolshevism" of the proletarian culture movement. Led by members Im hwa, An Mak, Kwŏn Hwan, and Yu Paeng-no, "Bolshevism" in this context meant the more stringent adoption of socialist doctrine and ideology as the foundation of proletarian

literature.[4] This involved the emphasis on the international role of Korean proletarian culture movement within the "worldwide revolution" (Ha 434), and the debate for and against nationalism (*Minjokchuŭi*); intellectuals were divided on whether nationalism was a function of capitalist hegemony or a conduit through which to achieve revolution (Ha 426).

The dissolution of KAPF in 1935 occurred amidst these discussions, and after the 1934 arrests of KAPF members; at the time of dissolution in fact, many members were still incarcerated and had no choice in the matter. The dissolution, although considered the end of the KAPF organization, is not what is usually discussed in terms of the end of the proletarian culture movement. Central to the scholarship on the end of KAPF is Pak Yŏnghŭi's, Paek Chŏl's, and Kim Ki-jin's renouncement of their participation in KAPF in the middle to late 1930's. However, among the three, Pak Yŏnghŭi is considered the most paradigmatic figure for his alliance with Japanese imperialism because of his central role in KAPF from its beginnings. Pak, for example, claims that the increasing ideological emphasis on the political movement became the central reason for "conversion." Pak Yŏnghŭi refers to the politicization of KAPF in his 1934 declaration that " although ideology was gained, what was lost is art." This famous statement sums up Pak criticism of what he considers the loss of aesthetics, and "stagnancy" of the proletarian culture movement going into the 1930s. Pak's polarization of aesthetics and ideology is not only a return to the "form" and "content" debate in 1927, but also ironically reveals the contradiction in such

[4] The main proponents of Bolshevikism were KAPF critics, An Mak and Kwŏn Hwan. For a representative criticism, see An, M. " On the Problem of Form in Proletarian Art—Proletarian Realism."

divisions, when form is very much integral to politics. This becomes clear when Pak later becomes a proponent of national literature (*Kungminmunhak*) under the auspices of the Japanese national state in the late 1930s.

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE PROLETARIAN CULTURE MOVEMENT

Historiography on the proletarian culture movement and the larger discussion of colonial Korea reveals the changing political alignments that have occurred under Japanese imperialism, U.S. military occupation, military dictatorship, and democratization movements in the 1980s and 1990s. In other words, as often is the case, scholarship on this period has reflected contemporary political alignments and global interests of the state. The lacuna in scholarship on the proletarian cultural movement until the late 1980s was a result of a legacy of Cold War ideology that suppressed the significant influence that socialism and Marxism had during the colonial period.

The erasure of this legacy occurred during what Charles Armstrong called a "polarization of the cultural arena," which, starting from the 1940s, mimicked and bolstered political lines drawn between democracy and communism. This was an interesting shift because during the post-liberation period from 1945-1950, communism still had a strong hold over the Korean population. Its legacy from the colonial period as an anti-imperialist and nationalist-oriented movement on both political and cultural fronts ensured the support of the people. After the U.S. occupation and Korea was thrown into the international Cold War, the U.S. became more concerned about the communist ideological influence and the cultural sphere, as

the Soviet Union successfully gained the support of the intellectuals and cultural elite in North Korea, (Armstrong 84). I would stress however that the ease of the transition was not mainly because of "superior" Soviet Union policies that co-opted the cultural apparatus, but rather this previous legacy of communism and the Soviet Union within the imagination of Korean nationalism.[5]

State nationalism after the Korean War, however, was founded on the erasure of and polarizing of historical memory, which followed the boundaries delimited by anticommunist state ideology. As Namhee Lee has documented, the years after the Korean War were punctuated by moments of historical consciousness emerging from the "despair" and discontinuities of the negative history of Korean modernity and postcolonialism. From the 1960s, "anticommunism" was unilaterally understood as anyone leaning to the "left," which was characterized by anti-U.S., anti-capitalist sentiment, and "socially progressive" ideals (N. Lee 75). The vagueness of the definition "anticommunist" was purposely used by the regime to challenge political opposition (N. Lee 82). This was strengthened following the April 19th student uprising that contributed to President Syngman Rhee's resignation, in which many of the members of the movements were influenced by Marxist-Leninism, and had participated in "post-liberation communist guerilla movements in the South" (N. Lee 32). The 1961 Anticommunist Law institutionalized by President Pak Chung-hee

[5] After the 1950s, South Korea was swept into the global Cold War between main actors, United States and China, and United States, albeit late, attempted to implement cultural reorientation policies (Armstrong 72). Armstrong argues that after the 1953 ceasefire, however, pro-American culture did not emerge in such polarized Cold-War fashion, and that it was a combination of cultural influences, such as Christian, volunteer organizations such as the Boy Scouts and 4-H club, and private organizations (Armstrong 96).

solidified this polarization and this climate continued until the 1980's. This was also extended to cultural policy, and was implemented in "anticommunist ethics" courses during the 1960's, and again in the 1970's under the Yusin system (N. Lee 87)

The legacy of this policy was pervasive, and resulted in the self-policing of individuals and intellectuals. Although there was extensive study on Japanese imperialism and its modernization of Korea, the historical lacuna around post-war movements, as well as, accounts of communist or socialist culture were not accounted in anticommunist nationalist accounts of Korean history. This lacuna was only revisited after the Minjung movements of the 1970s and 1980s, which resulted in the emergence of countermemory that reevaluated major events.

Thus, until the 1980s and 1990s, Korean and U.S. scholarship on socialist literature during the colonial period was sparse. And, as such, scholarship on the proletarian culture movement produced in the 1980's and 1990's can be situated within the political immediacies after the height of the Minjung movements. Specifically, for the proletarian movement, this meant resituating proletarian literature, and the rest of the efforts by KAPF within the history of the canonical Korean literary history, and within modern literary formations (*sinmunhak).* The political intervention of this scholarship was their documentation of the details of the proletarian culture movement.

These literary scholars, such as Kim Yun-sik, Kim Chae-yong, Kwŏn Yŏng-min, have reintegrated both proletarian literature and criticism, and have stressed the complexities and developments of KAPF in the larger context of the socialist movement in Japan and Russia, and within the development of Japanese imperialist

structures. Through these networks, realism is understood in terms of its material importation from the socialist movement, positioning Japan as the ideological center. Scholars, such as Kim Chul, have also done important work on situating KAPF within the Korean socialist movement, but have also concluded that the culture movement was "outside of" rather than working from "inside" the socialist movement (C. Kim 79).

Perhaps because the political intervention in the 1980s and 1990s concentrated on the excavation of the 1920s and 1930s, I understand scholarship's concentration on the ideological shifts within the KAPF movement as measured along "nationalism" and "Marxism," and the further organization of the Japan as the center and Korea as periphery, in addition to the bifurcation between politics and culture. Again because of previous absence from nationalist historiography, this emphasis is evident by the concentration on KAPF's nationalist politics, and within this emphasis, KAPF's collaborative efforts with other groups, such as the New Korea Society. Although this focus has resulted in incredible work on this period and movement, it shows the ways in which epistemologies of Western Marxism and official nationalisms remain fixed, and how this tradition also mimics the division between nationalist and Marxist literary cultural movements that divided literary criticism during the 1920s and 1930s. This continuation challenges us to examine the epistemological structures that cast a shadow on present and past understandings of the role of culture.

Also, because of this focus, scholarship has differed at certain points of comprehension on nationalism and Marxism. For one, there has been divergent understandings of how much KAPF was and wasn't involved with Korean nationalism,

as configured oppositional to the Japanese nation state. Some understand that KAPF was critical of capitalism, and thereby only critical of Japanese imperialism because of colonial structures of economic development. While other scholars understand KAPF as piggybacking on the socialist movement, in order to achieve independence from Japanese imperialism. Additionally, there are divergent opinions on how to understand different stages of the proletarian culture movement: most scholars understanding the New Tendency Movement as "experimental," while the 1930s as a more authentic application of Marxism because of the increasing alliance with international focus on Bolshevism.[6]

Emerging works have now moved away from this perspective, and have taken a more global, transnational approach. In recent years, Korean scholarship has moved away from these structural emphases, and has reexamined the proletarian literature movement, greatly informing the development of my dissertation. Postcolonial Studies and Poststructuralism have been some of the body of works that have influenced literary and cultural studies on this period in recent years. Another example of new directions is U.S. scholarship: Sunyoung Park addresses the significance of the Korean proletarian realism within the social development of colonial Korea, and Samuel Perry examines the dialogic relationship of the Japanese and Korean proletarian culture movements.

TRAVELING BETWEEEN MARXISM AND NATIONALISM

[6] For more on KAPF and these debates, refer to Kim, Y. Son, Y., Myŏng, H., Kwŏn, Y. M., Kim, C.

My research questions for this dissertation are not only about the examination of the proletarian culture movement, but also acknowledge that KAPF is a contested site, often managed by present politics. A constellation of theoretical texts have informed my work, and have helped me both formulate the ways in which our study of colonialism is also dominated by limiting paradigmatic discourse, how to think about these issues in terms of language and representation, and how we might understand mass subjectivity in this context. As such, my research questions do not examine the application of Western Marxism in the Korean context, but are concerned with how Korean Marxism contributed to the representations that emerged and constituted the collective Korean subject in the 1920s and 1930s. Through the socioeconomic criticism of capitalism, I argue that the importation of Marxism was significant in organizing and mobilizing through representations of a "collective" based on the experience and processes of socioeconomic marginalization. This experience, as I trace through the representation of the sensational affective and affected body, allows us to understand the "proletarian" as a manifestation, enactment, and contestation of the collective experience of Koreans.

It can be argued that the "proletarian" includes different groups of people at different moments of the proletarian culture movement; for example, during the New Tendency movement the naturalist influence extended the representation to all members of the lower "dregs" of society, thieves, prostitutes, murderers, etc. However, as I discuss in the 1930s, the increased centralization and strict identification of proletarian culture with the international socialist movement led to the focus on the agrarian population, along with more standard Marxist depictions of

laborers. At the same time, there is a split within the articulation of the "masses:" between the representations of intellectuals and class-conscious laborers, with the agrarian masses, located at the periphery of spaces designated as modern.

With bourgeois representations of the enlightened subject as a comparison, I understand the representation of the "proletariat"—the focus on the body as the site of socioeconomic and imperial structures of domination--as the crucial shift in culture during the 1920s. I am invested in both theoretical frameworks that call upon Marxist theorizations of the subject as a "body," as well as, postcolonial and poststructuralist frameworks of the "body" as an effect of power. In part, this involves what postcolonial scholar Aime Cesaire has understood as the objectification of the subject under colonization, or as Césaire calls it, "thingification." Albert Memmi, who also writes on the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, has elaborated on this through his illustration of the "mythical portrait of the colonized," which involves the colonizer's creation of discourse on the "colonized" that "dehumanizes" and makes the colonized into an object (Memmi 89).

This dehumanization process or power of colonialism is described more specifically in Franz Fanon's work on the Algerian struggle for independence. Fanon's unique development of the psychological results of this "dehumanization" process or colonization helps me understand the relationship between representation and material marginalization, representations of the proletarian body as physical manifestations of the historical experience of Korean colonialism. Although perhaps not in a linear theoretical tradition, theoretical frameworks from Western feminist scholars that formulate *difference* in the signification of the abject condition--Judith

Butler, Julia Kristeva and Kelly Oliver-- have also informed my exploration of the affective and affected proletarian body as the practice and embodiment of colonial subjecthood.

The problem of course in understanding the proletarian culture movement through this framework is that though the proletarian culture movement sought to awaken the masses to class-consciousness, in many ways the image of the proletarian mimics the very structures of colonization. Memmi calls this the "mythical portrait of the colonized," as an "anonymous collectivity," and, in the case of the proletarian culture movement, emerges from the often classed privilege of the intellectuals who led the proletarian culture movement. At the same time, I see the proletarian culture movement, through the acknowledgment, enactment, and occupation of the colonized condition as an important movement in the conceptualization of the masses, apart from the lack of mass mobilization, and for the representation of the "collective," as highlighted through the affective "excesses" of the proletarian body. Within this framework, I see social movement literatures, such as Korean proletarian literature, as both representative of strategies of control, but simultaneously as contestations to uneven strategies of discipline. The representation of the individual parallels the ways in which colonialism is diffusive. As Michel Foucault in "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison" recalls the spectacle of the scaffold during the 17th century as an unstable form of violence, that could easily be "reversed" (59) by spectators, similarly, I locate "collective" possibility around the sensational spectacle of the proletarian body.

Although a significant development of my dissertation concentrates on bodily representations, an overlapping research question involves discourse, both in contemporary manifestations and in literary Marxist criticism and logics of modernity of the 1920s and 1930s. In understanding the role of proletarian culture within Japanese colonialism and in light of postcolonial scholarship, I read culture as the site that reflects the adoption of Western ideologies, genres, but also a site that "encode(s) the tensions, complexities and nuances within colonial cultures" (Loomba 63). In this case, this not only refers to the presentation of new genres, ideologies in the representation of "proletarian identity," but also is in tension with the ideological conceptualizations that informed this movement. Specifically, I understand the "proletarian"(*musan kyegŭp*) as a representation of the collective that is split into two (Chakrabarty 40),[7] for one, formulated within the Marxist narrative of the revolutionary class, but also as the assumed identity of the Korean collective.

As such, I move away from understanding culture as a reflection of the epistemologies of official nationalism and Western Marxism, which belies the multiplicity and fluidity of both ideological structures, and understand the limitations of examining mass subjectivity through these conceptualizations. By "nationalism" I refer to the ethical, static designations of the official "nation" as registered through and for the nation-state, and by "Marxism," I refer to the ideological framework of Western Marxism as practiced in the West. I instead am concerned with the

[7] Although Dipesh Chakrabarty is discussing the representation of the "Indian people" located within the metanarrative of the nation-state, I find his application of Homi Bhabha helpful in discussing representations produced within the modernizing projects. See Chakrabarty, D.

exceptional formations of "mass" and the "collective" mediated through the proletarian culture movement.

I am inspired by "politics" registered and located at liminal sites within structures that regulate and govern national and modern subjectivity. In Neferti Tadiar's study of social movement literatures in the Phillipines, her definition of "historical experience" is not only " people's collective responses to the objective social and economic practices they engage in" but also the "collective subjective practices they engage in that help to produce and remake those objective conditions" (10). Tadiar locates possibilities in the "ontologies that have historically been prevented from coming into being, or into presencing, by symbolic as well as material orders of domination and exploitation"(16). In continuing my focus on the representation of the proletariat, my intervention is to revisit liminal sites of discourse and historical experiences that have been marginalized in traditional scholarship. This focus has led me to explore the liminal agrarian space of Marxist historiography in Chapter 3 and the discourse of ideological "conversion" in Chapter 4 to bring to mind the contemporary political significance of nationalist remembering of the past.

By liminal sites of discourse, I also refer to the formulations that developed alongside the modernization of colonial Korea. Although in the context of Japan during the Meiji Period, Karatani Kojin's *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, informs the ways in which we can talk about modernity in the context of different localities, especially in light of the similar rapid modernization processes of both Japan and Korea. Through writer and critic Natsume Sōseki's writings, Karatani exhibits how the rapid modernization process brought an influx of simultaneous

literary influences, and how the use of terms such as realism, naturalism calls upon the Western centric understanding of the term "literature," which implicates a teleological understanding of history of literature (14). This is appropriate to Korea as well, as literary development involved the simultaneous popularity of, for example, romanticism, naturalism and realism, and the overlapping networks formed among literary groups. The works produced, both in aesthetic form and content, shows the ways in which literary movements that are commonly perceived as oppositional were informed by each other. However, because of the ethnocentric, nationalist nature of literary history, these texts are in hindsight pitted against other literary genres and ideologies, or even rendered illegitimate forms of the "original" movement. This idea extends to my method in locating mass subjectivity at the "interstitial space" (Bhabha 149).

While writing this work, I am conscious of the problems in understanding the politics of the subaltern through bourgeois and intellectual history. In many ways, the proletarian culture movement constitutes and speaks for the proletarian body, and was ineffective in inspiring the type of mass politics that it strived for; as a result, many scholars have questioned whether we can consider the proletarian culture movement "proletarian politics." At the same time, however, I want to point out the limitations of this understanding of "proletarian politics" that prioritizes certain avenues and aspects of social movements. The proletarian culture movement is important precisely because of its representation of the lower classes, and constitution of the figure of the proletariat, which was an important shift at this time. By reformulating our understandings of "culture" as inseparable from politics, economics, the social, and as

"collective subjective practices" that are integral to politics, we can understand and discover the many alternative formations of collective identity that emerged under this movement.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I have organized the problematics and issues of my dissertation in the following chapters. The first half of my dissertation deals with the crucial intersection of socialism and mass literary culture, and begins with an examination of the hybridization of realism, the effect of mass politics on print culture, and "abject" bodily representations of the Korean subject. Chapter 1, titled "Politics of the Body: Realism, Sensationalism, and the Abject in 'New Tendency' Literature" explores the emergence of early socialist literature and literary criticism through "New Tendency Literature" (*Sin'gyŏnghyangp'a*), which was popularized from 1924-1927. Representative literary works by Ch'oe Sŏ-hae, Cho Myŏng-hŭi, and Chu Yo-sŏp, and literary criticism by Pak Yŏnghŭi and Kim Ki-chin illustrate the transnational context of the "importation" of Marxist theory and indigenization process in this beginning phase of the proletarian culture movement. I first address the tradition of the modern literature movement (*Sinmunhak)* in Romanticist bourgeois literature; this tradition involves the concentration on the emotive, interior narratives of the "civilized" and enlightened subject. As such, proletarian literature and the adoption of realism represent a critical shift, redirecting literature to and about the lower classes.

Using critical affect theory based in psychoanalysis, feminist scholarship, and postcolonial scholarship, I examine the excesses and compositions of affect that are

represented in the proletarian body, which pervade and spill over the text. I argue that the representation of the proletarian as a body affected highlights the constellation of overlapping, parallel, and intricate disciplinary practices of the state. In developing the affective and affected proletarian body as a central representational figure of the proletarian culture movement, New Tendency literature exhibited a significant influence from Naturalism. Marking a stark contrast with canonical socialist representations of the "healthy" laborer, through the example of New Tendency works, I understand Korean realism to be a unique adoption of Marxist theory in its employment of sensational representations of the dying proletarian body, and treatment of the Korean colonial subject as abject.

"The Proletarian Body in Mass Visual Culture" continues the focus on the proletarian body, but extends the analysis to other modern mediums of mass culture that emerged in the early 20th century amidst rising print capitalism and readership, the development of visual culture, urbanization, and industrialization. Using bourgeois representations of the modern cityscape as a comparison point, I examine illustrated episodes resembling political cartoons that emerged in the 1920s, which were often submitted by anonymous readers, and show the ways in which this period involved "participatory" readership. In my examination of political cartoons, films, and film-novels, and the circulation of mass representations of the "proletariat" in the figure of the abject colonial body, I argue that the circulation of the symbol of the starving body, the insane intellectual, and the trope of utopic resolution all present nationalism as "in-between," formulated against sanity, order, and imperial subjecthood.

The last half of my dissertation concentrated on marginal sites of Western Marxist and Nationalist discourse in the later context of the latter half of the 1920s and 1930s. Chapter 3, titled "The Liminal Spaces of Discourse" examines the concentration on the agrarian space in the 1930s. Through examples of modernist writers Yi Sang and Kim Yu-chŏng's essays on the agrarian space, I illustrate the ways in which interior modern literature polarizes the urban and agrarian space, and creates an interesting (mis)comprehension of and alienation from the agrarian space. In contrast, the proletarian culture movement, because of material and ideological changes in the movement, increases its focus on the agrarian space to address the majority agrarian Korean population. Yi Sang's and Kim Yu-chŏng's travelogues serve as a comparison point to proletarian and "fellow traveler" literature by Paek Sin-ae, Ch'ae Man-sik, and Yi Ik-sang, which provide what I argue to be temporal and spatial "interruptions" to universal narratives mediated by official Marxism, as well as by logics of modernity.

"From Artist to Soldier of Culture" addresses the dissolution of KAPF in 1935, and the ideological conversion of a main figure of KAPF, Pak Yŏnghŭi. Also calling upon the present "decolonization" work that is being done in persecuting and excavating Japanese collaborators, I argue against the ethical designations of "ideological conversion" that are marked by present boundaries of nation state. Instead of understanding collaboration as a conversion between two different ideological states, I understand Pak's conversion within overlapping networks of domination, and Pak's complex associations with Marxism. As result, I locate Pak Yŏnghŭi's conversion amidst the specific organization of Japanese imperial ideology

as a military mobilization of the population, which involved Pak's description of writers of (Japanese) national literature (*kungmin munhak*) as "soldier(s) of culture."

As I have outlined in my interests above, I hope my dissertation will contribute to new perspectives on not only Korean literary history, but also to an expansion of understandings of Marxist theory, realism, and sensationalism through the critical, interdisciplinary approaches I employ. In terms of literary studies, I believe that the examination of Korean realism in the colonial context, as a crucial site of modernity, print capitalism, visual media, imported literary trends, and political ideological trends will broaden understandings of literary realism as a site of hybrid exchange. I also hope that my work will engage other scholarship that similarly understands literature and language as organically grounded in material development and other mediums of mass culture.

II. POLITICS OF THE BODY: REALISM, SENSATIONALISM, AND THE ABJECT IN NEW TENDENCY LITERATURE (1924-1927)

INTRODUCTION

Scholarship on Korean proletarian literature and its preceding New Tendency works has been significantly affected by changing political alignments in post-Korean War years. Because South Korean modernization developed under state capitalist militarized dictatorships largely influenced by cold-war alliances, studies on socialism were discouraged, and it was only during the 1980's and 1990's under the transition to liberal politics and economy that there was a surge of scholarship on proletarian literature. The change in the political climate allowed key grounding scholars such as Kim Yun-sik, Kwŏn Yŏng-min, and Yu Mun-sŏn to write on the crucial role that proletarian literature played in the nationalist movement during the 1920's and 1930's and to reintegrate proletarian literature within the history of the New Literature (*sinmunhak)* movement[8], placing it in dialogue with canonical literary works.

Contemporary scholarship in the last decade on proletarian literature has taken a less politically hermetic and nationalism-centered approach, and positions proletarian literature among a larger network of literary influences, and, most importantly, as a crucial element of colonial modernity.[9] Scholars such as Kim Yun-sik discuss the importance of KAPF (Korean Artist Proletarian Federation) works in

[8] The New Literature movement was a literary trend that moved away from the use of Hangmun (Chinese characters) and the Chinese Literary Tradition.

[9] For a comprehensive historical understanding of Korean realism, with concentration on Yŏm Sangsŏp and foundational proletarian writers, Yi Kiyŏng, Kang Kyŏngae, and Kim Namch'ŏn. See Park, S.

the development of the Korean modern literary movement, and these works read alongside works by on the Japanese proletarian movement are enriching and helpful in understanding this period of literary experimentation and emerging modern subjectivity.

The emphasis on proletarian literature, however, has been placed mostly on the works produced in the 1930's. New Tendency literature, the beginning of KAPF (Korean Artist Proletarian Federation) has, for the most part, been understood as the forerunner to these later proletarian texts. On the other hand, proletarian literature from the 1930's is considered to be derivative of Marxist historical materialism and of exhibiting a more solid political foundation in the socialist movement.[10] In contrast to canonical depictions of a revolutionary proletariat,[11] New Tendency literature documents the violent and sensational downfall of a poor main character—whether farmer, laborer, or intellectual—because of socially determined circumstances: poverty, starvation, and the lack of means to procure medicine.

In this chapter, I argue that the generic "aberrations" in New Tendency literature--the sensational violence and affective death—are a cultural reflection of both political and historical conditions of the time. For one, the move toward realism is a turning point in Korean literature, evidence of the evolving role of literature

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[10] "New Tendency Literature" is commonly defined as the group of texts written by KAPF writers during 1924-1927. After which, the first "shift in direction" exemplified the push by KAPF critics to ground KAPF literary principles in socio-economic foundations. This shift is commonly referred to as "Bolshevization" because of the push for structural and ideological organization around socialism, as dictated by the developments of the Comintern.

[11] By canonical depictions, I refer to the common perception of Russian and Chinese socialist art that depict the romanticism of a revolutionary proletarian hero. This also implicates Korean scholarship that adopts this canon as a measure of the progression of Korean proletarian literary. This history refers to New Tendency Literature as a precursor, an experimental literary period before Marxist texts of the 1930's.

during the 1920s. I argue that these changes should be understood within the context of material changes: the growth of readership, popular consumer consciousness in magazines, liberalization of censorship policies after the March 1st movement, the development of new printing techniques and, most importantly, the move toward mass politics. These material changes should be understood as the context and fodder for Marxist-framed understandings of readership, premised upon the formation of conception of "masses" and "popular" literature, and interests in literary realism as a projection of true socio-economic conditions. As such, sensation-realist New Tendency literary texts are both constituted by and inform these formulations, and, at the same time, are a result of the simultaneous depoliticized/politicized role of culture in Korea and the limitations of socialism as a conduit for nationalist endeavors.

I furthermore propose that the change in the focus from the previous Romanticism-centered works, representative in Cultural Nationalist and Modernist works, to the emergence of proletarian literature, representative in New Tendency works, exhibits the change toward a modern subjectivity rooted in the affective resonance of the proletarian body. The formation of the "proletarian" is located in the shift from emphasis on the emotive and the interiority of the subject to the focus on the proletarian body and external social processes. Applying a body of works that differently address the body as both a site of discursive power, as well as, the "reality of bodies," I use theorists such as Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, and Franz Fanon, to discuss the formation of proletarian literature through what I understand as the fundamental and new representation of the body in the collection of works called New Tendency Literature.

I do not argue that these theorists are in a linear epistemological tradition, but rather that each theorist has been helpful in formulating a different application and method in how to read New Tendency literature's formulation of the proletarian, through textually inflected politics rendered through the affective body. By the politics of the body, I refer to the materialization of the body as a political signifier for the proletarian. The development of the proletarian as a subject involves what Foucault understands to be the subjectification of the body within power structures, as well as, what Butler understands to be the "set of defining foreclosures and repressions that constitute the discontinuity and incompletion of the subject" (Butler 191).

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault documents the development of punishment from one that involved the spectacle of a body in pain in the 1700's to modern structures of criminal punishment that involve a "trace of torture" and increasing focus on the "soul" of the condemned. Foucault's text is helpful in that it establishes the body as a site that is constituted by overlapping structures of power and differential treatment of the "materiality" of the body amidst the onset of modernity. I understand this theoretical framework to be applicable to theorizations of the body in 1920's colonial Korea, as scholars, such as Chŏng Kŭn-sik, have discussed the early 1900's as a period of rapid urbanization, capitalism, and industrialization.[12] These economic and material changes were accompanied by equally significant changes in the restructuring of colonial society and the policing of bodies. An

[12] For a comprehensive overview of the development of colonial Korea, refer to: Shin, G. and Robinson, M. and Chŏng, K.

example of such scholarship is the way Todd Henry has detailed Japanese hygiene policies that aimed to "sanitize" colonial Korea.[13]

Feminist scholar Judith Butler's conversation with Foucault's text resituates the "matter" of the body in conversation with structures of power. Butler's text is useful in understanding the ways in which the tortured body in New Tendency texts is constituted by structures of power while, at the same time, echoes the "material" incomprehensibility of the "outside" of this discourse. In conversation with psychoanalytical theorists Julia Kristeva and Jacques Lacan, Butler applies Lacan's semiotics of the nonsymbolizable and "excesses of" affect in understanding the politics of the matter of the body: "And in the case of bodies, those exclusions haunt signification as its abject borders or as that which is strictly foreclosed: the unlivable, the nonnarrativizable, the traumatic" (Butler 188). Working also from a psychoanalytic revision of Lacan, postcolonial theorist Franz Fanon helps narrate the alterity of the constitution of the subject within structures of colonialism.

With these theoretical structures mind, I understand New Tendency Literature as a literary practice that focuses on the matter of the body, as a site of and constitution of the social processes that occurred during 1920's and 1930's Korea. I hope to contribute to understandings of the genre and narrative as a function of affective politics and the construction of mass subjectivity. This not only widens our understanding of Korean realism as a literary concept, but also illuminates the literary

[13] In Todd Henry's article, "Sanitizing Empire: Japanese articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Colonial Seoul, 1905-1919" Henry examines the civilizing discourse during Japanese imperialism vis-à-vis cultural constructions of ethnic difference between Koreans and Japanese. These constructions center on the subject of hygiene and sanitation, and are employed through the structural, institutional reformations of the Korean colony.

practice and hybridization of realism and sensationalism as an image of the "masses" during this time. After the preoccupation with Enlightenment and the concentration on the "soul" of the bourgeoisie class, in many ways New Tendency Literature's realism shifted the concentration and focus of literary practice on the marginalization of the lower classes by a network of social and class structures. This enactment was introduced through the materiality of the body in exacting descriptions of the affective anguish of social conditions such as poverty, hunger, etc.

In comparison to canonical socialist realist texts in other localities, which commonly portray a robust proletariat hero who wages battle and overcomes oppression,[14] in New Tendency Literature, the main character's bodily affect and death belie possibilities of "speaking" Korean subjecthood under colonialism, and underwrites a criticism of colonialism by depicting the occlusion and abjection of the Korean subject. With the assistance of Julia Kristeva's description of the performative aspects of the abject and Fanon's understanding of the affective structures of colonialism, I exhibit how New Tendency works are an attempt to "practice" the abjection and occlusion of the bodies that comprise the lower class. I argue that the generic hybridization in New Tendency literature and affective self-destruction of the main character shows the alternative representations of the realm of culture as an inhabited space through which colonial subjecthood is contested, discussed and proliferated.

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[14]For scholarship on tropes of socialist realism, refer to Lahusen, T. and E. Dobrenko.

This reading of New Tendency Literature is formulated against the study of Marxist literature as primarily "politics" based in the epistemological structures of official western Marxism and official nationalisms, mediated through nation-states. As such, New Tendency Literature has been understood in defect of these structures because of the hybridized and sensational aspect of their narratives. Although I am also concentrating on a political aspect of the text, I am moving away from the understanding of the "political" as a reflection (or failure) of strictly Marxist social practices and movements. Although I understand the foundational aspect of Marxism in this literary practice, I argue for the equal significance of the emergent parallel networks represented in the representation of the proletarian body as a site of the social and political. Specifically, I am pinpointing, in light of the theorization of affect, New Tendency Literature visceral depictions of the "body's capacity to act, to engage, and to connect" (Clough and Halley 2).

The chapter is divided into three sections that follow different aspects of the site of "New Tendency Literature." The first section focuses on the material changes in print culture, industrialization, and readership during the early 1900's that accompanied the development of Romanticism and Realism. Through the Romanticist writer and critic Yi Kwang-su, and formulations of proletarian literary critics and members of KAPF, Pak Yŏng-hŭi and Kim Ki-jin, I emphasize the ways in which the "politics" of realism is representative in the change from the focus on the individual to the affective management of the masses. The second section defines "realism" in the Korean context and the important influence of Naturalism, in the employment of sensation, to the politics of New Tendency Literature, which characterizes realism in

the Korean context. Finally, I then discuss the ways in which the representation of the body is situated within colonial structures of power, and how the body embodies the colonial consciousness of the proletariat.

FROM ROMANTICISM TO REALISM

Korean realism is a term that implicates specific networks of Korean historical conditions during the 1920's: the importation of Marxism, relaxation of Japanese imperial cultural censorship, and turn toward mass politics. This turn was evoked in the critical organization of proletarian literature against what proletarian critics defined as "bourgeois literature." Pak Yŏng-hŭi, the first chairman of KAPF, describes this change in his reflection on the merits and pitfalls of the short-lived New Tendency movement, two years after the New Tendency movement had been coined. This later work, framed within a rough Marxist conception of the role of literature, discusses the New Tendency movement's contribution to the Korean socialist movement and its motives. He writes:

> The Chosŏn public searches for a mass literature. Proletarian Chosŏn truly searches for class literature. But, because our literature is still in the past, we cannot direct this new era and are unable to transcend our times and class. The reason is because literature captures the reality of the present. So, to create a new literature that captures real Chosŏn and moves away from the abstract, individualistic, pleasure-seeking literature that was in its heyday, how we are going to do this is not only interesting but is also worthy of research. (Pak 76)

The socialist movement of the mid-1920s represents a hodgepodge of different Japanese socialist, Marxist, and anarchist strands of thought, but it is apparent from this beginning statement that proletarian literature was founded on basic Marxist

understandings of the realm of culture as a site for realistic reflection that will inspire socio-economic consciousness.

I use Pak's piece to show that the epistemological formations of Marxism structure New Tendency realism as mass-oriented, and "popular," rooted in material realities. An important contribution of this restructuring is what Pak refers to as the foundational ideological break between "pleasure literature" or bourgeois literature and proletarian literature. Implied in this oppositional formation is the difference between the aesthetics of art-for art's sake (*yumijuŭi*), culture as a separate realm reserved for refined entertainment purposes of the upper classes, and Marxist realism, an aesthetics propagating culture for and about the masses. To illustrate this break and to emphasize that bourgeois literature was not imbedded in material realities, Pak notes ironically that amidst colonial destitution "pleasure literature" writers had little other material fodder but the "romantic enlightenment of kisaeng and delinquents" (Pak 76).

The distinction between proletarian and bourgeois literature is in part a reorganization of literary categories that occurred alongside the adoption of Marxism. The categories of bourgeois and proletarian literature do not reflect a difference in the authors' class backgrounds, but rather shifts in focus that I will discuss in this section. Although Pak tries to distinguish "New Tendency" literature from previous literary efforts that can be described under the term "romanticism" (*nangmanjuŭi)* the theoretical opposition between bourgeois and proletarian literature portrays the constellation of literary representations that are predicated upon the influence of Marxism and its material intervention in the realm of culture. On the flipside, the

division between bourgeois literature and proletarian literature masks the ways in which the proletarian literary movement was informed by networks that involved many of the elements that can be considered part of "bourgeois literature."[15] This foundational contradiction is revisited throughout the proletarian literary movement, and becomes the crux of dialogue during the "conversion" of KAPF intellectuals as well.

One example of the ways in which these ideological divisions were constantly shifting is *Paekcho*, the literary magazine created after the March 1st movement in the early part of the 1920's. *Paekcho* was created by a hodgepodge of literary critics and writers who would later represent a spectrum of left and right aesthetics. A number of the founders of this magazine were later associated with New Tendency Literature, such as Pak Yŏng-hŭi and Kim Ki-jin, as well as with cultural nationalism, such as Yi Kwang-su, who is known for his enlightenment rhetoric and nationalism (*minjokchuŭi*).[16] Before these later associations, they were considered part of this early literary coterie of writers who identified with romanticism (*Nangmanp'a)*, along with other members like Hyŏn Chin-kŏn, Pak Chong-hwa, No Sa-yŏng.

The term "romanticism" in the Korean context can be defined through the works in *Paekcho,* which ranged from essays, fiction, and poetry. In these works, the focus on emotion (*kamsŏng*) is a prominent feature, while in varying degrees the vicissitudes of life are played out in the characters' actions. An example of this is Pak

[15] For example, symbolism (*sangjingjuŭi*), decadent literature (*t'oep'yejuŭi*) sentimentalism (*kamsangjuŭi*), art for arts sake (*yumijuŭi*), individualism (*kaeinjuŭi*) were all strands of thought that were circulating during the early 20th century and provided the foundation for fiction.

[16] For more readings of Yi Kwang-su, refer to Yonsei University Modern Collection v. 31.

Chong-hwa's "The Girl who Commits Suicide" (*Mokmaei nŭn Yŏja*, 1923)[17] which is often identified as historical literature,[18] but in which the historical events are secondary to and conveyed through the wife's emotions. Contemplation of death in this narrative and others like Hyŏn Chin-kŏn's "Grandmother's death" (*Halmŏni ŭi Chugŭm, 1923*) exhibits the romantic literary tendency to highlight emotional negotiations of social despair and death within the context of colonial Korea.

The discussion of romanticism and realism is often discussed in terms of opposition, centered on emergent understanding of "reality," and the position of literature to accurately portray social realities. As a mode of comparison, in the English tradition, scholars also historically positioned realism in difference to romantic and sensational literatures.[19] In the Korean case, especially, I find Victorian literary scholar George Levine's definition of realism very useful. Understanding realism in the sociopolitical context, he describes the move toward realism as a distinct and conscious change in language to make ideas and things one of the same. In his understanding, realism represents a textual crisis in its contradictory efforts to capture "reality." Levine points out that the concept of realism is elusive because it is premised on perceived understandings of a unitary ideological foundation of "reality." These ideological contradictions within realism threaten its own literary content, form and foundations: "realism edges back in modern thought and literature toward its beginnings, or toward its entire elimination" (Levine 8).

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[17] Refer to full text in Pak, C. 22-46.

[18] Historical literature (*yŏksasosŏl)* is a term that refers to fiction that concentrates on historical events to facilitate the plot. For more on *Paekcho* and historical literature, refer to Kim, Han-o.

[19] I am discussing scholarship after poststructuralism, when interest in literature became less about authorial subjectivity, linguistics, separate from the organization of reality, etc. Poststructuralism interrogates the binaries that were foundational to structuralism.

In accordance with Levine, I propose that the sensational nature of New Tendency realism does not make these works exclusive of realism, but emblematic of the tensions within the movement of realism and the modernist literary position. With Marxism as the epistemological structure for its colonial reality, New Tendency writers made an effort to portray "reality" rooted in class conflict through a dynamic proletarian protagonist, but this effort is always a negotiation with the contradictions of realism as a concept. Additionally, material realities foreground these contradictions, among which are the impossibilities of the speaking Korean colonial subject, the foundational ideological slippage in the oppositional formulation of bourgeois and proletarian literature, and the tensions within Marxist ideological constructs that do not discuss national subjecthood and colonialism but inquire after an ideological construct of the masses.

I do not mean to concentrate on the contradictions of realism as a literary movement, but rather hope to focus on other modes of "reality" that are recuperated in the materiality of the abject suffering body and exhibit the creation of "community" through a popular proliferation of affect. The realist turn not only exhibits the creation of mass subjectivity in the Korean context, but also negotiates the particulars of Korea during this time with the conceived universal mode of modernity and Marxism. I focus on the role of affect in both romanticism and realism in order to understand, through an examination of key writers and critics, Yi Kwang-su, Kim Ki-chin and Pak Yŏng-hŭi, the significance of the realist intervention, and, more specifically, the significance of emergent concept of the "masses".

In accordance with scholars such as Raymond Williams and Benedict Anderson, who understand the concept of the "masses" and the "public" as a central turning point in the development of culture previously centered on the individual,[20] I understand this moment to be intertwined with changing social conditions that involve industrialization, print culture and mass politics. In particular, I find Raymond William's "cultural materialism,"[21] the understanding of culture as central to material social processes, helpful in understanding the development and construction of mass subjectivity through proletarian literature. As Williams stresses, the concept of the "masses" is in fact part of an "othering" process, and involves the process of "amass[ing]" others. Part of this process is of course the management of the "masses;" in this case, I will focus on how proletarian critics were concerned with the management of affect through the genre of realism, and how this concept of the "masses" resulted in the stylistic difference of New Tendency literature from individual-centered romanticism.

Alternatively, Benedict Anderson similarly maps the importance of culture in the creation of "imagined communities," but highlights the importance of print culture in establishing the basis for "imagined communities."[22] In the Korean context, the beginning of the period called Cultural Rule[23] involved the relaxation of colonial policy and allowed for material changes, mainly the rise in print culture. Although

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[20] The concept of the individual is also an important formulation during the early 1920's, as modernity not only opened the discussion of the individual under enlightenment ideas like Yi's understanding of societal reconstruction, but also for differing Marxist representation of the masses.

[21] Raymond Williams develops this term and practice in *Culture and Society, The Long Revolution, and Marxism and Literature.*

[22] An essential formulation that is separate from what is understood as official nationalisms, which involves the presentation of a community within a temporal, spatial simultaneity.

[23] For a detailed description of the term "cultural rule," refer to Shin, G. and Robinson, M.

newspapers began appearing in the beginning of the 1900's, it was only after the 1910's with the growth of movable type printing and serial publication that the reading class became more than a select few. However, what could be called "mass reading culture" emerged only during the period after the March 1st movement, when reform in the modern education system during the mid-1920's was followed by a rising literacy rate (Ch'ŏn 28). As Ch'ŏn Jŏng-hwan points out in his study on the rise of print culture and modernity during the early 20th century in Korea, 1920's newspapers and magazines, compared to newspapers from the first decade of the 20th century, were markedly different in form. It is during this period that artists became aware of the print medium as a visual communicative space through which they could establish contact with their readers. Illustrations, illustrated episodes, advertisements, photos were facets of the print medium that changed the relationship between the reading public and text, and altered how people consumed language. The rise in print capitalism and consumerism provided the perfect soil for writers to experiment with language as a platform through which they could communicate to a mass readership.

Because of similar foundations in modern literary form, realism in the Korean case started with the emergence of the *sinmunhak* movement that began at the beginning of the 20th century. Although proletarian literary critics, such as Pak Yŏng-hŭi, later publicly enforced a break from the romantic works of the 1910's, New Tendency works should be considered in development from these initial works of the *sinmunhak* movement that concerned the changing relationship between a reader and the text. As I mentioned earlier, these initial works involved collaborative literary coteries around magazines such as *Paekche* that were different from Pak and Kim's

later political-literary affiliations in KAPF, but still involved changing perceptions of literary genre. One of the representative authors of romantic bourgeois literature, Yi Kwang-su's grounding article "What is Literature," (*Munhakiran 'ao* 1916*)* (Yi 67) reflects the foundational break represented by modern literature, which differentiates literature (*munhak*) from science or scholarship (*hangmun*) (Hwang 9).

In this redefinition, Yi envisions a break with classical understandings of literature. Yi states that literature is not like scholarship that concentrates on the study of an object, its origin and development, and the didactic presentation of these findings; instead, literature is about aesthetics and "sensation of an object" (Yi 67). In this distinction, Yi places the importance of literature in its ability to be emotive and emphasizes its effect on the reader. Most importantly, in his further distinctions separating poetry, the novel and the drama, Yi stresses that the novel must, instead of being morally didactic, be realistic in portraying life and emotion, and he describes reality as a visual "happening before the reader's eyes" (Yi 71). Although sometimes Yi's division of literature is vague, it is clear that Yi is making a clear break with past literary form, and solidifies modern literature's foundations in the emotive and its importance in capturing reality.

Ultimately, however, Yi's analysis reveals the construction of romanticism in his separation of literature from politics, morality, and science, and the internalization of the human experience of reality as founded on human emotion and sensation. The construction lends itself to Yi's discursive formulation of the "individual" within his cultural enlightenment project, a proposal for social reformation in what he believed

starts in the minds of elite leaders of society.[24] In Yi Kwang-su's *Heartless* (*Mujŏng, 1918)*, we can see evidence of this in his emphasis on the internal enlightenment of the main characters and less on external factors. In the novel, Hyŏng-sik, a Seoul intellectual educated in Tokyo, is known as a morally upright man and is going to marry the beautiful and virtuous woman Sŏn-yŏng; however, Hyŏng-sik becomes conflicted when Yŏng-ch'ae, a childhood friend and daughter of his mentor scholar Pak, comes to see him. Her father and son are innocent of accusations of debt, but were thrown in jail, and she has become a kisaeng in order to earn money to free her father and brother. After she is later raped, she is distraught and tries to commit suicide but fails.

At the end of the novel, each character meet on a train while going to their respective destinations. Hyŏng-sik and Sŏn-yŏng are newly married, and Yŏng-ch'ae meets Pyŏng-ok, a liberal minded student from Tokyo concerned with reform. It begins to rain and the tracks and nearby villages become flooded. They are brought together when they help a pregnant woman in the rain, and decide later to organize a concert to help all those affected by the flood. As can be seen by the conclusion of the novel, the majority of the novel centers on the romantic interest of Hyŏng-sik and the two female characters.

Through the polarity of the two female characters, the narrative creates dramatic intensity through Hyŏng-sik's oscillation between his two love interests. Peter Brooks describes this melodramatic "reality" as " the place of continuous struggle and interaction between yin and yang, archetypically manicheanistic

[24] For more on Yi's cultural nationalism, refer to Robinson, M.

principals" (Brooks 36). Though social criticism, such as criticism of tradition, poverty, and disillusionment of religion, do play a role in his novel, ultimately the novel focuses on the inner turmoil of the main character. The concluding internal enlightenment of these individuals that makes them "rise above" for a common good, codes nationalism through enlightenment principles. The adoption of such exhibits Yi's adoption of an idea of progress according to a hierarchy of civilized nation-states, and further to racialized Social Darwinist understandings of the modern civilizing mission (J. Lee 101).[25]

Although Yi's understanding of literature is undermined by his strong romanticist undertones, it can be compared with later literary criticisms by emerging proletarian writers that concentrate on sensation and emotion. Not divergent in all aspects, and, in many ways, a continuation of this initial emphasis on reality as tied to the affective experience, the development of proletarian literature shows how literature's role and position in society increasingly became linked to the idea of the "reality" of the masses and less about aesthetics. Though the seed of society-focused realism was in the ideas discussed in Yi's "What is literature?" the works influenced by this romanticism are ultimately middle class-centered, didactic and makes human emotion and feeling equivalent with "truth." Many of the emotive generic conventions, and narrative devices that are used in Yi's works can be seen in later works, but, after the March 1st movement and the move toward mass-centered politics, literature--

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[25] Lee discusses the way in which Yi reflected the tensions within the modernization project, as it in many ways involved the colonization of subjectivity under what she calls "autoracialization: acceptance of global racial hierarchy." The conclusion to the story reflects the way in which this resistance to colonialism inscribed a different kind of hierarchy and colonized subjectivity within the global racial hierarchy.

influenced by Marxism, anarchism, and Japanese naturalism--reflect less the enlightenment of the internal subject, but focus outwardly on an affective portrayal of "reality" in order to connect to mass readership.

Considered the turning point in literary and intellectual development, the March 1st movement facilitated this move toward realism.[26] It was from this beginning of mass-uprisings and following relaxation of cultural censorship that allowed for the literary scene to develop toward realism, and altered the intellectual tide in favor of social, economic, and materialist foundations. Yi's brand of literature was no longer considered suitable to the new environment of mass-centered politics, and the emergence of a strand of realism was a result of this modern, self-conscious desire to make literature relevant to the public and thus, the nationalist movement.[27] Increasingly the focus became less on universal human emotion and feeling to an idea of a public consciousness, and an authentication of "reality" in this connection (Levine 18).

Urbanization, cultural commodification, and the chaos of the modern developments in colonial Korea became the focal point and not the backdrop of literature, as it was in earlier romanticist works. One of the founding members of KAPF and socialist critic, Kim Ki-jin wrote a foundational work "Accusing your

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[26] March 1st movement: In 1919, to protest Japanese colonial government, mass-scale demonstrations were held all over the nation. Not only did it include intellectuals, religious leaders, and students, but peasants and laborers also participated in these independence demonstrations. Although the rioters were later violently suppressed by the government, it was a testament to the power of mass-movement. It also resulted in changes of colonial policy to "Cultural Rule", which was accompanied by relaxed censorship of publication and allowed for the development of newspapers, journals, etc.

[27] Although I use a blanket term nationalism to describe the effect of Marxism in the development of a different political stance to the cultural nationalist movement, there are sub-distinctions between leftist nationalism and other forms or developments in proletarian literature that advocate an international marxism, as indicated by later "bolshevization" of the movement in the late 1920s.

Conscience" (*Nŏŭi yangsim ŭl gobalhanda, 1924*) (K. Kim 404). In his narrative of a scene, Kim does not concentrate on the subject and the subject's emotions, but rather infuses the external environment with energy and affective description:

> The grinding streetcars coming and going, the roaring train spewing sparks of fire and black smoke under the moonlit night, the workers busily coming and going across the intersection. Starved for three days without even a bowl of barnyard-millet gruel, a hollow-eyed person wearing tattered clothes stares into the windows of the emporium to steal goods. He barely conceals the desire in his eyes. The anxious tenants confronting the scheming landowner, the tense workers being taken away after the strike, the wealthy landowners walking in a flurry after being attacked, the nervous and fearful colonial police carrying long swords, arresting agitators and trying to disband the demonstration march. In the face of chaos and disorder-- the symphony of entangled reality-- how can the concept of aesthetics be unimpaired? The sensibilities of modern life do not fit with the concept of medieval aesthetics. (K. Kim 404)

In the above description of destructive industrialization and chaotic mechanization of life, Kim's important statement about aesthetics and reality in the Korean context reflects the changes that I have discussed. Demonstrating the ideological changes that have occurred in the relationship between politics and literature, Kim points out the disparity between "medieval" aesthetics and present realities of colonial Korea. From this work, we can see that, although literary understanding of modern life is still much connected to the importance of literature in expressing affective human experience, the conceptual foundation of art is no longer individual feeling and emotion as it was in Yi's romanticism. Rather, art is inseparable from this reality that he describes, and the focus is on the best aesthetic to spread this social consciousness to the masses. In turn, the reality he describes concentrates on social structures, and is represented in the evocative illustration of modern colonial Korea: industrialization, capitalism, class

conflict, and colonial rule. These social processes and networks are described through the pervasive energy in the mechanization of objects, and social conflicts.

Increasingly, Marxism is the structure through which socialist literary critics define literature in the mid-1920's, and in order to reinforce realism's relevance, proletarian literature is posited against bourgeois literature. This is apparent in another of Kim Ki-chin's works, "Purifying the Blood-stained Proletarian Soul" (*P'it'usŏngi toen p'ŭro honŭi p'yobaek*). Kim discusses the differences between the two aesthetic conceptions:

> This is where bourgeois aesthetics is different from proletarian aesthetics. Bourgeois aesthetics is the search for beauty through art and speaks about human beauty. The opposite of this is the aesthetics of proletarian literature, which is the search for a righteous beauty, which speaks more loudly than other types. (K. Kim 137)

This statement is a stand for realism, which proclaims that realism is more "just" in its "objective" search for truth. Kim insists that literature on laborers is not proletarian literature, but that authentic proletarian literature is written with proletarian consciousness and criticizes organizational exploitation and social evils. Differentiating also from Japanese proletarian literature, he states that though Japanese proletarian literature is powerful, it is "literature for proletarians," while Korean proletarian literature is true "proletarian literature." The main difference is that it is written with "proletarian consciousness," and therefore more capable of "speaking loudly:" of inspiring emotion, and class-consciousness (K. Kim 138).

However, as can be seen by the vagueness of the distinctions, Kim's analysis lacks clarity in explaining what sort of writing best "inspires class consciousness" and how these distinctions are carried out in the narratives. This will be a debate that

continues throughout the 1930's as well, and KAPF criticism will center around the question: "how best to inspire social consciousness in the 'masses'?" The socialist realism debate of the 1920's states that the role of art is to exhibit a socio-economic foundation, necessity for mass organization, and scientific consciousness. However, even founding works by Kim Ki-chin and Pak Yŏng-hŭi were still notably split in this regard: the former was more concerned with the boundaries of aesthetics of realism and the latter stressed literature's duty to actualize politics of proletarian class struggle.

The writers also differed in their literary style: scholars have noted that some were still utilizing the "subjective consciousness" and romantic concentration on individual feeling like Pak Yŏng-hŭi, Kim Ki-chin, and Yi Ik-sang. And others in the latter half of the 1920's "wanted to subjugate the romantic impulse" by employing realistic descriptions of objects, exhibiting a more strictly naturalist influence representative in works of Ch'oe Sŏ-hae (Seoul National University et. al 219). Even towards the end of the "New Tendency" movement, Pak Yŏng-hŭi notes that the problem with "New Tendency" literature was its lack of "refinement" in its attempts to be popular to the masses, and that its popularity undermined its politics (Pak 76). Pak's understanding of socialist realism became the spearhead for later socialist works that increasingly became more about their politics and content, over their literary aesthetics.

From this split between Kim and Pak's understandings of the direction of proletarian literature, we can understand why socialist realism in the 1930's was very different from the New Tendency movement. Some scholars like Myŏng Hyŏng-dae consider the many contradictions of "New Tendency" works—the interior and exterior

social consciousness, vertical and horizontal social structures represented in works, and the fluidity of reality and fantasy-- as experiments of literary experimentation before proletarian literature turned toward political content. This being the case, at the same, the movement should not be reduced to an experimental movement. Apart from the negotiations with literary style, I understand New Tendency Literature to be a foundational movement that shifted the representation of the masses during the colonial period. The negotiations of literary style, as I will discuss in Chapter 4, can also be understood in terms of ideological formations that foreground the binaries that bolster literary criticism. Even the scholar Pak Yŏng-hŭi, who criticizes New Tendency Literature and pushed the proletarian culture movement toward more political content, changes his ideological stance on New Tendency Literature. Pak later remembers his debate with Kim Ki-jin and regrets his position, claiming that they were closer to "true" literature at the beginning of the movement, rather than in the 1930's.

THE INFLUENCE OF NATURALISM AND SENSATIONAL POLITICS OF THE BODY

As I have outlined in the previous section, proletarian literature can be considered in many ways a departure from the romantic understanding of reality in individual emotion. New Tendency critics' understanding of reality is not about individual emotion, but instead about "mass experience." In this section, I continue this discussion, but will expand on how "mass experience" was represented and embodied in the representation of the "proletarian." With influences from Marxism,

naturalism, and sensationalism, I understand the genre of realism as the literary "hybridization" of the importation of these elements, as well as, a reflection of conceptions of the "masses" through a Marxist lens.

The "proletarianization" of the subject involved the representation of a "dynamic" body, the body as constitutive of social processes outlined by Marxism, as well as, involving an "unassimilable" quality. It is important to note that the proletarian writers were mostly intellectuals not from the proletarian class; in this way, the "proletarianization" of the subject involved the "othering" of the peasant, and the suffering of the proletarian body; from a purely reductive standpoint, this can be understood as a type of epistemological violence enacted on the peasant. I argue, however, that the representation of the suffering proletarian body is both a divorcing from and representation of the peasant. Although rooted in the experiences of the poor and indigent, the "politics" of the proletarian body lies precisely in the proliferation of its affective excesses. Employed through themes of desire, alienation, murder, poverty, the unstable proletarian body both pinpoints the discursive hegemonic structures that marginalize the subject, as well as, creates a visceral "social" through literary sensation.

The question of how the generic focus on the proletarian body came about can be pinpointed to, as many scholars have pointed out, the importation of French naturalism through Japan. Both in content and form, naturalist writers' understanding of reality became a crucial component of New Tendency Literature. Mostly influenced by Japanese naturalism (*shizenshugi)*, Japanese naturalism involved a broad interpretation of French naturalist writers, such as Èmile Zola, and focused less on the

scientific determinism of the original movement, and more on a broader interpretation toward materialism, the "individual's" relationship with the social machine, and utilized language that explored the complicated relationship of object and observer.

As Peter Brooks has described, French naturalists such as Zola concentrated on exposing the underbelly of society: corruption, prostitution, theft, laborers, poverty, amidst urbanization and industrialization in mid-19th century France. Although critics were wary of Zola, his contemporaries recognized Zola's works as a testament "in which popular interest in the author and his work [had] increased to last," exceeding sales of other contemporary French authors (Wells 387). More importantly, Zola's works were significant because it bridged the "aesthetic gulf that separates the reading public from the majority of toiling men" (Wells 388).

The comparison between Japanese, French, and Korean naturalism is difficult because as Japanese naturalism is hardly unitary in its character, its rise of "I-novels" and different takes on narrative (Sibley 165). Like Japanese naturalism and French naturalism, "New Tendency" was not a unitary homogenous movement, and involved the broad interpretation of naturalism. However, the influence was often derivative enough that some scholars divide New Tendency Literature further into generic subdivision of "naturalist-realism" (Pak 189). In this regard, the comparison between naturalism and New Tendency Literature reveals some similarities that enlighten our understanding of realism in the Korean context.

For one, Zola's "muckraking" stories about the depravities of social life relied on print capitalism and serialization of his titillating stories to establish a reader base. The grounding of French Naturalism in print culture resonates with the material roots

of New Tendency Literature. Secondly, the focus on the "underbelly" infused sensational themes of murder, theft, prostitution, and poverty into the proletarian culture movement. The main influences of naturalism, as can be seen from these two dominant characteristics, was the sensational aspect of naturalism and the sordid quality of the texts, a focus that Zola was criticized for, and not the ideological groundwork of naturalism that represented the fusing of a scientific attention to the detail and external processes. In this way, I understand New Tendency Literature's realism to be the meeting point between the genres of sensation and mass politics.[28] Politics as such reveals not only the involvement of the consumptive practices of reading during the rise of print culture, but it also involves the purposeful politics of sensation through the focus on the proletarian body.

In the following, I will explicate on examples that formulate New Tendency Literature as this meeting point of sensation, mass politics, and realism. In understanding New Tendency Literature as a cultural facet of social politics, I argue that the affective proletarian body of Korean realism is constituted by and constitutes the ongoing imaginings and projection of historical "realities" and formulations of "collective." In order to show how sensation, mass politics and realism contribute to the creation of these parallel politics, I will explore key New Tendency writers: Ch'oe Sŏ-hae, Cho Myŏng-hŭi, and Chu- Yo-sŏp.

Ch'oe Sŏ-hae was a writer who was central to the New Tendency movement for his "effortless rendering of New Tendency Literature," (Jin 222) and was also

[28] The focus on popular representation, sensational literatures, and print culture was influenced by Shelley Streeby's examination of popular representations of the US-Mexican war in 19th century American literature. Refer to Streeby, S.

known to have a strong naturalist presence in his texts. Although his writing career spanned only six years as he passed away at a young age in 1932, Ch‘oe was one of the most prolific New Tendency authors, writing around 60 pieces during this time (Jin 222). As I mentioned earlier, many proletarian literature writers were not from the peasant class, however, in Ch‘oe’s case this was not true. Ch‘oe was rumored to have worked as a laborer, and for not having the standard educational background for most writers. Born in the northern province of Ham-kyŏng on the border of Chinese and Russia, Ch‘oe was plagued by poverty for most of his life. At the age of 17, Ch‘oe crossed the border to Kando province in China where he lived an itinerant life, but later returned in 1923 and then graduated from primary education (Hong 431). Scholars attribute the naturalness of Ch‘oe’s description of itinerant life, the northern border, and poverty to his personal hardships and class background.

Ch‘oe wrote the short story “Pak-dol’s Death*” (Pak-dol ŭi jukŭm*) in 1925, and it exhibits the elements representative in New Tendency Literature. A sensational text and a story of excess from the beginning, the narrative concentrates on a mother’s grief and her son’s death. The text culminates in multiple states of excess, evoking the melodramatic trope “marked by ‘lapses’ in realism, by ‘excesses’ of spectacle and displays of primal, even infantile emotions and by narratives that seem circular and repetitive” (Williams 3). It vividly describes an intense beginning of a frantic mother begging the doctor for medicine, the son convulsing in pain releasing an excess of bodily fluids, to the tragic death and simultaneous return to the beginning: the mother wailing and beating her chest as a crowd gathers around her. This text and others similarly dealing with poverty and hunger—“ Starvation and Carnage”(*Kiawa Salyuk*,

1925), "Exodus" (*T'alch'ulki*, 1925), "Vomiting Blood" (*T'ohyŏl*, 1924)—call attention to destitute conditions through multiple descriptions of bodies in excess: sick body, dying body, mourning body. These descriptions are almost visual in description, capturing the "body 'beside itself'" (Williams 4). In understanding the connections between sensationalism and the emotive response, it is helpful to understand the text as film scholars have understood the genre of sensationalism. Film theorist Linda Williams discusses what she calls the "body genres" –porn, horror, and melodrama—and the production of physical response:

> Visually, each of the ecstatic excesses could be said to share a quality of uncontrollable convulsion or spasm—of the body 'beside itself' with sexual pleasure, fear and terror, or overpowering sadness. Aurally, excess is marked by recourse not to the coded articulations of language but to articulate cries of pleasure in porn, screams of fear in horror, sobs of anguish in melodrama. (Williams 4)

Linda Williams and her theorization of the sensations of the body and its inducement of reaction in the audience is helpful in understanding the ways representations of "bodies" both affect and are affected. Similarly, Ch'oe's text is occupied by the sick body and the mourning body, creating an excessive auditory and visual scene that compels the audience/reader's participation in the narrative. Although commonly in other works blood and tears are employed to achieve this effect, in Ch'oe's case, he shows the body's independent torture, through spasmodic release of bodily fluids:

> He vomited a sour, blue-black liquid through his nose and mouth. Each time he retched, he hit his gooseflesh and tore at his chest. Without interruption there was a (ku-reu-reu-kool) water sound from his stomach. When the water sound increased and stopped, after a grinding and creaking sound, he would have diarrea. The piece of sandbag with the pants that he wore had already become a thick gruel of feces.

A stark contrast with Romanticist works, New Tendency works' sensational realism appeals to the reader's emotive responses through affective language that appeals to all of the reader's/audience's senses, in the same way that theatre or film would. However, the gruesomeness of the descriptions, perhaps because of Ch'oe's more naturalist objectivity, is more extreme as the narrative reduces these characters to spectacles of suffering. Ch'oe's text exhibits that the center of the representation of the sensational proletarian body is the reactive relationship and resonance in the audience. Whether it is a text like Ch'oe's, which is considered more "naturalist," or other texts such as Cho Myŏng-hŭi's "To the Underground" (*Ttangsokŭro,* 1925) which is considered more "romanticist," we can thread these texts together by the representation of the proletarian body in affective state.

Cho Myŏng-hŭi, born in Ch'ungch'ŏng province, had a different background from Ch'oe in that scholars surmise that he was from an intellectual class, and that his mother was knowledgeable of Hangmun and Korean (No 190). Cho attended primary school in Korea before studying in Japan from 1919 to 1923. When he returned to Korea, he became involved in the proletarian culture movement, and during his involvement with KAPF from 1925 to 1928, he wrote a total of 12 narratives (No 199). In 1928, he was exiled to Russia and continued his writing until his assassination in 1938.

In Cho's text "To the Underground," through a subjective narrator, the reader follows an intellectual and delves into the intimate spaces of his domestic squalor and family's struggle with poverty. Gradually, Cho's text reveals an intellectual's unhappy domestic life, with intermittent interruptions of descriptive flashbacks, like his wife's

attempt at suicide. The reader is lead to believe that his family's sordid living conditions finally drives him to commit theft in a climactic, suspenseful scene that puts the reader on guard as the main character enters another's home: his knife scraping against the wall, his heart beating, the feel of the wood of the room. A sudden thump makes the reader, as well as, the narrator's heart stop. Finally, after stealing a coin, the narrator runs away and finds someone chasing him, and thrusts out his knife at the arms outstretched toward him. At this moment, however, it is revealed to be a dream, and the main character wakes up drenched in sweat to the peaceful sounds of his daughter sleeping.

Cho's work captures the way in which "realism" threatens itself, as the "uncovering" of these intimate social spaces is always accompanied by menacing excess, the making of spectacle, and "lapses" of realism. Although Cho's text does not result in murder, the sensationalism arises from the threat of this and it is accentuated through the ominous focus on the knife. Though it strives for realism, it borders on the non-real because the reader realizes what is "real" is not and is just a dream.

In other texts, the treatment of theft, murder, death, and poverty all vary; however, many texts are resolved and "relieved" through violent tropes. A crucial example is a narrative written by Chu Yo- sŏp titled "Murder." The writer Chu Yo-sŏp had a long writing career, and, in contrast to a majority of KAPF writers, was only actively involved in the New Tendency Movement in the 1920's, but in the 1930's departed from the mainstream proletarian culture movement, and started writing canonical works like "Mama and the Boarder" that scholars have identified with

humanism and a unique child narrator (Chung 188). After the Korean liberation, however, Chu quickly reverted to the mode of realism, and had a renewed interest in literary social criticism.

"Murder" (*Salin,* 1925) was written at the height of Chu's interest in naturalism and realism, in the style of New Tendency Literature. The text centers on a main female character working in a brothel, and the introduction notes that harsh conditions have taken her youth and beauty. A passing scholar from a nearby school awakens feelings of love and this one-sided love gives her the courage to kill the brothel owner who harasses her. Described as blood for blood, revenge is a seed as the main character contemplates blood as she looks at her parasitic owner: "I looked at the fat body of the grandmother that I had lived three years with. 'Ah that pig-like skin that has grown fat by sucking my blood… Oh! My blood, my blood" (Chu 38). Repeating this, while contemplating the grotesquely obese grandmother, she gets a kitchen knife and walks up the stairs to the grandmother's room. Later, she emerges "reeking of the smell of blood." Chu's gruesome descriptions of the living conditions at the brothel and bloody murder are contrasted with the character's relish and enjoyment in the clear blue sky. Described as an "awakening," the main character's physical and psychological liberation only occurs on account of the spilling of blood and sensational resolution.

New Tendency Literature, operating through visual language and the excesses of the body, brings to mind the ways in which the representation of the proletarian body produces "bodily effects" (Clough and Halley 2). The "reality" in the texts is manifested in the affective description of the body, and exhibits the unique

hybridization of naturalist sensation and the mass politics of realism. Although often times "New Tendency" texts are dismissed precisely because of this characteristic, I argue that "New Tendency" texts are interesting precisely because of this: they show the conditions of marginalization, and it is in turn felt by the reader. In the next section, I will discuss the counterpart to the "politics" in New Tendency Literature by discussing the representation of the proletarian body as a "body affected." Through theorists that understand the body as a site of overlapping networks of domination, I will discuss the significance of this generic quality in the "politics" of New Tendency Literature. Through structural inequalities, I understand embodied abject suffering as the communication of the structural inequality and class-consciousness of the poverty and sordid lives of the colonized. Through this argument, I hope to contest the depoliticization of culture under imperialism through understanding the diverse and simultaneous networks employed in New Tendency Literature and the representations of the proletarian body as a site for mass politics.

AFFECT AND THE ALTERITY OF THE COLONIAL SUBJECT

As can be seen from the sensational elements in "New Tendency" literature, one of its key features is its violent resolution: the text erupts in inward or outward affective and physical violence. This element has been the reason why many contemporary scholars and KAPF critics alike dismiss "New Tendency" texts, pointing out that it closes possibility of the Korean subject in death, rather than inspire social consciousness and revolution. This conversation about the legitimacy of New Tendency texts as a platform for revolution was also going on during the 1920's as

well. Contemporary critic and member of KAPF, Pak Yŏng-hŭi, in 1927, while examining protagonists in "New Tendency" literature in texts such as Chu's "Murder," asks, "How do we evaluate the social ideas and social phenomenon behind the social causes and main character's actions?" (Pak 77) In response, he argues that, despite the text's failings, the main character's actions were at least a result of social inequality, and were antisocial; most importantly, it caused "ripples," and social sensations (Pak 77).

This statement captures the meeting point between mass politics and literature in the "sensations" of the text. This concentration on the mobilization of "sensation" in the propagation of social consciousness further brings to mind the ways in which the organization of social processes and sensation is depicted in the tests. Although many times, because of the focus on the body, scholarship has not understood these texts to be "political" in their descriptions of power structures. I argue however that this is a limited understanding of "New Tendency" works and that the generic "aberrations"—violent murders, gruesome death, and "antisocial" actions—embody the colonization of consciousness of the Korean subject.

I draw upon theorists that discuss the penetration of power upon those marginalized bodies to discuss what I call the "colonization of consciousness" illustrated in the text. Specifically, foundationally I recall how Foucault writes in *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of a Prison* about the ways in which power "imprints" on the "psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness" of the "bodies of the condemned." Although in this understanding, there remains not much room for the subjected bodies, postcolonial scholars such as Franz Fanon, while examining the

alterity of the subject within colonialism and decolonization, has argued for the possibilities within even the state of powerlessness. These works have led me to reinterpret the resolution of "New Tendency" works as not a result of the main character's "antisocial" behavior, but alternatively a portrayal of the embodied experience of marginalization, of the abject subject expelled from the social.

Julia Kristeva's notion of "abjection" is particularly resonant with the oppressive state reflected in the texts. Because of the simultaneously depoliticized/politicized space of culture under colonialism, the oppression of the colonizer is coded through bodily affect. The Korean subject represented in these texts lack social, political expression, and even the language to give voice to their suffering; thus, the characters are reduced to violent outbursts, self-destruction, or bodily anguish. The colonized occupy a space where normative symbolic meaning and order is lost, (Oliver 88) and accurately represents the Korean colonial subject's illegitimacy within colonial hegemonic structures, and the realities of his abject, social non-existence.

In Chu Yo-sŏp's "Dog Food," (*Kaebap*, 1927) the story centers on a housekeeper for a rich household who lives with her three-year-old daughter, Tan-sŏng. The rich owner receives a Western hunting dog[29] from a Japanese hunter, and the housekeeper is in charge of giving the dog food everyday. The housekeeper initially gives the dog a meal of eggs and milk, but the dog refuses the food and the owner tells her to make the dog, white rice in beef soup. The housekeeper is shocked

[29] Dogs appear frequently in New Tendency texts, a representative text is Pak Yŏng hui's "Hunting Dog," (1925) which is a suspenseful story of a poor man who steals money from a rich man, and is threatened by the hunting dog that guards the house.

at the owner's request to feed precious, expensive and scarce white rice and beef to a dog, but keeps silent and does what the owner asks. One day, the dog still unaccustomed to the food, leaves some of the food in his bowl, and the rest is given to Tan-sŏng:

> How tasty the rice must have been, for her to eat it all! Tan-sŏng, whose overworked mother could not produce milk, grew up without milk from her mother's breasts, and this tasty and good bowl of white rice and beef broth restored the years that she had gone without nutrition. (Chu 179)

In the above excerpt, the extremity of poverty and hunger that is described is coded through the alienation of the daughter from her mother. The nutrition denied from her mother's breasts is replaced by leftover dog food, and the daughter becomes obsessed with the dog bowl, stealing whatever she can and greedily watching the dog eat. The class difference between the housekeeper and the rich owner, the allusion to the Japanese friend who gifts the dog, and the mother's laborer husband who goes to Japan for work, foregrounds the structural oppressions that cause the poverty of the mother and daughter.

Though poverty is the central focus of the text, the resulting alienation between the mother and child because of hunger captures the psychological abjection of the Korean subject. In Kristeva's terms, the Korean subject, represented by Tansŏng and her mother, occupy a space where normative symbolic orders have dissolved. The mother, in turn, does not recognize her own daughter,

> Tears falling, her face that looked like a violet shriveled from the lack of sun, her hands and feet but bones, her small frame covered in unlined clothes even though fall was here-'Is that thing mine?' (Chu 179)

The mother, upon looking at her gaunt and haggard daughter, wonders how the daughter could be hers. The unrecognizability of mother and daughter, and the confusion of human and animal describe abjection as the breakdown of these social distinctions, and the loss of meaning in the body of the colonized.

Later, when the daughter is dying of starvation and asks for a bowl of rice and beef soup, the mother, stricken with grief and hopelessness, fights the dog for the bowl of food. Culminating in violent struggle, where the mother is unrecognizable from the dog, the mother at last emerges blood-soaked, but goes insane. The rich owner's refusal to give the food that he would give to a dog to the starving daughter highlights the structures of colonialism, class, and oppression that render the Korean subject non-human. The mother's inability to enact change and her inward breakdown capture the relegation of the Korean subject to a space of death and illegibility, both physically and mentally.

This is also mirrored in previously mentioned Ch'oe's "Pak-dol's death," in the bodily anguish of the dying son. Like Fanon's work on the colonial subjugation of Algerians under France, the colonizer's affective oppression leaves a physical mark on those who are colonized:

> In the colonial world, the emotional sensitivity of the native is kept on the surface of his skin like an open sore which flinches from the caustic agent; and the psyche shrinks back, obliterates itself and finds outlet in muscular demonstrations which have caused certain very wise men to say that native is a hysterical type. (Fanon 57)

The bodily anguish of the son in "Pak-dol's Death," the "hysteria" of the mother in "Dog Food" are ignored by the police, the rich owner, and the doctor in the story.

Interpreted as "uncivilized," "insane," and "poor," the mother and son in the texts are rendered illegible by those in power.

In Ch'oe Sŏ-hae's text "Starvation and Slaughter,"(*Kiawa salyuk*, 1925) the main character Kyŏng-su works odd jobs to make money, and lives with his mother, wife, and daughter. His wife, however, falls ill and he goes to get medicine to treat her illness. He doesn't have money, and even though he goes persistently four times to the doctor, he is refused. The main character, upon returning from the doctor's, hears that his mother, while trying to sell her hair for money, has been bitten fatally by a dog. When he hears this, a "devil holding a knife appears before his eyes," and while screaming, "Ahhhhh Destroy! Destroy everything!" he kills his wife, mother and daughter, and runs out into the street stabbing anyone, anything in sight.

In both Ch'oe's text "Starvation and Slaughter" and Chu's "Dog Food," the police are called at the end to literally expel the main characters, and those around them describe the main characters as "insane:"

> The owner quickly went into his room and called the police. It was a phone call asking for the arrest of one crazy grandmother wearing a jacket soaked with red blood, and heading toward the main road, screaming at the top of her lungs. (Chu 187)

As Kelly Oliver develops in her understanding of double alienation, those colonized under oppression are not only incapable of making meaning of their suffering and their own body, but the "affects of oppression" are coded as "individual pathologies" (Oliver 89). The protagonists in the text are illegible in a social realm that is based on values: the doctor who will not treat patients without money, the owner who values the Western dog over the dying daughter, the police who label the grandmother/man

criminal, etc. The body of the colonized is reduced to a commodity without value, and the main characters, in the end, are expelled as singular anomalies, individually marked as "insane."

As can be seen by these examples, "New Tendency" texts, without directly criticizing the more obvious oppressive structures of colonization, capture rather the intimate all-encompassing violence of oppression through the transference of affect into the physical body of the colonized. As Fanon writes, the oppression is "deposited in the very bones" (Fanon 52) of the colonized, and even the "breathing of the colonized is an 'occupied' breathing" (Oliver 49).

> No tears fell. No cries would come out. My chest felt stifled and my anger rose. I want to shut them up and beat them and run like crazy. I can't think and can't breathe. I smell a fishy pungent smell from my throat. My breathing is strained. My chest feels like it is going to collapse. I retch while hitting my chest. Someone hit my back. I retch again and throw up. It was a pile of red blood. (Ch'oe 118)

As is representative in the above text, New Tendency fiction documents the transfer of affective oppression into the colonized subject, and the psychological and physical immobility, suffocation of the colonized subject. By doing so, "New Tendency" literature recuperates the otherwise limited descriptions of subjecthood that exclude those who are colonized, and offers alternate means of translating experience through vivid depictions of bodily affect: "it is this communication and questioning based on the body, touch, and affect that will be human" (Oliver 68).

Works on socialist realism are often inquiring after and searching for the revolutionary seed in the literature that sets it apart from other modes of literary thought. And, more so, because of its ideological origins, the evaluation of the text is

often done so through an examination of the author's social consciousness, predetermining the text against a political standard. Through the exploration of these texts, I hope to discuss the possibilities within these texts apart from the political parameters that delimit socialist realism as a cultural rendering of its political counterpart. As a collective organizing node, the body is a site of collective organization, affect, and hegemonic power. The bodily affect, or as Butler describes the "body beside itself" understands and formulates a different understanding of the reader's relationship with the text and fundamental life, as a shared experience of excess sensation, negative affect, taking the form of pain, grief, etc. As Judith Butler elaborates,

> Many people think that grief is privatizing, that it returned us to a solitary situation and is, in that sense, depoliticizing. But I think it furnishes a sense of political community of a complex order, and it does this first of all by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility. If my fate is not originally or finally separable from yours, then the "we" is traversed by a relationality that we cannot easily argue against; or, rather, we can argue against it, but we would be denying something fundamental about the social conditions of our very formation." (Butler 23)

In discussing the "revolutionary" in proletarian literature, I offer the quote from Butler's text in dialogue with the textual examples to understand the communities that are founded on negative affect involving grief and the destruction of the body. Although portrayed as expelled from the social, the literary space and representation of abject bodies are the negotiations of these "boundaries" that represent the possibility for cultural rearticulation (Butler 8).

CONCLUSION

This chapter is a response to past scholarship on proletarian literature that concentrated on socialist realism's historical materialism, and is an effort to illustrate "New Tendency" literature as an important turning point in Korean literature, mass culture, and realism. For one, because realism plays such a key role in contemporary film and literary studies, I believe discussion of "New Tendency" literature informs and illuminates any scholarship concerned with origins of the realism movement in Korea. Attempting to invoke the spaces between methodologies centered around the epistemological structures of nationalism and Marxism, my analysis of literature uses theorizations of body and affect to examine "collective" formations that are lost or do not fit into these two epistemological formations.

As I have exhibited, I understand realism to be an originally ambiguous concept, which contains internal contradictions between idea and form that became especially apparent in the Korean context. On a whole, however, the sensational aspect to these stories does not make it exclusive of realism, but reveals its internal contradictions, and, especially in the hybrid form of Korean realism, the frequent "lapses" of reality. Through the influence of naturalism, I emphasize the importance of proletarian writers' adoption of certain aspects of naturalism, specifically the connection to print culture genres and the location of sensation in the excavation of the "underbelly" of society. These generic changes are of course being informed by but also departing from the romanticist emphasis on the emotive and transfer of affect to the reader. I also stress the correspondence to readership, rise in print capitalism and emergence of visual media.

In the last section, I discuss the fundamental meeting point of the "politics" of New Tendency Literature in the proletarian body through its criticism of social processes. This criticism, I argue, is constituted by the representation of the alterity within the colonized subject. Implicating the sensational transfer of affect, I examine New Tendency literature through the works depiction of the proletarian body as "affected." Simultaneously a critique of social structures dependent on class difference, I understand New Tendency works as a rich and evocative space through which proletarian writers express alternative understandings of the colonized subject that are otherwise occluded.

It not only highlights the historical perimeters of colonial censorship that hemmed in literary writers, but opens up a space that restores communicative agency to the colonial subject by understanding the psychological conditions of oppression. In this section, I want to recuperate alternative reading of the texts that highlight the qualities of the generic "aberrations" and affective violence in New Tendency literature. The significance of this kind of reading is to highlight the ways in which our scholarship is hemmed by corresponding and derivative literary analyses that are located within structures of what is considered "political" versus "cultural." Through this reading, I would also like to capture what I consider the "excesses" of New Tendency texts that are so evocative and fundamental to the "social," but in many ways slip away from understanding.

III. THE PROLETARIAN BODY IN VISUAL CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I addressed the proletarian body as a representation of the meeting point between networks of mass politics and literature. As New Tendency literature has developed colonial subjectivity through the proletarian body, I argued that the figure of the proletariat becomes the site for mass politics and the trope for the marginalization of the lower classes. The representation of the proletariat as "political" not only refers to its class-designations, but also involves the affective quality to these renderings, the elusive but poignant suffering communicated through the affected body. In this chapter, I expand the cultural scope to emerging media of mass culture—political cartoons, film novels and film—to understand how the representation of the proletarian body can be understood within the circulation of Korean "mass culture." This chapter investigates the central role that Marxism played in the formation and proliferation of a figure to represent the lower classes.

I do want to emphasize that this chapter is largely dependent on the extensive archival research done by scholars of colonial cinema, theatre, and literature; much of these primary resources have been unfortunately lost and destroyed during the colonial period, and archivists and historians have painstakingly pieced together the remnants. However, in this chapter, I would also like to move away from the formalist study of Korean mass culture during the colonial period that produced wonderfully comprehensive works on the development of national cinema, the origins of theatre and film genres, and rising readership according to genre, print capitalism, etc.

Instead, I will concentrate on the fluidity between genres, nationalisms, and political divides.

In many ways, the study of Korean colonial mass culture has often times involved a looking "backward" that corresponds with the idea that the Korean colonial period was an incomplete modernization process.[30] that often failed to reach the level of mass viewership/ readership. As a result, our understanding of mass culture focuses on the level of mass viewership/readership and the hindered modernization and growth restricted by Japanese colonial government. In area studies scholarship there has been significant criticism of this type of historicism, and I ask that we also extend this critical turn to the study of literary genre.

An area to which we can apply this critical lens is in the case of hybrid genres. Scholarship on colonial cinema, for example, highlights 1920's and 1930's cinema's lack of refinement because of "lapses" of non-modern aspects like a narrator (*pyŏnsa*), the screenplay's similarities to literature as a negative or a lack of development, and the underdeveloped plot as a result of censorship policy. Structural aspects like Japanese censorship of course have evidently shaped the course of cinema, but, for the purposes of this study, I want to redirect attention to the ways in which the divisions between genres, mediums, nationalist vs. non-nationalist works often times blur the ways in which Korean mass culture was constituted by the rich resonances among and between these cultural sites. Specifically, I would like to call attention to the way in

[30] As postcolonial theorists have introduced the idea of comparative modernities to challenge the teleology of modernization theory, I extend this idea to hybrid genres that involve both the importation of Western media and genres and indigenous forms of cultural practice. For more on postcolonial studies and modernization theory in the context of Korean studies, refer to Watson, J.

which these studies have overlooked the negotiations and slippages between these divisions that we have constructed.

In the first section of this chapter, I will describe the nature of mass culture and visual culture during the 1920s and 1930s in order to set the material context for the next two sections. Using postcolonial theorists' application of Mikhail Bahktin'snotion of "dialogism" and Julia Kristeva's term "intertextuality,"[31] I will illustrate how hybridity in generic form and mediums--kino-drama, cinema-novels, narrated cinema—exemplified visual culture during this time. In this chapter, I seek to re-conceptualize Korean mass culture during the 1920s and 1930s as a network that involved the circulation, reproduction, and instability of visual and narrative tropes.

In the second section, I will focus on one aspect of visual culture--political cartoons as an illustration of mass culture's investments in the socialist movement. I examine how readers participated and imagined their association with "a shared community" through the language of Marxist-Leninism. As a comparison point, I include bourgeois cartoons that concentrate on the cityscape and the sartorial detail of the "modern girls" and "modern boys." In contrast, the cartoons focusing on the proletarian body instead embody criticisms of international, class, and social inequality by concentrating on the class struggle of the agrarian class and the poor. These cartoons enact contestations of local problems, highlighting land ownership and poverty as a shared problem. The proliferation of these images assisted the reimagining of community (Anderson 6) and reconfigured the landscape of print

[31] Bakhtin developed the term "dialogic" in a series of essays titled "The Dialogic Imagination" in which describes discourse as a multitude of linguistic and cultural differences. Kristeva is said to have developed the term "intertextuality" from this idea, which establishes the idea that a text is always simultaneously another. Refer to Bakhtin, M and Kristeva, J.

culture for those marginalized by multiple, overlapping social structures: for example, changing taxation policies, changes to land ownership, imperial policy, capitalism, foreign influences, etc.

In the third section, I focus on the "intertextual" representation of the proletarian body. This intertextual representation enlightens the similarities between nationalist film and a KAPF film and challenges the monologic category of the nationalist film (*Minjok Yonghwa)* that began with the popularity of the film *Arirang*. *Arirang* is a film that has become a central cultural paradigm for Korean nationalism through contemporary recreations, nationalist scholarship, and recounts. I understand this movie, despite its nationalist readings, as in dialogue with the representation of the proletarian body as abject, or in-between. During the colonial period, the film, which has been lost since 1950, was rewritten as a cinema-novel and serialized, recounted in short blurbs, and memorialized through the folk song, "Arirang."

The intertextual nature of the film represents the complicated split between the "othering" and the occupation of "abject space" by the main character, and further spectator identification with the "madness" of the main character. I draw a comparison to imperial film, Seo Gwang-jae's *Military Train,* which instead maps the subject on the "machine"[32] or the rational body. This is shown through the sentimental overlapping images of the main character's body onto the military train, a symbol of progress, order, and rationality.

[32] In this instance, the "machine" is the train, but we can extend this formulation--militarization of and commodification of--to representations of colonial subjecthood.

In sum, through this chapter, I argue that through the circulation of the representation of the proletarian body at different "intertextual" sites, we can understand the ways in which resistance to socio-economic structures is similarly rendered through the depictions and embodiment of the *abject* subject. Whether it is the abject proletarian body in political cartoons about tenant, landlord conflicts or the "nationalist" film *Arirang,* we can draw connections around the manner in which bodies occupy the space outside of the modern "rational subject." On the one hand, this shows how colonial nationalism is mapped onto the abject space and speaks from the "interstices" and not the center. Alternatively, it also suggests bourgeois literary cultural nationalism's close approximation with the language of the colonizers, which becomes less distinguishable and easily appropriated with imperial rhetoric. For example, *Arirang*'s investment in madness suggests a cultural legacy of Marxist theory, as a language for the masses that invoked a network of tropes, which expressed subjectivity through the abject colonial body.

UNDERSTANDING VISUAL MASS CULTURE DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD THROUGH "HYBRIDITY"

Although before the past decade "mass culture" has usually connoted post-liberation films, literature, etc., in recent years there has been considerable work in recent years done by scholars who have understood the 1920s and 1930s as a crucial period of "mass culture." Korean historian, Ch'ŏn Jŏng-hwan, has examined evolving print culture, and pinpoints this period as the beginnings of print mass culture, as magazines, newspapers, and literature became a visually-oriented, circulated medium.

Film scholar, Kang Hyŏn-ju, discusses how literature was a platform for mass culture, in the form of gramophones, film-novels, audiobooks, and narrated movies. Cultural historian, Yu Sŏnyŏng, discusses the classed connotations of "mass culture" and points out that before the mid-1920s, and from the late 1800's, culture—film, theatre, popular songs, dance--was only accessible to the ruling class: nobles, landlords, merchants etc. It was only with the widespread education of youth, and the creation of cities as "cultural cities" with cultural associations, educational associations, etc. that there emerged the intellectual "cultural type" (94). This type--Yu uses the example of the journalist—not only had the cultural landscape to engage with, but could write about their cultural experiences in essays, articles, literature, and other mediums of culture.[33] From this class perspective, Yu defines "mass culture" as the reorganization and incorporation of new culture by this "cultural type" amidst modernization and civilization (95).

Although these scholars often concentrate on the accompanying modernization and technological advances that contributed to the development of mass culture, scholars such as Kim Mi-Hyŏn take note of uncritical designations of "mass culture" as "modern," when forms such as sinp'a theater were in fact crucial to mass culture during the 1920's and 1930's. The term "sinp'a," originating in Japan, refers to the melodramatic play that was popular during the late 19th and early 20th century, and generally involved a main protagonist who was often helpless, and swept away with external factors that governs his/her behavior. Scholars such as Kang Young-hee discuss this theme with the term "antinomy," arguing that the protagonist's

[33] Ch'ŏn Jŏng-hwan also discusses mass culture and youth culture, refer to Ch'ŏn J.

helplessness was evocative of the anxieties that arise from the clash between modern and pre-modernity. For a time, sinp‘a theater, which literally means “new school,” represented a new understanding of theater genre that was directed toward the masses.

Both in form and content, sinp‘a, called the “flood of tears” involved “the binary opposition of good and evil, the victimization of innocent heroines, unlikely coincidences and strong emotionalism” (E. Cho 24). Although sinp‘a was the springboard for the form and content of other mediums, as well as, plot devices of nationalist and leftist films, scholars such as Kim and Cho point out how the designation of sinp‘a as low culture occurred after the importation of Western film and foreign culture (*Oehwa*). Nevertheless, an important designation of what is popular (*T‘ongsok*) is the “unrealistic” portrayal of “triangular relationships” that is characteristic of sinp‘a (M. Kim 257). Starting from the 1920s, rather than as a genre, critics used the word “sinp‘a-like”(*sinp‘a jŏk*) for other narratives, films, mediums of mass culture that used the themes of “triangular relations and intense emotional upheavals.” This revisional work on sinp‘a has revealed how, even during the 1920s and 1930s, the classed connotations of “mass culture” were evolving, and cultural tendency can be understood as a fluid concepts that was circulated among cultural forms.

Although this is only a portion of scholarship that has redefined the emerging culture during the colonial period as “mass” oriented, this scholarship has emerged in response to previous scholarship in the 1990’s, which often retained generic boundaries between mediums and genre, but set the stage for studies of the 1920’s and 1930’s. One strand of this scholarship aligns “mass culture” with the emergence of

"mass politics" that coincides with the organization of culture under the proletarian culture movement. Scholars such as Kim Yŏng-min, Kim Chae-yong, Kim Chul, Kwŏn Yŏng-min have discussed this intersection within their comprehensive studies of this period, proletarian literature, and KAPF.

This strand of scholarship concentrates on the discussion of mass representation among KAPF members. This dialogic trend was represented in an ideological split between founding members, Pak Yŏng-hŭi and Kim Kijin. A central voice during the 1930's and early 1930's, Pak Yŏng-hŭi's 1927 piece "Recent thoughts on Literature" *(Ch'oekŭn Munyesogam)* marks the beginning of focus on producing mass-centered (*daejung munhak*) proletarian literature. In this piece, Pak emphasizes the foundational importance of literature to the socialist movement by stating that it would be impossible to acquire the masses without literature. These initial thoughts were then accompanied with discussions both concerning form and content of proletarian literature: the emphasis on the former evident in Kim Kijin's definitions of mass-centered literature written in April of 1929 by considering the comparison of popular novels (*t'ongsok sosŏl*) and storybooks, such as *Ch'un-hyangjŏn, Kuunmong, Ongnumong* (K. Kim 512).

The discussions of mass-centered literature emerged amidst changes in the political foundations of the KAPF group. For one, in terms of proletarian literature as a literary genre, there was a split between central critics Pak Yŏng-hŭi and Kim Ki-jin, as Pak enforced a break with "futile, full of despair, and individualistic" (1) New Tendency literature, while Kim Ki-jin was interested more in sustaining the literary foundations of the proletarian literature movement. As a result, their conceptions of

"mass" differed in terms of prioritizing politics over aesthetics. Pak's break with New Tendency literature represented a shift from the conception of proletarian literature as primarily a literary genre and art to foundations in political organization.

The study of mass culture in the former sense, and the latter sense that focuses on mass politics represents what Raymond Williams described as two strands of the modern: "first, the idea of culture, offering a different sense of human growth and development, and, second, the idea of socialism, offering a social and historical criticism of and alternative to 'civilization' and 'civil society' as fixed and achieved conditions" (14). With this framework in mind, we can understand mass culture as existing in not the division between these two developments, but rather the in the "extensions, transfers, and overlaps between all these shaping modern concepts" (14).

With this in mind, I would like to offer the critical understanding of texts as always "intertextual." This concept highlights our dependence on definitive categories of genre and medium, which prohibits the discussion of hybrid mediums like kino-drama, cinema-novel, narrated film, and reader- produced socialist cartoons. In turn, I question the presumed value judgment of "non-modern" applied to "incompatible" or "contradictory" forms, and hope to understand the ways in which these hybrid forms are manifestations of alternative sites through which to understand material and ideological conditions of 1920s and 1930s colonial Korea. By understanding hybridity as a productive site, this section will focus on reconceiving mass culture as a *network* that involved the *circulation, reproduction,* and *instability* of visual and narrative tropes.

One important aspect of the development of visual culture during the 1920's and 1930's is the censorship by the Japanese colonial government that pervaded cultural production during this period. Although it is evident that censorship represented a ceiling on the potentials of film, literature and visual culture; for this project, I argue that is more useful to understand censorship as an infusive presence that constituted the form and content of mass culture. However, this does not mean that it created an absence at all times during the 1920's and 1930's, but rather was a dialogical relationship between the colonial government and the culture manifested.[34]

Censorship can be understood as a changing structure that varied according to political lines and different moments of colonial policy, relating to world events and Japanese imperialism. Apart from the discursive cultural influence of imported films, domestic film was produced both by Korean filmmakers and the Japanese colonial government. In terms of film, especially, perhaps because the Japanese government was aware of its "potentials" as a mass medium, film was regulated from the 1920's. Even from 1920, the Japanese Government-General was well aware of the potentials of film as an educating medium for the masses, and a motion picture department was established in April of 1920 (M. Kim 71).

The colonial government understood film to be an important mode of mass influence, evident by the parallel relationship between colonial government's filmmaking and film censorship. However, until 1923, there was no systematic regulation of film production, but rather viewing was regulated through the policing of venues and theaters. This changed however by 1926, when the colonial government

[34] For more on Japanese imperial policies on censorship, refer to Yecies, B.

started censoring film content. Enacted through the Motion Picture and Film Regulation, the terms stipulated vague terms for film censorship; of most encompassing was the third stipulation that stated that the "film can only be released when the censorship bureau acknowledged that the film cannot damage public security, morals and health" (M. Kim 75).

The severity of censorship also progressed relationally with Japanese endeavors abroad. Lee Young-il identifies the Shanghai Incident and the Manchurian Incident in 1931 as a turning point from tragic nationalist films of the 1920's to nationalist-based enlightenment films of the 1930's (Y. Lee 70). Especially from 1937, under changing colonial policy espousing "Japan and Korea as one" (*Naissen ittai ron),* Japanese colonial government increased film production over the years leading up to the Pacific war, and likewise increased censorship of Korean films. Censorship culminated in 1940 with the Chosŏn Film Decree that required all theaters to show the pledge of allegiance and the flag of the rising sun before screenings, and the increased showing of Japanese propaganda films, like *Military Train, Dawn of the Mountain Village, Light of the Sea,* and *Pure Heart*. And finally from 1943 to 1945, no films were made outside of the Chosŏn Film Co. Ltd, which was directed by the Office of the Governor-general and Chosŏn Military Headquarters (Y. Lee 76). The utilization of film structurally from both top and bottom reveals how deliberate mobilization of mass culture can use similar medium and genre but serve different purposes.

For the proletarian culture movement, however, in terms of KAPF (*Korean Artist Proletarian Federation)* films, censorship represented an insurmountable

obstacle. Even though focus on the proletariat was considered "trendy" during this time, KAPF ventures into film were never quite as successful as other Korean films. There were only six films produced in total under the Chosŏn Film Art Association, of which *The Wandering* [Yurang] in 1928 by director Kim Yu-yong and *Don't Be Defeated Sun-I* [Jiji mara Sun-I] by Kang-ho in 1928 are most discussed. Under a change in production companies, under Jinju Namhyang Kino, the production of *The Iron Road* [Amro] by Kang-ho and under Seoul Kinema, *The Evening Street* [Honga] in 1929 by Kim Yu-yong, *The Underground Village* [Jihach'on] by Kang-ho, and *Fire Wheel* [Hwa-ryun] by Kim Yu-yong in 1931. Most of these films were directed by Kim Yu-yong, and faced both criticism for shoddy technique and, because of heavy censorship, were often shown half cut. In addition, and this applies to most colonial films, the actual film reels were destroyed, and what remains are the screenplays and few stills of the films.

Within these structures, however, mass culture and the emerging visual culture affected the landscape of Korean culture through a multitude of influences. For one, it represented the first contact with the "West," in the form of capitalism and circulation of foreign goods. In fact, the first film shorts in the early 1900's were mostly advertisement-based and fostered the sales of cigarettes and the promotion of electric street cars, etc. (Y. Lee 19), later longer filmic episodes were imported from the West or Japan. Even from this early period, we can see that the development of visual culture worked in tandem with print culture, capitalism, urban, and industrial development. Although this chapter does not directly address the relationship between consumerism and film, the mobilization of desire in visual mediums is essential to the

topic of mass culture; even fashion trends were influenced by the mobilization of desire between the audience or subject's gaze and the film images. The following quote by Kim Jin-song in 1937 shows how consumption and western fashion trends were linked to the proliferation of films:

> "Because of the [film's] influence over the masses, road glasses, Hitler's mustache [Charlie Chaplin mustache], straw hat, Kelly Cooper's overcoat, Lowell Sherman's hat, Robert Montgomery's necktie, William Powell's pants, Clive Brook's shoes were implanted in people's memories." (H. Kang 37)[35]

As can be seen by Kim's observations, Kim identifies film's overreaching influence through the circulation of these objects. This interesting quote shows both how consumption and fashion is premised on identification between the subject and the image in spectatorship, and commodification of Western "star power." As Kang Hyŏn-chu points out in his study, Hollywood and imported films provided the vocabulary for understanding urbanization and commodification of Korean mass culture in literary works.

Visual culture, however was not just an "importation" process but involved the simultaneous developments in cinema, theatre and literature, as a network of hybrid mediums—kino-drama, cinema-novels, narrated cinema--that was constituted by the circulation of genre and visual, literary tropes. Visual culture during this experimental period that involved both the development of proto-melodrama, originated in kino-drama, which was popular from 1910's to the early 1920's, in which short films were used during portions of the play, as a backdrop or short scene. As scholars like Lee

[35] Lowell Sherman, William Powell, Robert Montgomery, and Kelly Oliver were all American actors and actresses during the early 20th century. Clive Brooks was a British actor, but also worked in Hollywood as well.

Soon-jin have pointed out, the medium of "sinp'a" theater was a template and venue during the beginnings of colonial film, and fused the film medium with the play venue. Though the majority of films until the 1920s were imported, sinp'a theatre was the main avenue through which colonial Korean films were screened until the emergence of sound films in 1935. From a Korean film perspective, this not only shows the integration of theatre with Korean film from its very origins, but scholars attribute the development of full-scale domestic film production to its use in this hybridized form of popular sinp'a theatre (M. Kim).

Apart from sinp'a theatre and kino-drama, cinema was highly influenced by literature as well. In the next section, I discuss content through the circulation of proletarian literary tropes, but in terms of medium as well, screenplays were in close association with film-novels, and were also in close association with the traditions of theatre. Screenplays were often turned into film-novels, and serialized in newspapers for those who could not attend the film; in the next section, I will discuss *Arirang* and *The Wandering's* film-novels. Even in more developed forms, films were also a hybrid form, and were often accompanied by music, an orchestra, and a narrator (*pyŏnsa*) (H. Kang 91). Even after the emergence of sound films in 1937, an integral part of the Korean film experience was the orchestra and narrator. This critical function of the narrator was also incorporated in film-novels and marked with a (T). Not only did the function of the narrator represent a key function of the film that translated easily into literary translations of the omniscient third person, but also showed the fluidity in which screenplays, film were translated into literature. From 1926 to 1939, there were around 24 film-novels published in literary journals,

newspapers or other literary mediums. As Kang notes, as much as film was a development from literature, accompanying film-novels made film "vocabulary" accessible, and assisted the success of the cinematic form (H. Kang 85).

High, low designations on different aspects of mass culture are reflective of intellectuals, proletarian literary critics preoccupation with what they viewed as oppositional relationships among understandings of "popular," "mass-oriented" and "high-culture." This issue was also at the forefront of the discussion within the proletarian culture movement. Marxist theory was imported through the intellectual and majority bourgeois class, and anxieties were centered on the idea that popular and interesting mass literature was "low-culture." In 1929, Kim Ki-jin in "A Discussion of Mass Literature" argues that in their struggle to create "interesting" literature that appeals to the masses, there is a loss of refinement" (516). This reveals that understandings of mass culture, premised by Marxist but primarily bourgeois sensibilities, inflected understandings of mass culture as a compromise between their own artistic sensibilities and mass readership. Thus, the measure for "refined" realism, as Pak Yong-hui discusses in 1927 (Pak 76) becomes whether the work has enough political basis and accurate description of social structures. This provides the premise for considerations of national cinema like *Arirang* to be labeled high culture and "embodying the authentic nationality" (E. Cho 31). Despite the class designations between shinpa and melodrama, the undeniable influence of shinpa theatre set the stage for the development of melodrama in Korea. Even in post-war film, Korean melodrama involves similar utilization of sensation and affect in its heightened

description of "dramatic and sudden reversals" (Abelmann and Mchugh 2) within overlapping gendered, economic, political, and social networks.

Although by no means comprehensive of this period, through these examples I hope to set the stage for understanding the hybrid forms that are central to visual and mass culture during colonial Korea in a productive way. Through the concept of the "intertextual" nature of colonial texts, I hope to understand the multiple political, intellectual, historical, class networks that constitute mass culture during this time. In turn, I hope to address the ways in which the proletarian body is circulated within these networks of mass culture.

THE MODERN SPACE OF THE FLÂNEUR AND THE PEASANT IN VISUAL EPISODES

A key example of the widespread proliferation of proletarian literary tropes is the case of socialist cartoons. Although scholarship has differentiated the socialist movement from the proletarian literary movement, journalists represent a crucial cross section of the population that were not only involved with mass literary culture but with the socialist movement, as a high percentage were members of the Communist party (S. Lee 82). By understanding their similar depictions of the tragic proletarian body and excess representations of social conditions, we can understand how visual tropes were part of a network of images, symbols and narratives that formed a "collective" around the depiction of the mass proletariat as abject. Through these examples, I hope to draw linkages between narrative tropes and visual symbols, by understanding sensational-realism as a fluid term that suggests the contextual

genealogy of the modern literary genre through the transnational circulation of narrative trends and influences. While I also note the unstableness of these genre distinctions, as are shown by their unique application of and transference of motifs in this context, I point out the central circulation of the representation of the proletarian body as an embodiment of socioeconomic marginalization.

When one considers political cartoons with socialist content, Russian and Chinese socialist realist cartoons,[36] which involve idealistic representations of the laborer elevating the body as national or socialist allegory, come to mind. In comparison, Korean cartoons or "visual episodes" with socialist content operate as not idealism but as sensationally rendered realistic snapshots of suffering through the physical marginalization of the proletarian figure. Not only does this echo interesting connections between literary sensational genres and visual culture, but suggests the interesting method of "parody" in print illustrations, in regards to class and colonial social structures. Operating in both difference and repetition, socialist cartoons or those suspected as such work within a system of tropes that are copied, circulated, and recognized within this period through similar renderings of the proletariat/farmer/laboring body. In contrast, many of the bourgeois cartoons,[37] reflecting and poking fun at high culture of daily life, function similarly to satirical

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[36] Referring to common perceptions of socialist realist art that correspond with scholars such as Andrei Sinyavski (pseudonym Abram Tertz) in "What is Socialist Realism" who discusses the central romanticism of the revolutionary hero in socialist realist art, or art during 1960s in China, rallying support for Communist Party. I am referring of course to public perception of socialist realism, and believe that there are many comparisons that can be made between, for example, Chinese woodcuts during the 1930s and 1940s and Korean proletarian art.

[37] By "bourgeois cartoons," I mean specifically the oppositional configuration between proletarian and bourgeois culture as defined by proletarian literary critics, mainly Kim Ki-jin . Bourgeois cartoons refer to the subject matter as being focused on leisure and entertainment, while proletarian subject matter focuses on issues of the working classes.

cartoons we are familiar with in the present, and operate in the realm of mimicry and romantic depictions of city spaces.

In Sin's book on the images of the modern girl and modern boy that circulated during the 1920s and 1930s, he emphasizes the spacial changes of Kyŏngsŏng that provided the beginnings of modern mass entertainment. Cafés, parks, paths by the Han River were places where the "lower" class, "higher" class, modern girls and modern boys congregated. Sin explains that café culture in the 1920's and the creation of parks like Ch'angkyŏngwŏn and Namsan Park were places that the modern girl and boy could go and loiter all day (Sin 47). Serial cartoons like the "Spring" series printed in the *ChosonIlbo* during the late 1920's below take an interesting "flaneur"[38] type role, gazing on and describing the romantic intrigue of the couple in the park from the point of view of a detached narrator (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

[38] I am using Baudelaire's understanding of the term "flâneur." See Charles Baudelaire and Jonathan Mayne, The Painter of Modern Life, and Other Essays, Phaidon Paperback (London, New York,: Phaidon, 1970).

Figure 1: Spring 1. Source: Sin, Myŏng-jik. Modern Boy, Strolling Kyŏngsŏng: Seeing the Face of the Modern through Cartoon Sketches [Modŏn ppoi, Kyŏngsŏng ŭl kŏnilda : manmun manhwa ro ponŭn kŭndae ŭi ŏlgul], Hyŏnsil Munhwa Yŏn'gu (Seoul: 2003).

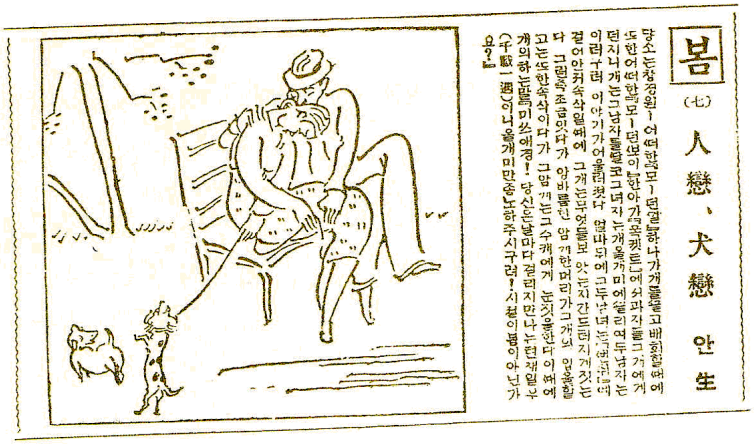

Figure 2: Spring 2. Source: Sin, Myŏng-jik. Modern Boy, Strolling Kyŏngsŏng: Seeing the Face of the Modern through Cartoon Sketches [Modŏn ppoi, Kyŏngsŏng ŭl kŏnilda : manmun manhwa ro ponŭn kŭndae ŭi ŏlgul], Hyŏnsil Munhwa Yŏn'gu (Seoul: 2003).

Sin explains that the development of parks served the dual purpose of beautifying the city and simultaneously glorifying the emperor (Sin 47). The cherry blossom viewing in April and the building of the zoo in Changkyŏngwŏn Park especially became a celebration of the "purity of the Japanese emperor". I would like to add to, however, that like the "flaneur" type role of the "Spring" episodes that push the images to border on "parody," the images were "unreliable" celebrations of the modern spaces.

An example of this are the following three images (Figure 3) printed in *ChosŏnIlbo* in 1934 that describe the cherry blossom viewing from the point of three different viewers. The first figure titled "Father's spring, Child's spring" is accompanied by the dialogue " Child: Father! Look at this flower! Father: "Child! Look at THAT flower." This can be contrasted with the third image of the vagrant-type figure who rests below the tree and says "Instead of blooming flowers, it would be better if they bloomed money…I hate the sight of all this. I'm going to sleep." Although like Sin emphasizes, these images show the central figure of the modern girl and boy to the popularity of these spacial changes, I would argue that in these images there is an imbedded class critique that highlights the insignificance of the display to those who are poor.

The first cartoon mocks the "romanticism" by playing with the word "spring," as both childlike bloom and a man's lewd interest in a passing woman, while the second cartoon shows the seriousness of modern girl in appreciating the scene. The third, however, juxtaposes the lavishness of the cherry blossoms with his situation of poverty and displacement. Although I argue that these images operate differently from the socialist cartoons, they too can be read as unstable images; this one in

particular critiques class differences and the imperial government's investment in these projects.

Figure 3: Cherry Blossom Viewing. Source: Sin, Myŏng-jik, Modern Boy, Strolling Kyŏngsŏng: Seeing the Face of the Modern through Cartoon Sketches [Modŏn ppoi, Kyŏngsŏng ŭl kŏnilda : manmun manhwa ro ponŭn kŭndae ŭi ŏlgul], Hyŏnsil Munhwa Yŏn'gu (Seoul: 2003).

In comparison, socialist influenced "visual episodes" or cartoons on class and the proletariat do not operate in the realm of laughter, but rather concentrate and map local, and national issues onto the symbol of the proletarian body. The proletarian body, distinguishable by their ragged white peasant clothes and topknot, are

excessively starved. And although sometimes the depiction of the proletariat is rendered in a comically pitiful manner and silent film-esque expressive dismay that lapse into the realm of humorous distance, most times the illustration of the proletarian body is sensationally realist, mirroring the excessive generic tendencies of the proletarian literary movement. Unlike the previous images of the modern girl and modern boy that are always secondary to the spacial atmosphere of the park, café, etc, in these images the proletarian body is the main focus.

The widespread proliferation of similar images suggests that Korean intellectuals' adoption of Marxist theory, operating both within and outside of purely "socialist" organizations, provided the framework and the language for discussing structural concerns and social problems. In Lee Seung-hi's study on socialist cartoons, he notes that in 1925, a reporter introduced new "trendy" vocabulary for his readers and 1/3 of these buzzwords words were derivative of or influenced by the influx of Marxism: "social movement," "labor and agrarian movement," "minjung," "proletariat," "liberation," and "class struggle" were among the 22 words published (S. Lee 82).

This not only shows how during the mid-1920's emergent mass politics was vocalized through the language supplied by Marxist theory, but were used to proliferate and circulate dialogue concerning class politics. Many cartoons were in fact submitted by anonymous readers, and there were "contests" that were offered for submission of cartoons (S. Lee 83). This interesting process shows how mid-1920's mass culture involved a kind of participatory readership, and illustrated the local contact with the "collective" imaginary within print culture. Individuals would submit

from different provinces, and although many of the cartoons represented local, specific issues, there was a shared association of symbols regarding the proletariat as the main figure of oppression, and were central to the circulation and effectiveness of these ideological representations. The images coming from outside of the city were a contrast with the romantic celebrations of city spaces in "bourgeois" cartoons.

I would like to suggest linkages between the tropes exemplified in socialist cartoons and literary representations we have discussed in previous chapters. As I have discussed in Chapter One, colonial subjectivity is communicated through the proletarian body, and structural problems are exhibited through the starvation and abject conditions of the peasants, farmers, laborers who are central to the narrative. In the *DongaIlbo* illustration (Figure 4) published in 1923 and submitted by an anonymous reader from Kyŏngsŏng province (S. Lee 83), "Squeeze Out Completely" (*Chakjak Tchnaeŏra*) portrays the exploitation of farmers under Japanese landowners (Yoon 38). This cartoon was one of the final winners of a contest held by the *DongaIlbo* newspaper. There were no regulations limiting the submissions, the only rule was that the illustrations had to depict "contemporary problems" (Yoon 37).

Figure 4: Landowners. Source: Yoon, Young-ok, The History of Korean Newspaper Cartoons 1909-1995, Kangnam Center for Publishing Culture (Seoul: 1986). 38

The two hands, marked with the word "landowners," squeeze the perspiring farmer, recognizable by his topknot, who vomits coins into the hands of the landowners. This image, along with other images and narratives that illustrate the frequency of blood, vomit, and other bodily fluids emitted from the proletarian body captures the way in which the "abject" within the body, the abjection of the body, and the abjection oozing from the body not only disturbs the boundaries of "self" and "other," creating a visceral reaction, but imbeds a criticism of social structures that hem and marginalize the colonial subject. Interestingly, the critical aspect of this piece is the inversion of the expulsed object with money.

Although it is unclear whether the cartoon targets specifically Japanese landowners, it is from 1914 to 1929 that ownership of land by Japanese immigrants and wealthy Koreans increased significantly, as a result of lower land taxes and other

measures by the government-general to stimulate growth in the colonial agriculture (Gragert 116). From September 1918, the government-general consolidated and thereby took control of agricultural and industry banks, centralizing local banks under the Chosen Shokusan Ginko. As a result, although landownership remained in the hands of wealthy Korean owners, a larger part of the land became concentrated under Japanese corporations, and money-lenders (Gragert 141). The illustration effectively represents the widening number of tenant farmers, who rented the land they farmed, and suffered under these changing conditions.

Similarly, Figure 5 and Figure 6 draws attention to the plight of the farmers through the marginalization of the proletarian body. Titled "If you suck too much blood, our stomach will burst" (*Nŏmu Ppalatŭrimyŏn Paega T'ŏchinŭn*), the illustration was published on January 11, 1925 and was featured in the newspaper *Sidaeilbo.* From 1925 to 1926, the newspaper published daily cartoons on national issues until June of 1926 cartoon publication ceased, perhaps because of increased censorship (Yoon 52). In the cartoon, the emaciated farmer is plowing the land, and has a large mosquito clinging to his back. The mosquito is labeled with the words "blood-sucking mosquito," but targets the increasing demand for agricultural production, and corresponding rising oppression of farmers. Figure 3 "Can we live like this?" (*Iraesŏ Salsu Inna*) was also published in *SidaeIlbo* in the same series, and depicts the farmer physically weighed down by boulders that symbolize different monetary burdens: cigarettes, school, land tax, alcohol tax, etc.

Figure 5: Mosquito. Source: Yoon, Young-ok, The History of Korean Newspaper Cartoons 1909-1995, Kangnam Center for Publishing Culture (Seoul: 1986). 53.

Figure 6: Boulders. Source: Yoon, Young-ok, The History of Korean Newspaper Cartoons 1909-1995, Kangnam Center for Publishing Culture (Seoul: 1986). 53.

Both these cartoons capture the social structures that hem and marginalize the lower classes, but these social processes are embodied through the physical exploitation of the proletarian body.

Other cartoons like Figure 7, published in *DongaIlbo* in November 7, 1924, specifically targets the colonial government for tenant-landlord disparities. Two figures, recognizably Japanese wearing work *kimono* and *geta,* turn the hand-powered

grain grinder and the "small farmers" are being ground, their blood pouring out onto the floor. The grinder is labeled "*dong ch'ŏk*," which means "Oriental Development Company." The Oriental Development Company had initially been established in 1907 by the Japanese government in order to assist the emigration of Japanese skilled workers to Korea to improve agricultural production in the colony. Although financed by the Japanese and colonial government, most land transferred to the Oriental Development Company were from the Korean royal household ministry; the assets were turned over by the Provisional Property Reorganization Bureau. Although the initial plan for the company was to finance the emigration of Japanese skilled farmers, by 1910 the plan was largely abandoned, and the land was owned by Japanese, but farmed by mostly Korean farmers (Gragert 66).

그림 16 『동아일보』, 1924. 11. 7.

Figure 7: Grinder. Source: Lee, Seung-hee, "Socialism Politics and the Cultural Effect of the Newspaper Cartoons in the 1920s," Sanghur Hakbo: The Journal of Korean Modern Literature 2008: 77-112. Figure 18.

These images that employ horrifying images of the proletarian body being crushed, bleeding and withering away show the proletarian body occupying the liminal space of the abject. Both horrifying and menacing, these images confront local

issues through the "collective" proletarian body. While the cartoons of the modern girl and modern boy celebrated the spacial environment as a marker for its parody and shared understanding, these images differently employ critique "felt" through the sensational and clear critique of class and colonial structures through the radical abjection of the proletarian body.

That is not to say that the proletarian trope is not an unstable trope. The image of the proletarian figure not only illustrates Korean colonial subjecthood as formulated "in-between," but also shows how writing involves what Albert Memmi calls a simultaneous "othering." In Chapter one, I call to mind the New Tendency writers' violent depiction of the physical destruction of the colonial body as both an "othering," looking at colonial subjecthood as if from the colonizer's eyes, and as what Gayatri Spivak described as a project of speaking and becoming a subject. In text, this is anchored through the narration of the subject, but in visual form becomes an unstable symbol that at times becomes unhinged. Alternating between parody and sensational realism, the trope of the proletarian body represents the complex way in which the construction of colonial nationalism was a uneven filtering process of both indigenous development and application of Marxist theory, formulated against but not diametrically opposed to bourgeois nationalist groups and imperialism.

In other words, at times, the unique positioning of the proletarian figure in the Korean case not only illuminates the formation of subjectivity of the colonial Korean subject as determined through the body, but also shows the simultaneous "othering" of the proletarian body, which distances and threatens the subject as an "object." An example of this is Figure 8, published in *Dongallbo* on December 18, 1923, which

takes a less realist approach by shows a pitifully emaciated farmer, with his topknot and wearing ragged clothes, being hanged on a pulley holding a grain bag, while a smiling landlord sits on the other grain bag. The illustration is rendered in a more exaggerated, humorous way, operating more through facial expressions than the previous examples. The caption for the illustration says, "As the days go by, the load becomes more tilted," (*Chimŭn Kalsurok Kiunta*) suggesting that the more profit the landlord makes, the more oppressive the situation is for the farmers.

Figure 8: Pulley. Source: Lee, Seung-hee, "Socialism Politics and the Cultural Effect of the Newspaper Cartoons in the 1920s," Sanghur Hakbo: The Journal of Korean Modern Literature 2008: 77-112. Figure 2.

The cartoons centering on the agrarian population show how 1920s colonial Korea was much shaped by colonial agricultural policy, changing land ownership, and tenant tariffs. It was during this time that many farmers became wage farmers, and an even larger amount joined the unemployed masses, many of those who could not be assimilated into the labor industry. Ken Kawashima describes these populations of

Koreans who migrated during the 1920's and 1930's as "surplus populations," who often wandered and remained in "in limbo" and " in conditions of extreme contingency and precariousness" (12). As a result, the population of poor surrounding the cities widened, and there were many people who emigrated to Japan and Manchuria. This trajectory was captured in illustrations like Figure 9 published on October 16, 1929 in J*oongWoeIlbo*, which shows farmers carrying sacks labeled "Manchuria-bound" and "Japan-bound," calling attention to the growing emigration of Korean farmers and laborers to Manchuria and Japan for work and land.

독자 시사만화, 중외일보, 1929.10.16

Figure 9: Emigration. Yoon, Young-ok, The History of Korean Newspaper Cartoons 1909-1995, Kangnam Center for Publishing Culture (Seoul: 1986). 56.

Through the previous montage of cartoons, I not only echo Lee's emphasis that Marxist theory provided the language for class inequality, but I also want to illustrate how the language of sensational realism in proletarian literature transferred and

operated in the visual medium. During 1920's labor and rural contestations over increasing unemployment, poverty and dislocation, the proletarian body becomes the object on which these conflicts are mapped. Rendered in different degrees of sensational and realist fashion, visual representations of the physical marginalization of the abject proletarian body by these Korean illustrators mirror literary representations of colonial subjectivity. I point out the circulation of these illustrations of the proletarian body to suggest a network of images that highlight the occlusion of the colonial subject through the suffering proletarian body, and parallel literary representations of class inequality. It not only shows the foundational influence that Marxist theory provided for the discussion of rural changes and the plight of the proletariat, but shows the unique development of the figure of the proletariat, central to the imagination of the "collective" during the 1920s and 1930s.

Rendered in different degrees of sensational and realist fashion, visual representations of the physical marginalization of the abject proletarian body by these Korean illustrators mirror literary representations of colonial subjectivity, but also represent a departure at certain points. The representation of the proletarian is radical in its imagination of "collective," and especially in light of bourgeois cartoons that highlight and celebrate "modern" individuals, like the modern boy and modern girl. At the same time, the cartoons singularly approach the body in different ways, at times, with "satire" predicated on distance, objectification, and humor, while other times, embodying social critique through the utilization of the embodiment of dominating social processes.

THE MADNESS OF THE PROLETARIAT: NATIONALISM AS "IN-BETWEEN"

In this section, I would like to show how the language of Marxist theory changed the focus to the lower classes and provided the fodder for other seemingly different politically minded groups to understand the collective in similar ways. To do so, I will compare how nationalist film *Arirang* and KAPF film *The Wandering* both seek resolution through characters that are "outside" of society, represented through their non-normative psychological state, while imperialist films like *Military Train* take a different approach and espouse rationality, timeliness and order through the image of the military train. Through these comparisons, I would like to draw links between the Nationalist Film (*Minjok Yonghwa)* genre and the proletarian art movement in their similar understandings of the "collective" experience as experienced through the abject condition. Likewise, I suggest the appropriation of enlightenment rhetoric that was espoused by the Cultural Nationalist groups by the imperial government. Through these comparisons, I hope to emphasize the ways in which the "collective" is employed through the overlaps and spaces between what we understand as "culture" and "mass politics."

I use these comparisons also to draw linkages between studies of cinematic realism and foundational literary realism of the 1920's. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, the importation of Marxist theory altered the understanding of readership and audience through the radical re-imagining of the individual and the "masses," as understood through the proletariat. Literature, film, print culture during the 1920's became the conduit for discussions of structural problems concerning class

divisions, colonialism, and criticism of oppressive social structures. The foundational utilization of the sensational downfall of the proletarian protagonist in New Tendency works and later more melodramatic depictions of the dynamic proletarian hero provided the foundational basis for mass culture and enacted criticisms of social problems through the sensational trope of the suffering proletarian body.

With these tropes in mind, I would like to illustrate how in understanding this period and mass culture as a network of symbols and tropes, we can rethink the monologic terms that have divided nationalist, proletarian, and propaganda films. In contrast to the traditional division between nationalist and socialist endeavors, nationalist films similarly employed proletarian tropes of excess, recalling and positing colonial subjectivity as abject, marginal, and otherwise "nonnormative." This not only shows the extensive influence that realism had beyond cultural forms designated to be "socialist", but also illustrates how Marxist theory was the epistemological foundation for these cultural manifestations to discuss mass, and become central to the way in which "nationalist culture" spoke from the "interstices" (Bhabha 4) and not the center as is commonly understood.

In order to show this, I will examine one of the most foundational "nationalist" films during the colonial period, Na Un-kyu's *Arirang*. Although the film has been lost since 1950 and most records of its viewing rely on oral historical accounts, Korean film scholars agree that Na's film was the first film of the *minjok yonghwa* genre, and has since been appropriated into postwar politically-colored discussions of what constitutes "traditional" and "canonical" Korean culture. Not only did Na's film create a stir when first released in 1926, but remakes in 1957, the film music, and the

film novel released in 1929 has become a central figuration of nationalism in both North and South Korea's imaginaries to this day.[39] Although the film is no longer in existence and was destroyed during the colonial period, this film, along with revisions of classical folk classics such as *Ch'unhyang* and *Hong Kil-tongjŏn*, has been central to scholarship on mass culture. Although this focus is a result of the popularity of these narratives for centuries, the consideration of what is popular has more or less been aligned with nationalism. In other words, mass culture has been associated with cultural works that have been mostly exclusively "nationalist," either excluding or making minimal reference to the socialist movement. As such, the Korean Artist Proletarian Federation members' and leftist readers' participatory engagement with films, theatre, and print "visual episodes" are marginal to understandings of mass culture.

The film, in its many forms, is representative of the ways in which the collective is composed of unstable cultural tropes that involve a complex process of subject formation. In this case, I argue that the subject formation of the colonial subject is influenced by the legacy of Marxist-Leninism in Korea, in the foundational concentration on the proletarian figure and the material plight of the lower classes. Formulated against Enlightenment, modern, humanist notions of subjecthood that prioritize a conscious, rational subject, the symbolic representation of the proletarian figure as "insane" exhibits this foundation but also highlights this oppositional framework. This is most evident in the portrayal of the main character *Arirang's*

[39] For an article on the significance of "Arirang" (both the folk song and colonial era film) in the contemporary North Korean context, refer to Kim, Y. K.

Ch'oe Yŏng-jin, a "ruined" intellectual" who has gone insane, and has returned home in the middle of the semester.

Arirang begins after Ch'oe has returned home to the rural village where he lives with his sister Ch'oe Yŏng-hŭi and her father. The father is very bitter toward his son because he sold most of his land to pay for his education, and, because of their debts, the landlord's lackey, Oh Ki-ho, constantly harasses the father and Yŏng-hui. Ch'oe receives news that Yun Hyŏn-gu, who was a fellow student in Seoul, is returning home, and she is giddy with the news. When Hyŏn-gu returns, he and Yŏng-hŭi are reunited and fall in love, while Oh Kiho continues to harass the family and finally asks the father to give him Yŏng-hui's hand in marriage in return for his debts. The father refuses, and in retribution, Oh Kiho tries to rape Yŏng-hŭi. Hyŏn-gu happens to be passing by and tries to save her and starts wrestling with Oh Kiho. Ch'oe Yŏng-jin doesn't comprehend the scene and smiles while watching them fight, imagining that they are dancing with each other.

It is at this moment however when the film shifts from the present to a fantasy sequence, immersing the viewer/reader in the point of view of Ch'oe Yŏng-jin who imagines that he is in the desert in front of a poor man in need of help and at the mercy of an evil merchant. In order to help him, he kills the merchant, who is Oh Ki-ho. The ending scene involves Ch'oe Yŏng-jin being taken away to an asylum while singing the song he always sings "Arirang." However, his usual incoherent "babble" suddenly resonates with the people of the village and they are mobilized by his song, and join in his singing. Rhee discusses this last scene and the song 'Arirang" as a

crucial moment of mobilization: “a conversion of mood that turns the audience from spectators to participants”(31)

In Joohyung Rhee’s article “Arirang, and the Making of a National Narrative in South and North Korea,” Rhee embarks on one of the first textual analyses of the cinema-novel’s literary and cinematic style. Rhee departs from the traditional understanding of the main character’s madness as symptomatic of the colonial psyche, but argues that the “madness” of the main protagonist is representative of the colonial within the modern subject that “has been pathologized in art and literature” (Rhee 31) Rhee responds to the main strand of conversation regarding the film that centers on Na’s agency as the suspected director: some scholars stating that Na’s “brilliant” use of madness was to evade censorship, while others say that it is in fact questionable that Na wrote the film, because of the lack of sources.

Although this is an interesting discussion, for the purposes of this study, I am not concerned with whether Na “purposefully” utilized madness, but rather how the trope of “madness” operated relationally with other proletarian tropes that identified the colonial body as abject, in both physical and psychological manifestations. Within Korea and in contact with the West and Japan, this film became a key paradigm of Korean nationalist culture. The predominance of excess in reality genres, such as sensational realism in proletarian literature and fantastical madness in the case of Na’s film, show that Na’s use of madness is not exclusive of the colonial context, but shows that sensational plot lines and fantastical resolution was symptomatic of colonial works about the collective lower classes. Although Na’s film has been distinguished from realism, its concept of class-consciousness was crucial to formations of

nationalism, aligning more with proletarian literary realist works, rather than bourgeois intellectual representations of subjecthood. This draws attention to how "genre" can be politically inflected, and also shows how colonial subjectivity was formed both within and against understandings of modern subjecthood.

In another context, Fredric Jameson discusses "madness" in his analysis of Lu Xun's novel "A Madmen's Diary,"[40] which is set in late imperial China, and is about an "insane" man who believes that the people around him are cannibals. Jameson explains how the reading process involves not only an objective portrayal of the main character's psychological breakdown that involves an unreliable narrator, but also a gradual stripping down of the reader's world, through shared "aesthetic expression": the unspeakable, unnameable inner feeling, whose external formulation can only designate it from without, like a symptom" (Jameson 71). I would like to use Jameson's understanding of "aesthetic expression" to illuminate how a film/text like *Arirang* and the *Wandering* create a "collective" resonance through the "insanity" of its sub-characters, rather than through the romantic love between Yun Hyŏn-gu and Ch'oe Yŏng-hŭi in the former, and Suni and Yŏng-jin in the latter.

Similarly, in the film-novel version of the KAPF film *The Wandering,* which was serialized from January 1 to January 5, 1928 in the *JungwoeIlbo*, the film centers on the "return" of an intellectual named Yŏng-jin to his hometown. When he returns to his old home, a neighbor tells him that his family has left to search for work after losing all their belongings in a flood. The neighbor, who is a close friend of his parent's, insists that he comes to stay with him and his daughter Sun-hi. While

[40] Refer to Lu Xun, Diary of a Mad Man (1918).

staying with the neighbor, he and Sunhi begin to fall in love, and he starts a school for the neighborhood children and a night school for the farmers. However, in the village, there is a violently oppressive village governor, Sŏ byŏng-jo, and his toadie, Pak Ch'un-sik who harass the villagers. Sŏ also has a son, Yun-gil, who is described as the village "idiot," and is seemingly unrecognizable as the rich man's son with his tangled, unkempt hair and ragged clothes. Pak Ch'un-sik sees the farmers going to night school and doesn't like that Yŏng-jin opened a school and is staying with Sunhi and her father. The governor then asks Sunhi's father to marry Sunhi to his son Yun-gil, and the father agrees reluctantly because of his debts. Unbeknownst to him, Sunhi and Yŏng-jin had already exchanged vows of love.

To her despair, Sunhi is married off to the governor's son, and Yŏng-jin feels betrays and believes she never loved him. Sunhi, however, is weeping in her room continuously, when the toadie Pak Ch'unsik enters her room and attempts to rape her. Luckily, Pak hears a sound outside the window and leaves. After this incident, she decides to kill herself. That night, she goes to the mountain ridge, and is about to jump off when Yŏng-jin appears and stops her. He says he thought she was a ghost and followed her there, and professes his love for her. Together, they decide to go back to town and tell her father, and leave town altogether. The three of them leave early the next morning, but Pak Ch'un-sik overhears the villagers gossiping about their departure and sets off after them seething with anger. He manages to catch up to the three, and attacks Yŏng-jin. They start fighting, and Yŏng-jin is about to collapse when Yun-gil appears and throws a rock at Pak, they start fighting and the three manage to escape onto the "wandering road."

What is interesting about this film and *Arirang,* is the resolution of both films by characters that occupy "nonnormative," and psychologically abject positions in society. Apart from the insanity of these sub-characters, both stories take on similar Manichean plot development, with an evil rich landlord or governor and the good intellectual. The good prevails but only through the action of the marginal figures, who do not play a central role in the plot, and really only appear to facilitate resolution. Thus, the ultimate "heroes" of both *Arirang* and *the Wandering* are not the male figures of the romantic partnership, but the two characters that represent a space that is commonly understood as unreadable and unknowable. However, the characters are rendered legible through their insanity and "unleashed anger" that prompts them both to attack the harassers.

In contrast, imperial Japanese films such as *The Military Train* adopt modernism and aspects of Enlightenment philosophy to engender patriotism toward the Imperial government. The director of *The Military Train,* Sŏ Kwangje, was actually previously a predominant film critic and member of Korean Artist Proletarian Federation, alongside *The Wandering* director Kim Yu-yŏng (H. Lee and J. Kim 245). However, in 1932, as a result of the repeated "cutting of their films" as a result of imperial censorship, Sŏ left to study in Japan and later released in 1938 his first pro-Japanese film, *The Military Train.* A key topic of scholarship on the ideological "conversion" of KAPF members under the "total war" period of the late 1930's, the discussion of Sŏ represents the complex ideological orientations toward the late 1930's as many leftist cultural figures recant their ideologies and political leanings, which I discuss in Chapter four.

The main character of the *Military Train* is Jŏm-yŏng a train conductor, but the military train could also be considered the "star" of the movie; the film is interspersed with the multiple glorified shots of the train speeding down the tracks, emitting plumes of smoke. The train conductor's friend, Wŏn-jin is in love with Jŏm-yong's sister Ye-shim, who is working as a kisaeng to pay off her brother's education loans. Wŏn-jin promises Ye-shim that he will free her from the brothel, and that they will be together in the future. When Wŏn-jin is approached by a spy for opposition groups who want to bomb the train and offers money for the timetables for the trains, Wŏn-jin sees his opportunity to earn the money to pay off Ye-shim's debts. However, he is torn between his loyalty to his friend and his love for Ye-shim.

Although he does evidently steal the timetables from his friend, in the end his guilt gets the better of him and he confesses to his friend before the arrival of the targeted train. This plot development not only disparages the romantic love between the train conductor's sister and his friend, but also elevates patriotism for the empire above all other human relations. The imperial rhetoric is most apparent in the initiation scene when Jŏm-yong becomes a military conductor and the railroad boss says to him "Your body does not belong to you, but to the empire." The "disposability" of the colonial body is echoed in the end when Wŏn-jin commits suicide by throwing himself on the railroad tracks.

Although a film commissioned by the Japanese government, the parallels between the main character and the train, and the suicide of Wŏn-jin exhibits the colonial government's constitution of the Korean people as a population of able bodies for the imperial cause. The overlapping articulations of train and Jŏm-yong implicate

the capitalist-economic structure of modernity within what Foucault calls the "simultaneously real and artificial space of confinement" (224). As Takashi Fujitani discusses in "Right to Kill, Right to Make Live," during wartime the Korean population were reinscribed into the imagination of the Japanese imperial nation to serve the material need for bodies for the war (19). The film, through Wŏn-jin's death and Jŏm-yong shows the ways in which the value of Korean bodies is determined by the biopolitics of the state: Jŏm-yong nurtured for his docility, and Wŏn-jin is disposable. Sŏ's embracement of the "one body, one nation" propaganda in the film reflects the complex technologies involved in the film.

This film shows the complex parallel and overlapping development of modernization with imperialist policy. Although in the 1920's Korean nationalist groups piggybacked onto civilizing and racially-infused rhetoric in enlightenment works, in the 1930s these ideas became easily appropriated and enforced. The *Military Train* exhibits the ways in which enlightenment rhetoric did not run counter to imperial rhetoric, but espoused the same romantic treatment of the rational individual. Through these comparisons, I would like to draw comparisons to how the film *Arirang* and the *Wandering* occupied the abject condition, and through this unknowable space that only resonates incomprehensible affective resonance, employs similar utilizations of the felt "collective." Despite the illegibility of madness in the eyes of the censorship authorities, this was legible to the masses.

As Foucault has discussed in Madness and Civilization, since the eighteenth century, madness and the idea of "confinement" is linked, and we can understand the main character of *Arirang* as the "very symbol of confining power" (227). In

Foucault's description of the asylum, he describes the asylum keeper "as a reasonable being, invested by that very fact, and before any combat takes place, with the authority that his not being mad" (252). Foucault's understanding of the oppositional relationship between madness and reason, or madness as un-reason highlights the ways in which *Arirang*'s madman has been constituted as unreason precisely because rationality and reason has been named by the structures that hem him. If one compares this work to *The Military Train* it is easy to see how the madman questions the reason of imperial subjecthood. The power within this identification of madness is evident in how Foucault has discussed literary works by Sade and Goya, "unreason continues to watch by night; but in this vigil it joins with fresh powers" (284).

In sum, beyond the literary efforts of KAPF writers, the generic tendencies located in visual culture reveals the ubiquitous circulation of visual genres that blur the "boundaries" between realist works, enlightenment, and historical works. Although many film scholars try to differentiate KAPF films, historical, nationalist, and sinp'a films, I understand the slippages between these genres—even the "lack of" socialist ideology in socialist films—to be representative of political limitations and alternative possibilities of culture under colonialism. As many postcolonial scholars have discussed what we can consider to be literature "from the margins," I am interested in the complicated way in which colonial visual culture appealed to mass culture, but was marginal in its use of generic appeal.

CONCLUSION

Although scratching the surface of what can be considered "mass culture" during 1920's and 1930's Korea, through this chapter I hope to introduce a formulation of "mass culture" that both incorporated the importance of mass politics, the development and advancement of technology like print culture, film, theatre, as well as, stress the circulation and "intertextual" possibilities within comparative studies and readings of culture works. The 1920's and 1930's as many scholars have stressed was an interesting convergence of new educational policy that contributed to a new cultural intellectual class, importation and development of the cultural space, urbanization, etc. that created the space for this proliferation.

Although I focus on the political aspects of "mass" through the emphasis on the proletarian body, at the same time, I choose the site of the proletarian body because I understand this representation of the lower classes to be crucial to the changing designations of "mass" during the mid-1920's. As I exhibit with political cartoons, the cartoons with socialist content feature the site of the proletarian body as a marginalized and affected body. As such, this becomes a crucial critical element of tenant issues, class disparities, and other contemporary conflicts that were occurring at the time. The bourgeois cartoons, in contrast, employ the urban space, and operate more as voyeuristic entertainment. Continuing with my previous chapter, I hope that these formulations create ways to discuss the generic tendencies of the proletarian body, madness, and the abject as fluid, and alternative to traditional understandings of the "politics" of nationalist and Marxist culture.

IV. THE LIMINAL SPACES OF DISCOURSE

INTRODUCTION

> It is vital to recognize (as the Manifesto so clearly does) the ways in which geographical reorderings and restructurings, spatial strategies and geopolitical elements, uneven geographical developments, and the life, are vital aspects to the accumulation of capital and the dynamics of class struggle, both historically and today. (Harvey 31)

In this excerpt from *Spaces of Hope*, David Harvey emphasizes how, through Marx's *The Communist Manifesto,* we can understand the possibilities for worker's rights through the critiques of uneven capital outlined by Marx. Although Harvey is discussing globalization and the neo-liberal world system, I find Harvey's theorizations and limitations of the "spatial strategies" outlined in the *Communist Manifesto* very useful in identifying the geopolitical boundaries of Marxist politics. The term geopolitical boundaries calls attention to the ways in which space plays a central role in political struggles against the uneven spatial, material qualities of capital accumulation, but is not fleshed out in political discourse. In this chapter, although I continue my formulation of previous chapters by traveling between limitations posed by practices and traditions of Marxist criticism and nationalist scholarship, in light of Harvey's framework, I will address the consequences of the spatial organization of modernity and Marxist discourse, and examine how this template is negotiated in the Korean case.

My focus on space is a result of the increasing importance of spatial designations in proletarian literature in the 1930s, as the representation of the agrarian space (*nongch'on)* became more central. Although Marxism was the blueprint for

revolutionary literature in colonial Korea, the proletarian literary culture movement shows the centrality of *liminal* spaces of Marxist, even modernist discourse--the agrarian space at "home" and abroad--were to this movement. This interesting focus on agrarian literature in the 1930's shows the slippages between "mass" as primarily conceived by Marx, and as developed by KAPF and proletarian literary writers.

Marxism was significant to the proletarian literature movement by both forming borders, in the case of the agrarian space, and dismantling borders, in the case of diasporic literatures. However, changing spatial borders of modernization also constituted literary representations of the agrarian space. In *Topographies of Japanese Modernism,* Seiji Lippit describes Japanese modernist fiction during 1912-1916 as a rejection of interiority for the "focus on heterogeneous urban topographies" (31). Drawing from Lippit's comparative framework of this experimental period as a period of changing representation, space, and subjectivity, I would like to trace the ways in which the agrarian space represents both the tangential and the core of modern subjectivity and mass politics during the 1930's.[41]

With these agendas in mind, I will situate the agrarian focus in the 1930's amidst the various material changes that were occurring at the same time. As scholars Kwŏn Yŏng-min and Jin-kyung Lee have described, agrarian literature had been a topic of literary criticism in both the Cultural Nationalist and KAPF camps from the mid-1920's. As Kwŏn Yŏng-min defines, agrarian literature characteristically has an awareness of agrarian life, and the literary subject usually exhibits a kind of "rural

[41] The centrality of agrarian populations can be extended to other Marxisms, like what scholars have called, "Asian Marxisms" and "Maoism." For more on "Asian Marxisms," refer to the anthology: Barlow, T.

consciousness" (*chŏnwŏnjuŭi*). This agrarian movement was accompanied by the "return to the farming village" (*kwinong*) slogan that romanticized the agrarian space and encouraged intellectuals to return to the "hometown" and the "people." As Lee points out, there was an underlying "performative" aspect to this movement, highlighting the intellectual's privilege and "intrinsic flexibility of their positionality" (101).

It was from the 1930s, however, that the proletarian culture movement began to concentrate on the agrarian space as a structural "class" problem. As Sunyoung Park discusses, this change "was both bolstered by ideological changes in central Marxist organizations[42] that started a rippling interest in peasant literature and resulted in the rise in news on rural poverty (Park, 103). The rise in news and interest was a result of an economic crisis following the severe drop in rice prices, which brought about more reportage of peasant poverty, and in turn resulted in the increased focus on the peasant population as a "class" problem (Y. Kim 280).

In terms of ideological changes within the KAPF movement, the 1930s represented a shift and interest in the rural peasantry as the "masses." Although Korea was always a majority agrarian population, it was only in the 1930's with the rise in agrarian news and ideological discussions among KAPF members about a mass-centered subject rooted in Korean realities, when the agrarian space began to occupy the forefront of the literary imaginary. A significant turning point occurred in 1929 when proletarian literary critic Kim Ki-jin in "Thoughts On Agrarian Literature"

[42] Sunyoung Park mentions the importance of the Second Congress of Revolutionary Writers in Kharikov in 1930 and its influence on the Japanese proletarian movement's shift in focus to peasant literature. Refer to Park, S.

(*Nongminmunye e Taehan Ch'ohan*) connected mass culture with agrarian literature (Kwŏn 303). Also mirroring this refocus, KAPF members, An Ham-kwang and Paek Ch'ŏl, began to emphasize the problems of peasants as "class issues." As is shown through this ideological shift in the early 1930's, the discussion of the "masses" involved a re-examination of their ideological alignments with contemporary problems in Korea, involving the central question of how to define "mass" in the specifics of the Korean context. This context also involved the growing number of peasants and laborers who had "emerged as independent forces" during 1923-1927. The communists within the Sin'ganhoe group,[43] the nationalist alliance between communists and the bourgeois nationalists, acknowledged this important political base and attempted to win a stronger hold over the party by bringing the workers, peasants and poor into Sin'ganhoe to saturate the group with a more left-leaning population (Scalapino 105).

Although scholars like Cho Hyŏn-il have connected this political emphasis to culture by showing the intensifying realistic literary depictions of laborer movements and revolution during the 1930's, I first want to move away from the knee-jerk link between urban literature, labor movements and Marxism. Instead, by concentrating on depictions of the rural space, we can see the ways the configuration of the rural space in proletarian literature altered and imagined political possibilities that are not always translatable to standardized notions of social and political experience defined through the governing "spaces" within modernist and Marxist discourse.

[43] Organized in 1927, the Sin'ganhoe was a group comprised of both nationalists and Korean communists that were united under joint nationalisms and goal of Korean independence.

The following sections are inspired by Neferti Tadiar's understanding of "tangential" literatures and the location of "revolutionary" in their "transformative possibility, despite being located within structures that regulate and govern national and modern subjectivity: "In this endeavor these literatures do not merely represent or thematize the historical experiences of existing social subjects (for whom they are means of expression); they also deploy socially shared modes of experience and subjective practices as a way of creating new social subjects with transformative historical agency" (16). Through the concentration on literary "modes of experience," I am interested in the way "possibility" is formulated through the creation of alternative subjective experiences in literature. Also, the exploration of liminal spaces within dominant discourse locates sites of alternative possibility for the masses, both marginal and central to the discourses of modernity and Marxism.

In order to do so, the first section of this chapter will explore the spatial configurations of modernity. As scholars such as Benedict Anderson or, in the Japan context, Tessa Morris-Suzuki has explored, modernity involved not only different geographical delineations, but also the different temporal and spatial conceptions of "communities." I first trace the changes that occurred during the modernization of Korea under Japanese imperialism: more specifically, urbanization, industrialization that configured the topography of the city landscape. I then explore the dialectical relationship between modern subjectivity and the urban landscape, through narratives by "fellow traveler" Ch'ae Man-sik, who was one of the foremost realist and satirical writers of Korean society during the 1930's. Further, through modernist writers Yi Sang and Kim Yu-chŏng's essays (*supil*) on the rural space, through what I call their

interior "points of comprehension" of the rural landscape, I show the ways in which the urban space is central to modernity. And within the liminal space of modern—the rural space-- the anxieties within the contradictions of "modern subjectivity," its façade of "free will" and ultimate governance, pervades the texts and creates a residual specter of despair.

Secondly, by exhibiting modernist writers, "fellow travelers,"[44] and proletarian writers' works in a network, I hope to show the ways in which literary depictions of agrarian space are the complex negotiations of the temporal and the spatial organization proposed by modernity and Marxism. In contrast to modernist works that focus on the interior subject, in proletarian literature, the figure of the peasant (*nongmin)* and the exploration of the farming village *(nongch'on)* are different reflections of social totalities from dynamic urban society.

Proletarian literature's marriage with agrarian literature presents the "translations" that Dipesh Chakrabarty has described in his description between "History 1 and History 2" (67). Both histories of the past, "History 1" is the history predetermined by the relations of capital in which the laborer experiences alienation from his labor and is subject to the disciplinary processes of capital; "History 2" represents what cannot be managed in History 1: the "more *affective* narratives of human belonging where life forms, although porous to one another, do not seem exchangeable through a third terms of equivalence such as abstract labor" (Chakrabarty 71). This idea helps us understand the ways proletarian agrarian

[44] "Fellow Travelers": The peripheral writers who during the 1920's shared some of the same views as KAPF members, but were not part of the KAPF organization.

literature can be seen as an "interruption" of the progress of History 1 that represents the negotiation of a universal logic of capital.

This "interruption," is enacted through the historical differences within the agrarian space. As can be seen by literary critic Im Hwa's description of the narratives on the peasant and farming village as "ideal" revolutionary pieces, writers such as Sim Hun, a novelist and screenwriter who wrote pieces on rural life during the 1930's, were also considered integral to the conception of the masses, showing that proletarian literature involved heterogeneous temporalities and space. This interest in rural literature and the agrarian space is evident through the common "mapping" of Korea through literary depictions of the farming village (*nongch'on*), seaside village *(inch'on*) the mountain village *(sanch'on*), the common village (*minch'on)*, hometown *(kohyang),* etc.

In order to address these "interruptions," in the second section, I follow the liminal spaces within Marxist discourse through contradictory points in Marx's *The Communist Manifesto*: first, the location of revolution in the dense populations of the urban space, and secondly, the universal historicism of a "worldwide proletariat." I explore proletarian literary works, Yi Ik-sang's "Seaside Village" and Paek Sin-ae's " Kkorai," to explore how these literary works reconcile these liminal spaces of Marxist discourse. As such, Yi's understanding of the seaside village evocatively produces thematic resolution in a productive absence of laboring bodies, contrary to Marx's understandings of "revolution" in dense, healthy laboring bodies. And further, Paek's text imagines utopic resolution in the melancholic diasporic experience of the

populations of Korean farmers and laborers who moved to Manchuria and Japan to look for work during the 1930's.

Though Yi's text and Paek's text represent different local sites, I am additionally interested in how these texts are connected and interrelated through their affect, both producing a kind of "melancholia," which resonates with what postcolonial scholar Vijay Mishra calls an "ideal death" associated with the traumatic diasporic experience, represented in the abstract loss of a "home." Affect--despair and melancholia in the rural space--shows the disruptions and discontinuities within our understandings of modern subjectivity and Marxist discourse. Alternatively, these uncanny spaces suggest the death of "homeland" in the production of absence, but imagines alternative modes of "community" through these other spaces and temporalities of historical experience.

COMPREHENDING SPACE THROUGH MODERNITY: MODERN MARKERS AND THE RURAL LANDSCAPE

Although some scholars have discussed the "modernization" of Korea that emerged from the simultaneously exploitative and regenerative efforts of the colonial and administrative government during 1905 to 1944, many scholars have also pinpointed the beginnings of industrialization in Korea from the late 19th century[45]. After Korea was "opened" to foreign influences emerging from the treaty of 1876, Japan's influence culminated in the Korea-Japan Eulsa treaty that established the residence-general in Seoul. Administrative and colonial policy can be considered a

[45] For more on modernization of: Eckert, C. and Shin, G., Robinson, M.

springboard for Japanese immigration from 1876, while global capitalism and imperialism provided the structural network and impetus for individual entrepreneurs and foreign interest in Korea. As Wŏnsik Jeong points out in his study of the urban development of Seoul, the influence of Korea's position in the global sphere are reflected in changing urban and rural configurations of Korea as the population of people living in Seoul increased from 25,000 to 100,000 from 1910 to 1944 (Jeong 4).

This modernization process is emergent in the cultural sphere in which the new urban landscape becomes a backdrop, element, and main feature. The ways in which the urban landscape formulated modern consciousness is perhaps most representative in writer Ch'ae Man-sik's narratives. A writer, playwright, and critic, Ch'ae Man-sik is known for his satirical, parodic, and ironic depictions of Korean society, modernization and class. Although many of his earlier works during the 1920's and early 1930s criticize class disparities and are understood as a type of realism for this characteristic, Ch'ae was known as a "fellow traveler" of the proletarian culture movement because he never aligned himself with KAPF.

Ch'ae Man-sik's "Residents of Chongno," which was written in 1942, reflects upon 1930s uneven development of the urban space. Although the text was written during the 1940s after the shift to "total war" and the Sino-Japanese war that rendered the colonies a viable source of food, bodies for Japanese imperialism, the text is important for its reflections on the past. Scholars like Hong Kal draw comparisons between the urbanization of Kyŏngsŏng with the "Haussmannization of Paris" (Hong, 364). "Haussmanization" refers to the reorganization of the city to create a bourgeois splendor in the creation of wide boulevards, tall buildings, and central organization.

This comparison suggests that the modernization of Kyŏngsŏng was simultaneously mimetic of the modern Euro-American city, but particularly "colonial" in its assymetrical development. Scholars point out that this process started in the late 19th century as the creation of parks, "centralizing" symbols of cities: Kyŏngun Palace (*Kyŏngun'gung*), Independence Gate (*Tongnimmun*), etc.), modifications to central waterways, electricity, streetcars, and trains were all part of a modernization process spearheaded by the resident-general and later the government-general (Kim 46).

These changes provided the impetus for the reorganization of space around central locations; main roads like Chongno and Namdaemunro were flanked by stores and provided a connective organization and "public" space where people could gather (46). However, as Hong points out, the divisive Chongno (street) was a marker of this uneven process, which divided the Korean neighborhood of the north (*pukch'on*) and the Japanese neighborhood of the south (*namch'on*). The "colonial modernity" of Seoul was salient in the way the city space was unevenly reorganized along ethnic divisions. This organization also suggests the ethnic/racial organization of modernization: the Japanese neighborhood represented the new "urban spectacle," and was a stark contrast with the Korean neighborhoods. As Todd Henry has argued, the urban development of Seoul involved the tensions between the exclusionary and inclusionary aspects of "civilizational and developmental discourse" (642).

Following the wanderings of a movie director, Ch'ae's narrative elucidates the internal boundaries of the urban landscape that emerge in the main character Song Yŏng-ho's affective distance; the narrator "travels" in the southern neighborhood, while the northern neighborhood he associates with "home." These affective

associations are interesting counterparts to early 1900's Japanese travel guide narratives on Seoul, which Henry illustrates "dislocate" Koreans from the representation of the development of the city (664). Ho Duk Hwang, in his article "Empire Japan and Colonial City, Apartheid in Keijo - Ch'ae Man-sik`s Topos, Resident of Chongno," discusses Ch'ae's main character's affective response to Chongro street as an elucidation of the "internal border of the colonial" (130).

Alongside the developments of urban spaces and changing ethnic, class topographies,[46] technological changes additionally affected "modes" of viewing, as the cityscape became the playground for consuming subjects. Perhaps one of the most significant changes was the creation of the Seoul-Pusan railway. Although the creation of the railroad began before Korea became a protectorate and a colony of Japan, the running of the railroad mirrored steadily increasing Japanese administrative presence in Korea: the railroad was first in the hands of the protectorate, and then under the colonial government. Finally in the 1930's, the military trains' crucial roles in delivering troops and supplies to equip Japanese imperial ambitions in Korea, Manchuria, and abroad illustrated the crucial dual role of modernization as serving both the development of the colonies and expansion of the Japanese empire (Hong 364).

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[46] The reorganization of class both propagated and developing parallel to changing political and economic structures. Carter Eckert in his case study of the Goch'ang Kim family explores an exceptional and influential portion of the population who led a new industrial bourgeoisie class in the changing Korean economic and social landscape after the Kanghwa Treaty of 1876: "a new 'core class' in Korean society, a modern version, as it were, of the old Confucian literati"[46]. Using the Goch'ang Kim family as an example, Eckert discusses the increased industrialization of Korea, evident by the increased move of agrarian workers to work in factories in the cities, the emergence of a capitalist class, and increased Korean participation in international economy. Korean ownership of factories becomes more relevant however in the late 1930's and early 1940s, while in the 1920s most factories were Japanese owned.

In literature, the train as space--a "modern" space-- is a connective meeting place where characters of different circumstances converge, and experience the sensations and voyeurism of "seeing" in the public urban space; the train as a narrative trope that both represents the "modern," and as a space that moderates "modern" subjectivity. In Ch'ae Man-sik's "Toward Three Paths" (*Sekillo*) the train is both representative and subject-forming. "Toward Three Paths," as a lot of Ch'ae's texts do, centers around a first-person narrator, who is traveling on a train to Seoul. In Ch'ae's text, the main character is the modern spectator, analogous to Baudelaire's flâneur, who both embodies distance from and immersion in his surroundings. As Baudelaire writes, the flâneur is both the subjective and the collective: "to be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world" (9).

The narrator in Ch'ae's text describes this duality by understanding the space of the train car through sensations of "familiarity," as if he had been here before *(nach'i ikeun)*: "While the outer world is unceasing and changing, my mind is peaceful despite the sound of the noisy train, and in the peaceful and continually leisurely, familiar car, I felt an intimacy that I cannot express fully" (14). These urban spaces—the arcades, the streets, and, in this case, the train—are in between the interior and the public, but to the flâneur it has the familiarity of home (Benjamin 18). Before boarding the train, Ch'ae's narrator contemplates the scene at the train platform, the chaos, noise, crowdedness, effusive energy, and numerous bodies peddling, boarding, searching, waiting. The narrator remarks on the "leisurely and peaceful" expressions

of the train passengers as they look out the window onto the platform, as an onlooker but not participant.

Suggesting the fleeting and superficial nature of the narrator's infatuation in his own commodity (33), the majority of the narrative he remains an observer who collects. He collects details of passengers' clothes, regional accents and surmises the passengers' backgrounds and goings-on, and this is only occasionally interrupted by his own realization as an object of interest and fellow passenger in the space of the train.

> I went toward the front seat opposite the man and placed my bag on the shelf and, after momentarily sitting, I stood up again, took off my jacket, and while loosening my necktie I glanced in the direction of female student. Maybe she was already looking at me because our eyes met. I felt embarrassed so I turned my head away and avoided her eyes. I thought, "I wonder why she is looking at me?" And then, "Why would it mean anything when someone looks at someone" and, even though I interpreted it in this way, I couldn't help but be happy that she had looked at me. Then, I realized the older woman had turned to look at me, the man, the junior high student across the row, and some country gentleman too. Although I was a little uncomfortable, I felt something similar to the mentality of having won something. (13)

The pleasure he derives from the young female student's returning gaze propels the narrative, during the remainder of the narrative the narrator longs for her to look at him again. However, this desire is fleeting and he is only involved in her spectacle, and not the actualization of this desire. He is infatuated with gazing upon the intimacy of her body--her effusive "sensuality" (13)—and he experiences pleasure through her image. When she breaks off a piece of watermelon to eat, his mouth unconsciously "salivates" at the site of the "ripe, sweet red insides filled with budding black seeds" (16). This infatuation, however, is ephemeral and she remains a fleeting object of his

desire, and as he transfers trains, he catches sight of her conversing with another man on the train.

Ch‘ae’s first short story not only exhibits the visual dynamic that has emerged with the changing spaces of Seoul, but the embodiment of this modern subjectivity in the subject/object distance between the narrator and the people he observes. The self-reflexive narrator is both detached and absorbed in his surroundings, producing an intentional gaze, but also always a “stranger,” looking away when discovered. His infatuation with the young female student also echoes the gendered inflections of modern subjectivity in this text. James Fujii’s term “intimate alienation” shows how we can understand the commuter train amidst developing urbanization of a predominantly rural agricultural country:

> If Marx was right in seeing the transfer of goods from the worker’s shop to the market as a process of commodification, the commute must be seen as a form of transfer that subjects the commuter to its rigid temporal and spatial requirements—converting them into commodities in the process. (118)

Fujii pinpoints the commodity production at work in the sexualized space of the commuter space that “fragments” young schoolgirls, and the contradictory “alienated” intimacy that produces the sensual arousal (127). In lieu of critical work by feminist visual studies scholars such as Griselda Pollack, Ch‘ae’s piece can also be read to understand the naturalization of the public space as primarily mediated by the masculine gaze. In this understanding, women are only allowed as objects of desire and display (Pollack 259).

The texts I have discussed represent the dialectical relationship between the urban landscape and representations of modern subjectivity. As Karatani emphasizes,

the beginning of modern literature can be located at a critical shift he terms "the discovery of landscape." The beginning of modern consciousness: the "discovery of landscape" refers to the "epistemological constellation" from which the idea of the subject and object emerge. A reversal of common philosophy that predicates the subject on the oppositional subject/object, Karatani's "landscape" implicates not the emergence of an "exterior" to the subject, but the discovery of an interior that renders the outside as object. However, as Karatani posits, the origin of "landscape" is repressed from memory and the subject and object appear to exist prior to "landscape" (34).

Karatani's text is particularly useful in examining the ways in which literary systems claim interiority as truth, cloaking its part in this "system of confession" (94). A particular genre that highlights this dynamic is the genre of essays (*supil)* that often involve the writer traveling to new locations where he writes on the local culture, landscape and people. Because of its interior dialogue, sometimes in the form of a letter, the genre of essays can be reexamined to articulate the ways literary systems centered on interiority were less about the accounting of rural areas, but the accounting for rural areas and the populations that occupy them.

I examine modernist essays on the rural space to point out the ways in which representations of the rural space are subsumed under modernity. Although differently employed than Ch'ae's text, the urban landscape is central to writers' comprehension of their experience of the rural landscape. In order to examine the contact point within interior modernist works and the agrarian space, I will examine Yi Sang and Kim Yu-chŏng's essays on the rural.

Yi Sang, now known as a canonical modernist, wrote essays, criticisms and fiction during the 1920's and 1930's. Best known for his short story "Wings" (Nalgae), Yi Sang is known for his existential portrayals of characters' inner consciousness. In "Wings," for example, the urban landscape plays an important role as the main character wanders the city, and becomes aware of his own consumer consciousness. For this section, I will concentrate on one of two essays Yi Sang wrote on rural Korea during a trip to the village of Sŏch'ŏn in 1935. Titled "Lingering Impressions of a Mountain Village," the essay documents the minutiae of Yi Sang's encounters and observations in the mountain village.

John Frankl has written about this work in his article "Between Memory and Prediction: Recasting a Mountain Village in Yi Sang's Ennui" in which Frankl discusses this work and Yi Sang's later work "Ennui," which was written in 1936 in Tokyo with Yi's recollections of the same village. Understanding the work as an "anti-nostalgic" understanding of the mountain village, Frankl discusses the second work as a revisionary "unbalanced and negative" piece of the first (256). Although Frankl touches upon the "distance" between Yi Sang and the objects that he views, I would like to discuss this point amidst the larger context of modernity.

In "Lingering Impressions of a Mountain Village" (*Sanch'on Yŏjŏng*), Yi Sang's interiority is mediated through systems of Yi Sang's cosmopolitan subjectivity. By "cosmopolitan," I refer to his translation of scenes and observations through modern markers of different cultures and items.

> There are beasts that you would only be able to see in a zoo, and these mountain animals weren't being caught and put in a zoo, for a moment,

> I thought they were taking animals from the zoo and letting them loose in the mountain. (Yi S.178)

In this work, the narrator frames his understanding of P'albongsan and local animals such as deer and boar through the image of the zoo. The zoo is an example of how metaphors reflect the ways in which modernity mediates Yi Sang's views of the rural space, which translates the space in terms of urban commodification and spectatorship, exoticizing and rendering the "ordinary" as "exceptional." As Frankl notes, the comparisons between urban and pastoral life create a distance between Yi Sang and the object of his observation; however, I argue that the "distance" is created out of his rearticulation of and inscribing of landscape under terms of "modernity." Yi Sang expresses surprise that animals are not captured and put in the zoo, and that they are being released onto the land. In this reversal, Yi Sang internalizes the zoo as a place for "beasts," and the landscape, whether the animals are indigenous to the land or not, is merely subjected to his own subjective rendering of the "urban" mapped onto the rural.

Seiji Lippit's application of Louis Althusser's notion of modern subjectivity highlights the ways in which the cosmopolitan universal represented in Yi Sang's interiority is subject to governing modes of modern ideology. Yi Sang's positive affect with the space is his (mis)recognition, the rendering of the rural space as a product of governing modern and cosmopolitan systems of thought (Lippit 63). As Althusser writes in his famous essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Toward an Investigation)":

> The reproduction of labor power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the

> rules of the established order, i.e., a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for its workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression. (132)

Applying Althusser's understanding of ideological subjugation within the realm of modern subjectivity, Yi Sang's contemporaneous points of disruption and "comprehension" of the village through modern markers discloses his reliance on capitalist worldview. More seamless quotes such as the following further disclose his "subjection to" modern discourse.

> A Spartan-like honeybee sat on a simple yet bold pumpkin flower on the vines beyond. The bright dark-yellow reflected gold, like a Cecil deMille movie, and was luxurious. If you turned your ear, you could hear music from a Renaissance living room. (181)

Yi Sang's frequent references to Hollywood—Paramount studios, films, and film terms while watching the film being played at one of the restaurants—shows the ways in which his interior dialogue is marked by his (mis)recognition of the landscape.

Gazing upon the women working in the fields, he reinterprets their appearance in terms that are "understandable" and "familiar" to capitalist economic realities: "like the socks that the M shopping mall Misono makeup sweet girl wears, the women's skin had the brightness of wheat" (184). In another observation, he identifies their labor and the landscape in terms of urban topography: "The women, like an electrician climbing an electrical pole, climbed high up the tree to pick mulberries"(184). These observations show how "modernity" is involved with the development of the urban landscape and the display of consumerism. Yi Sang's following comparison brings to mind Marshall Berman's explication on the significance of captivating military display to modern life: "In the cornfields, white, yellow, black, gray, then white again,

a whole spectrum of dogs, eight or ten, walked out in a line. Under the sensuality of the season, it was brighter than a exciting parade of Cossacks" (Yi 183). This vision captures the vividness and showy pomp of a military parade in the colorful "display" of the rural landscape, exhibiting the crux of what Berman calls the "pastoral vision of modernity" (Berman 137).

Literary scholar Kim Yun-sik makes a significant point in his elucidation of Yi Sang as the foremost representational figure of modernity and modern literature. Although Kim locates the beginning of modern literature in the influence from Dadaism, Futurism and New Tendency Literature for its vision of "alternate worlds," Kim considers Yi Sang's texts exceptional for his thematic repetition of suicide and death (Kim 247). Kim locates a "rupture" in what he calls Yi Sang's "suicidal impulse," which he understands as Yi Sang's narrative "renewal," mobilization of," and "escape" of death (243). Referring to Yi's criticism "Poems and Fiction" where he states: "Modern people are in despair. Despair gives birth to rhetoric. And because of rhetoric we despair," Kim interprets this statement as Yi's confidence in the restorative possibilities of writing. Although I agree that this is an important crux in Yi Sang's relationship to his own practice, I also think his quote highlights the ways that modern subjectivity, the changing ways of seeing, visuality, shapes and is shaped by his writing process. This interesting circular relationship and the reproduction of affect is emergent in Yi's formulation of a pervasive "specter of death." An example is the "suicidal impulse" that haunts Yi's documentation of the mountain village. At the beginning of his trip, Yi Sang accounts two dreams:

> I dreamt of a city girl who resembles the girl on the Paramount[47] trademark. Then I dreamt of a poor family that has been left in some city. They stand in a line like prisoners of war in pictures. They worry me. And then I wake up. I think about dying. I stare at my frayed jacket hanging on the nail in the wall. It followed me here for thousand ri[48] on the western road" (180)

In this quote, Yi dreams of two realities, one dream is a recollection of the romanticism of Hollywood film, while the other a haunting reminder of the brutal realities of the urban poor and war. Rather than understanding his essay as a deliberate manifestation of his criticism of the "power of " rhetoric, I understand Yi Sang's text to be interesting in its parallel contemplations of death, consumerism, and, most of all, its exemplification of the interior split between the constitution of the body and the mind, the dualities between the materiality of bodies and commodified representations.

The following quote further captures the ways in which Yi interestingly discusses modernity and the accompanying overwhelming despair.

> My concerns are bigger than this limited world. If I opened the floodgates then a flood of worries will infiltrate this body. But my masochism will not allow me to pull the stopper yet. Worries wrap and surround me, my body will be cleansed by the rain, whittled by the wind (*p'ungmause*), and will shrivel up and disappear. Spreading the melancholy night wind upon my pad, I write a letter to my pale friends. Inside I enclose my own obituary.

The "specter of despair" that accompanies Yi Sang's narrative of the rural space and its populations brings to mind Horkheimer and Adorno's understanding of modernity and the "culture industry," which criticizes the false replication of "individual will" that has become obsolete under "modernity." The anxieties emergent in the dreams

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[47] References Paramount Pictures, unsure of what logo he refers to, however, often times, there were screen shots superimposed by the logo at the end of the film.

[48] A measurement of distance, approximately 0.39 km.

and the "suicidal impulse" of Yi Sang's text comments on the contradictions of modernity within Yi Sang's interiority. Yi Sang's essay is an indulgent subjective account, hemmed by the lack of "freedom," and subjection to the modern discourses that govern the points of his "comprehension" of the rural space. This text, along with Ch'ae Man-sik's "Toward Three Roads" shows the tensions within bourgeois subjectivity under what we understand as onset "modernity" and mass culture in 1920s, 1930s Korea. Although the "suicidal impulse" is particular to Yi Sang's "modern subjectivity," it exemplifies the ways in which the representation of the rural space is engulfed and reinterpreted within modernity. This affective understanding of the rural space as one of "despair" is not only pervasive throughout Yi Sang's narratives but is also resonant in other modernist texts.

A good comparison text is another modernist writer Kim Yu-chŏng's recollections of the agrarian space. In "The One who leaves in Spring" (*Ip'i P'urŭrŏ Kasitŏn Nimi),* Kim disrupts the romanticism of the rural space, by deconstructing the space through negative affect. The title of the essay is taken from a song that the farmers sing while working in the fields. This melancholy song talks about one's beloved who leaves in the spring and does not return in the winter. Kim notes that this song leaves a strong imprint of "rural charm," however, his focus on this song that mourns absence reveals his affective turn. This nostalgia is forgotten when Kim begins to talk about the rural space as a place of despair.

> The country is not a beautiful and peaceful place. Seoul people yearn for the mountains, the rice, and the blooming grass… in this way, sorrowful poetry becomes flooded with this monotonous dream, but at that same moment there is a country bumpkin who has rice, clothes and money and is aching to come to Seoul.

In the above quote, Kim shows the contradiction between poetic perception of the country and the reality of the country, which shatters this representation. He reiterates throughout the text that the country is a place of despair, rather than of rich harvest. Kim also provocatively notes the absurdities of rural production, pointing out that although farmers are producers of rice, they starve and go hungry.

> We know the country where they can't eat rice (*ssal*), not the country where you can't eat food (*bap)*. The odd starving people with hungry bowels do not know the city. If we ever instinctually realize *jurim* [harvesting food that cannot be eaten] we would immediately not say the beautiful country, peaceful country. (214)

Kim's remarks on the ironies of jurim hits the heart of emerging contradictions of capitalist-economic realities, as farmers became materially disassociated with the fruits of their labor, the "modernization" and production in the rural areas producing rice to feed the empire, while farmers went hungry. As in Yi's text, although both writers are writing within a modernist framework, their interiority documents the absurdities within modernity: the arresting affect associated with modernity as a spectacular whirlwind of progress, but also of enveloping despair.

THE SPACES OF MARXISM AND UTOPIAN POSSIBILITIES

If Yi Sang is considered the foremost example of a modernist writer during this period, KAPF writer and critic Im hwa can be considered another figure within modern literary criticism who occupied the opposite spectrum, foregoing revolutionary "aesthetics" and locating "revolutionary" literature in class politics and social criticism. In this section, I would like to examine Im Hwa's criticisms alongside proletarian literature on the rural space as a way to understand "popular imagination"

of the rural space, and its central but marginal position within modern discourse. His criticisms on modern literature reveal how proletarian literature both differed and were similar to alternative compositions of the agrarian village (*nongch'on*).

Discussing the return to "agrarian literature," in "The Peasant and Literature," (*Nongmin kwa munhak*) Im hwa highlights the significance of the agrarian population in two ways: the peasant as a reader of literature and the peasant as an important "literary subject." These two questions, although discussed since the 1920's, remain the crux of his literary criticism on the peasant and the rural areas in the 1930's. In response to the former problematic, Im hwa reveals his bourgeois positionality by asking the question, how do they make literature both entertaining and "awaken" peasants from their "ignorance" (132). Practical discussions on literacy rate reflect the rational possibilities of the peasant as reader, but other discussions reveal intellectuals' classed understandings of the relationship between the masses and literature. Im Hwa touches upon the problem of "civilizing" literature, which involves the reconciliation between "entertaining" literature and "social politics." I would like to examine Im's organization of literature as a question of emerging "political space," and "political actors": who and in what way are allowed in the formulation of class politics.

In terms of the peasant as a "literary subject," the rendering of the rural space becomes one of the sites "in need of change." Im Hwa criticizes the split inherent in earlier New Tendency Literature between literature of the city and rural-scape, as founded upon class-divisions (134). In order to provide examples of representative literatures on the rural space, Im Hwa discusses the integral ways writer Sim Hun and

Nagatsuka Takashi[49] capture the peasant's "productive health" and "strong zest for life," despite the "unenlightened" and "uncultivated" descriptions of natural rural life (135). An example of this type of rendering of rural space is KAPF writer, Yi Ik-sang's "Seaside Village," which illustrates an idyllic representation of a fisherman's village and a fisherman, Sŏng-p'al.

The story begins with a description of a southern fishing village: the sounds of the boats punctuated with the tide warning bell, and the different types of people—wanderers, farmers, merchants, sailors—who traverse the docks. The main protagonist is preparing to leave on a fishing trip, and his wife and son catch him before he leaves to give him a charm his wife received from the fortune-teller. Revealing the superstition and practices of the village, this local color distinguishes this space as tangential to "modernity." The fortune-teller's grim premonition that something will happen to their family portends the sailor's ill fate at sea. However, when his wife gives him the talisman he responds,

> 'What would I do with a talisman (*Pujak*)!' he said, flashing his bright white teeth, and laughed again. If you saw his smiling face from far away, you wouldn't be able to tell if he was crying or laughing, there were so many different emotions in that one expression. He fastened the pouch he was holding to his jacket string again and looked down. The red pouch on his jacket-string must have looked out of place to him because he laughed louder. (154)

The description of this exchange is interesting because it highlights the fisherman's acceptance of his "fate" through the many emotions that run through face, indistinguishably sorrowful and exuberant, accented with his hearty laughter. This is the last time we encounter the fisherman, and the main feature of the remainder of the

[49] A representative text exhibiting Nagatsuka's depiction of rural life: "The Soil: A Portrait of Rural Life in Meiji Japan." Refer to Nagatsuka, T.

text is the unrelenting strength of nature in the endless storm, and the villagers' hope that the fishermen survived:

> In this town, there was a superstition from a very long time ago. When you open the top of the rice bowl and there are water drops on the top, it means that Sŏngp'al and the others whose whereabouts are unknown, are still living. If there is no water then it means that they are no long living. Every time they set the table on the ondol floor and put rice back out, they would see if the water fell when the lid was opened. (Yi 161)

Although the water keeps falling from the lid, the story ends and the fishermen never return. This detail of the "failure" of local traditions reaffirms the laws of nature in the face of superstition, and the corresponding lack of power within totalizing structures of life and death.

The illustration of nature and the fishermen's communion with the fatalistic structures of the village are bolstered by accompanying critics', such as Im Hwa's, production of the category of the peasant and the rural space as a central space to "nation" and "tradition." In the following quote, he describes this relationship:

> The discovery of peaceful and traditional conventions in rural life is the modern person's recollection of a homeland *(chaguk*) and is a kind of historical consciousness. In agricultural life, there is no distance from nature and the free discovery and lively communion is one fragrance of nature. Mankind's world, experiencing life and death with nature, is a scroll *(ilp'ok*一幅) of the modern person's beautiful dream. Especially in terms of agrarian literature, this examination of man's relish in nature awakens the deprivation in the city person and, with this yearning of life, incites freedom and human change in his daily life… (136)

I focus on the above quote to show the way Im Hwa organizes the rural space around temporal markers, such as the "recollection of homeland" in the use of the rhetoric of "return," "nostalgia," and affective familiarity with the term "home." Although the

focus is on the rural space, Im Hwa suggests the opposite: that the rural space conceptually serves as an "awakening" to the city person's lack of freedom and alienation from nature; in this way, the rural space serves as a necessary site within urban consciousness that reestablishes a sense of "community."[50] Using Homi Bhabha's understanding of the homogenous time of the nation, I also think it is interesting to examine Im Hwa's understanding of this "recollection" as a type of historical consciousness, highlighting Bhabha's emphasis on the "split consciousness" that occurs in the formation of a historical nation. The temporal construction of the nation relegates the "traditional" and hybrid elements, in this case the local traditions of the seaside village, to the "scrolls" of the nation. The elements of "nature" and "superstition" become "controlled" elements after the onset of urbanization, industrialization, and civilization.

Other scholars have written about the figure of the peasant amidst early 20th century modernization. In Clark Sorensen's article, "National Identity and the Creation of the Category Peasant in Colonial Korea," Sorensen discusses the changes that occurred at the turn of the 20th century that understood "peasant" (*nongmin)* as a central figure of national identity and "koreanness," as formulated tangential to 1920's consumption and capitalist-driven modern identity. Specifically, Sorensen discusses the way in which the 18th century social stratification of *yangban*, *sangnom*, and *ch*'*onnom* was supplanted with the term nongmin, and the lower classes "began to be

[50] An interesting comparison is Gi-wook Shin's discussion of the agrarian movement in which he describes the displacement of the urban for the rural as the center of society: "They viewed the urban as the 'space and symbol of contradictions of current society' and argued that the rural should be 'the center of economy and culture of a society.' In order to achieve a society free form urbanism (tosi chuui), commercialism (sangsi chuui), or materialism (kumbon chuui), agrarianists advocated the establishment of a self-sufficient agrarian society" (Shin 794).

imagined in terms of primordial ethnic community epitomized by peasantry"(293). Sorensen traces this change of "class based on social-status" to "class based in relations of production," as specific to the change from Confucian social status based on "mental labor" to "physical labor" (299). This signifies changes of modernity that moved away from prior Sino-centric understandings of social hierarchy.

I believe Sorensen's understanding to be useful in illustrating the relationships between changing economic and political structures and the cultural production of "nongmin," as a constantly changing popular imagination of the peasant class. However, in terms of proletarian literature, I would like to expand this idea by understanding how spatial constellations also mapped this cultural production. With this in mind, I am interested in the complicated ways that the spatial configurations of Marxism, as exemplified through Im Hwa's reading of the rural space, assisted formulations lending to this popular imagination. In lieu of the discussion in the previous section about the positionality of modern subjectivity and its "reading" of the rural space, it can also be said that Marxism is accompanied with its own spatial configurations that create a further complex relationship with the rural space.

As David Harvey discusses in the term the "spatial fix" of capitalism, Marx's understanding of the accumulation of capital fixes the site of revolutionary possibility within the industrial and urban space. In this famous quote from *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx documents the different stages of the proletariat: "But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more" (480). Although the previous essays from modernist writers "read" the rural

landscape differently, in many ways, Im Hwa in his alignment of the center-peripheral configurations of Marxism adopts similar rhetoric of: "rescuing the [proletariat] from their 'idiocy' and reducing the proletariat to a subaltern class" (Harvey 24). The quote from Marx also shows how the conceptual "stages" of the proletariat parallels and follows the development of industrialization and urbanization, glossing over the cultural differences, and geographical differences in other localities. Because of this, it also determines the space of the revolution to be urban spaces with its greater masses of "bodies." In Korea's case, the agrarian population becomes the site where the contradictions between Western Marxism and Marxism in the Korean case become more apparent, and this divide is mirrored in the difference in criticism between proletarian urban and rural literature.

If we are to understand Im Hwa's criticisms and readings of "ideal" peasant literature as a site of this discourse, we can see the ways in which epistemological structures of Marxism and nationalism similarly flatten the distinctions of Korea and the "peasant," exhibiting the ways both frameworks by-pass slippages, ruptures and heterogeneous elements within the texts: the former, in favor of establishing a universal "world-wide" proletariat, and the latter in favor of a temporal "national" historical consciousness. Utilizing the framework of Partha Chatterjee's work, I read Im Hwa's understanding of the rural space as a reflection of the temporal perception of nation under the homogeneous time of modernity and capital, which renders subsequent "encounters" with another type of space as pre-capital (5). As such, we can intervene in these structures by returning to the critical heterogeneous elements that are excluded in understandings of rural literature.

A critical intervention in Yi's account is the way in which the peasant occupies the rural space. Contrary to Marx's illustration of the "revolutionary" masses as space occupied by dense bodies, instead, Yi's text suggests the opposite: the absence of bodies. The romanticism of the fishermen's "communion with nature" is only productive in the beginning of the narrative, and the fisherman quickly ceases to be a "healthy viable laboring body," when he dies at sea. The remainder of the narrative wallows in this loss, the rural space embodying the affects of absence. This theme of absence, and its modernist alternative the "specter of despair," suggests networks that are built on affects not considered within the ideological structures of Marxism, nationalism, and modernity.

Another liminal site of Western Marxism is the contradiction of emerging geopolitics that gives birth to ideas of "emigration" and "utopia" in socialist colonies such as planned by Charles Fourier and Robert Owen. Marx describes these "Utopian" visions in the *Communist Manifesto*: "Such fantastic pictures of future society, painted at a time when the proletariat is still in a very undeveloped state and has but a fantastic conception of its own position correspond with the first instinctive yearnings of that class for a general reconstruction of society" (498). Marx, however, criticizes the premature quality of these "reactionary groups" who believe in "castles in the air," claiming they "hold fast to the original views for their masters," lacking the necessary "consciousness" acquired in the historical development of the proletariat to move forward without resorting to the same class conflicts and dependence on bourgeois structures (499). As David Harvey notes however, emigration and the utopian dream was a logical response to workers seeking their own "spatial fix." This

contradiction is particularly insightful in the context of Korea in the 1930's and 1940's, as emergence of emigration in proletarian literature become increasingly common.

We see this contradiction emerge in works that deal with the "frontier," such as Paek Sin-ae's narrative "Kkŏraei," which was first published in January of 1934 in *The New Woman Magazine.* Paek is considered one of the most important realist writers of the colonial period. This narrative, as others by Paek's like "Don't go" (*Kaji Malkae*) and "The Comrade Who Has Gone Far Away" (*Mŏllikan Tongmu),* is based on her own travels in Siberia, and captures the diasporic experience of Koreans through a female protagonist. "Kkŏraei" is set in an unspecified place north of Korea, near Manchuria. Cold, vast, and barren, the Siberian landscape provides a fitting backdrop for the topic of a dispossessed group of people, and is a reflection of the emigration of Korean peasants in the 1930's to Manchuria, as a result of encouragement from the Japanese government (Park 2).

In part, from the standpoint of the Japanese government, the goal of this endeavor was to establish Korean nationals as a kind of representative of the Japanese government to the Manchurian people. A reflection of changes in Japanese policy in the 1930's,[51] the Japanese empire used this populating technique as leverage against

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[51] See also Ching, Leo. *Becoming Japanese*. The discourse of dosa established a common likeness between Japanese and Koreans, doka and kominka (*naissen ittai)* Japanese and Koreans as one single body) marked more intense strategies of identity. Ching further makes a differentiation between *doka* and *kominka*, by noting that *doka* dealt with the colonial government's aims of making the colonized into Japanese, while *kominka* involved the internalization of these ideologies of identity, which occurred during this period of mobilization in 1937. After the Manchurian incident in 1932, the Japanese started to seriously consider Korea for its reserves of humans, and it played an important role in the mobilization of the Korean people into the Japanese empire.

See also Lee, Chulwoo's, "Modernity, Legality, and Power in Korea under Japanese Rule." Lee discusses Japan's method of colonial control in terms of the Rural Revitalization Campaign that

the Chinese government, and, following this argument, the people were useful as settling "bodies." In many ways, it was a way to deal with the overpopulation of farming land to make room for Japanese "penny capitalists" (Delissen, 130). For Koreans, however, the migration was most prompted by the promise of free land for farming, and populations dispossessed by the depression that started in the late 1920s and resulting landowner-tenant disputes considered emigration a viable option to alleviate their poverty (Gragert 140).

In Paek's text, the main character Sun-hi is of Korean origin, but the group that accompanies her is comprised of a mix of various people of different ethnicities that include one Chinese "coolie," as well as, Russian-Korean, and Russian soldiers. The soldiers are leading the group to Manchuria, and it is clear that they are not conventional "prisoners," but upon crossing the border they have become "Manchurian subjects," and have been compelled to follow these soldiers. As the narrative unfolds, it is revealed that Sun-hi, her mother, and her grandfather have embarked on this trip to search for Sun-hi's missing father, who they believe is dead. They want to retrieve his remains to bury him at home:

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sought to increase performance of the population, by instilling "work ethic." An essential aspect of Japan's relationship with Korea is described as "interest-driven representation formation", which assists a fluid disciplining of colonial subjects. Similarly to Foucault, Lee proposes that power is discursively constituted through multiple formations. As in colonial capitalism, what facilitates power is not just the direct pressure by Japanese government through policy and policing, but the production of control, "organically" through the "normalizing" of citizens, under the understanding that creating a "semivoluntary" citizen is more efficient to the empire. The "normalizing" of citizens and commodification of individuals as laborers, valued for their productive capabilities, is viewed as an aspect of modernization. However, Lee disrupts this Foucaultian analysis by considering the Korean colonial subject as a fragmented subject, not "docile" bodies. In what a modern state would be determined as "discursive power", is disrupted by the unwilling Korean subject, thus, certain measures such as "flogging" becomes a site through which the Japanese assimilation project reverts to an uglier form of imperial violence.

> In our native country, the three of us heard the news and the three of us made the decision to bring back my husband's skeleton. However, at X X X without a word we were dragged here. If you let us go, we will find my husband's skeleton and return to our homeland. (Paek 32)

The fantastical, figurative quality of this passage emphasizes the exilic nature of the group. A phantasm of the past, the missing body adds a haunted quality to the text that affectively captures an interesting "loss" in the theme of emigration. This is emphasized further by the stark, barren, and unforgiving qualities of the Siberian landscape. The narrator traces the main character Sun-hi's development as an increasingly "conscious" proletariat. She begins to protest the treatment of the group, demanding physical necessities and a warm place to stay. The paradigmatic proletarian subject, Sun-hi embodies the active passion and urgency for change; even the Russian soldiers respond to her insistence and provide more hospitable arrangements for the group.

As Naoki Watanabe writes in "'Manchuria' and the Agrarian Proletariat Literature of Colonial Korea: Narratives of Cooperation (Kyŏwa) and Reinventing Agrarianism," the utopian imagination of Manchuria in proletarian literature by writers such as Yi Ki-yŏng and Han Sŏl-ya, depicts a space where different ethnic groups live—Chinese, Manchurians, Japanese, Koreans— and conflicts arise from the friction of these encounters (22). Similarly, Paek's narrative captures these conflicts in the border space of Siberia. On one hand, these contacts are mediated through romantic illustration, as in Sun-hi's interest for the Russian solder: "In the morning, the face of the soldier who brought the food was different than the day before, and, when Sun-hi looked more carefully the soldier was much more taller. The young

soldier with a white face had a charming and attractive face" (Pak 41). However, this ideological depiction of whiteness contrasts with illustrations of the Russified Korean soldier, who she treats with contempt. This racial hierarchy is further organized through her pity for the Chinese coolie; because of Sun-hi's "Korean" identity, she considers herself "superior" to him, interestingly, within the organization of this liminal space, "whiteness" seems to be prized. These ethnic conflicts are also notably reconciled through class and, although in this story the Chinese coolie is sympathized with, in other proletarian texts such as Kang Kyŏng-ae's "Salt" (*Sogŭm)* the Chinese landlord, as an exploiter of both resources and of the main protagonist's body, is especially vilified.

In many ways, though this narrative represents a paradigmatic and dynamic proletarian hero in the character of Sun-hi, these affective designations show the complexities of the diasporic experience, emphasizing the interpretive slippages of the spatial and temporal structures of Marxism. Instead, Paek's text represents a different assemblage of spatial and temporal images, sketching an interesting geographical and ideological complexity of the diasporic experience. Capturing the realities of emigration and the "lived experiences" of the Korean people who left their hometowns in order to search for farmland, through the poetics of the text the text formulates these experiences through modes of exile and utopia. In particular, the sentimental language brings to mind the most common exilic narrative of the Jewish people: "Like the wandering lost flock of sheep caught by the wolf and wandering over the rugged frontier, the white clothed Korean group of people again driven out…" (Paek 43)

Through this invocation of exile, the text suggests the linear epic of a wanderer in search of a home.

Postcolonial understandings of diaspora illuminate this text as not only a historically grounded experience in the 1930's, but also as central to an imagined condition of emigration. The "loss" that is carried throughout Paek's text resonates with Vijay Mishra's understanding of "melancholia" as a particular loss of an "ideal kind" associated with the painful experience of diaspora (9). The term "melancholia" specifically refers to a loss that cannot be "healed" because the loss is abstract and "is therefore internalized as the emptiness of the ego itself" (Mishra 10). This "melancholia" is reproduced in the description of the Siberian "exile road":

> On the Siberian plain, with the cruel cold wind harassing them, the three people started walking on the exile road. Past the plain and over the mountain ridge, walking the icy road and in the snow, they walked with the sound of the horse's footsteps over their hearts. Where they walked, there were tears of blood collected in the traces of the footsteps of the poor people who had been chased out. (Paek 45)

In Mishra's application of psychoanalytic theory "traumatic moments heighten the sense of mourning occasioned by a prior 'death' of the homeland which in a sense is part of the entity, the *dasein,* the subject" (14). The text suggests this "internal" death with the frequent allusion to tears and blood in the loss of the "homeland," figuratively in the "bones" of Sun-hi's father, as well as in the affective description of this road that has been traversed many times by other wanderers.

The poetics of the text additionally capture the ambiguities of the "home" represented and the "Other" by which they are being chased out. This ambiguity calls upon the formulation of the "nation" as a figurative loss, and the slippages between

what is considered subject and this "Other" that persecutes them. Translated again within this exilic narrative, the text borrows from a representative wandering to envision the Korean diasporic condition:

> 'Like the wandering lost flock of sheep caught by the wolf and traveling over the rugged frontier, the white-clothed group of kkŏrae was again driven out…'
>
> While the tears fell from Sunhi's eyes, she caught this written on the wall with a pick.
>
> 'Can you escape as a kkŏrai?'

The word "kkŏrai," the word that Russians use to define "Korean," is reflective of ethnic, racial boundaries, but also defined a new type of sensibility of "korean" in diasporic state. Sun-hi defines herself as "kkŏrai" and disrupts the interpellation of these structures of the "racialized Other." Instead, her self-definition through this word reformulates an indeterminate state of "koreanness." Through the representation of Sun-hi, as a "sheep," there is a sacralization of this relationship between the nation and its citizens, which calls attention to the ambiguities within the framework of this "homeland." As Mishra calls "diaspora's own silenced discourses of disruption and discontinuity" (6), "homeland" as such floats away from the tangible realities that caused the emigration of Koreans in the 1930's, and suggests instead the refiguration of "homeland," "nation-state," in this affective loss. This loss, in Sunhi's question "Can you escape as a kkŏrai?" shapes diaspora to be an endless condition of melancholia.

This condition of melancholia connects the condition of the 1930's with diasporic communities, exiles or emigrants, who continued to shape both the landscape and imagination of "Korea" post-liberation. Although at a different period,

I look back in hindsight at these literatures to understand the formulations of "community" that provide alternative readings from definitive structures of "nation" and "class" that do not capture the power of affect in shaping community. As Salmon Rushdie writes of the postcolonial experience of diaspora:

> It may be that writers in my position, exiled or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by a sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, we must do so in the knowledge—which gives rise to profound uncertainties— our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (Rushdie 10)

Rushdie's provocative understanding of the condition of diaspora illuminates the material circumstances that have marginalized dislocated, exiled people. However, it also takes us beyond the "physical alienation" and allows us to revisit the representations of diasporic experience as a way to understand the constellation of loss, belonging, and reclaiming that constitute this state.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explores the spacial and temporal configurations of proletarian literature in the 1930's that involved the focus on the agrarian space as a site for mass politics. Using Chakrabarty's theoretical framework that engages with a reading of official Marxist historiography of capitalism and alternative histories, I revisit the site of the representation of the rural precisely because it represents the liminal but central space of modernist and Marxist discourse. As Chakrabarty contends for the contemporaneous histories that elude, I move away from the Marxist focus on laborers

and the urban space. To do so, the first section centered on two modernist writers, Yi Sang's and Kim Yu- chŏng's, essays on the rural space that I argue maps the rural space under governing structures of modern consciousness. This mapping occurs through the points of comprehension that I define as the recognition of "modern markers" of urban space. The second section, with the modernist position of the rural space in mind, examines the contradictions within Marxism and how Marxist theory was negotiated in proletarian literature. Through proletarian texts on the rural space, by writers Yi Ik-sang and Paek Sin-ae, I argue that the networks that are produced within the text suggest alternatives to the central Marxist narratives of mass politics. With Yi's "Seaside Village," I locate this alternative within the absence of bodies and embodied space, while Paek's text shows the complicated construction of community within the diasporic experience. The cotemporaneous description of the rural space captures what Chakrabarty says is "the disjuncture of the present with itself" (109).

Although this chapter is called "The Liminal Spaces of Discourse," I do not intend to disregard the Marxist framework and its significance to mass politics in colonial Korea. As Lisa Lowe has pointed out in "Utopia and Modernity," we cannot ignore the ways in which Marxist theory and its "narrative utopia" is central to the critique of capitalism and the rise of class-consciousness and, might I add in the Korean case, the elucidation of structural inequalities such as imperialism. However, at the same time, Marxist theory also contains within its narrative a certain fixity: "the development of proletarian class consciousness has privileged a uniform concept of the working subject, with particular definitions of labor and exploitation, which has marginalized other kinds of political resistance, subjectivity, and practice" (12).

Although Lowe discusses the contemporary moment of globalization, this framework has been a starting point in my own revisitation of these works. As I closed this chapter with proletarian literary representations of diaspora, I am conscious of the ways in which these "narrative utopias" are glossed over in present circumstances that organize the experiences of those diasporic communities abroad in a peripheral relationship with the "Korean" center, or even erase the legitimacies of their experience of dislocation. I hope by understanding representations of "narrative utopias" in a productive manner, we can understand the possibilities represented in the condition of diaspora that connect and examine the complexities of narratives of dislocation rather than flatten and splinter them.

V. FROM ARTIST TO SOLDIER OF CULTURE: DESTABILIZING IDEOLOGICAL CONVERSION DURING THE 1930'S: THE CASE OF PAK YŎNG-HŬI

INTRODUCTION

"Although ideology was gained, what was lost is art"- Pak Yŏng-hŭi, 1934

This chapter focuses on leftist writer, critic, and lastly pro-Japanese intellectual (*ch'inilp'a*) Pak Yŏng-hŭi who has been a critical presence throughout this dissertation. In the first chapter on New Tendency Literature, I discussed Pak alongside another main critic Kim Ki-jin; they were two central thinkers of the New Tendency Literature movement during the early formations of the proletarian culture movement. Pak, in particular, became a core figure of KAPF, and led the ideological turn in 1927 and 1928, which resulted in the movement away from the style of New Tendency literature toward increased political content in proletarian culture.

This chapter addresses the latter portion of colonial period leftist politics during the 1930s, which, amidst changing colonial policy, was punctuated with anxieties that reflect both points of stress in intellectual production, and structural changes by the colonial government in the management of intellectuals. This chapter, like the previous chapters, travels in the discursive spaces between Marxism and Nationalism by formulating Pak Yŏng-hŭi as first an artist to a "soldier of culture." I also focus on Pak to destabilize his ideological "conversion" (*chŏnhyang)* in the 1930s as purely about the recantation of Marxism or a unilateral understanding of "conversion" as submission to Japanese ideology.

In contrast to past scholarship and aligning with recent scholarship, I emphasize the "progression" of Pak's ideological change (Chang 346); through this, I would also like to destabilize the term "conversion" and discuss the ways in which this term can be dissembled. Because the term "conversion" suggests the sudden "turning to" or oppositional relationship of two ideological states (Viswanathan 39), this conception hides the ways in which the structures that determine the converted are similar:

> The blurring between the objects to which the convert assimilates—and those he or (she) challenges with a free crossover between assent and dissent—is precisely the source of the power or conversion. Thus, assimilation and dissent often crisscross with motives not immediately attached to their apparent function in conversion. (39)

Although Pak's ideological change is not a "religious" conversion, this conceptual framework highlights the ways in which scholarship that interprets Pak's ideological change from "Marxist to Non-Marxist" or "Korean nationalist to Japanese nationalist" fixes the idea of "conversion" as assenter to dissenter, and masks the shifting affiliations of Marxism with Korean Nationalism. This idea simplifies the complicated social processes of the late 1930's that informed Pak's ideological reorganization, and the ways in which the blurring of the conceptual Korean nation and Japanese nation necessarily foregrounds Pak's "pro-Japanese" texts in the early 1940s.

Pak's statement on the progress of the proletarian culture movement over the last decade concludes with the above beginning statement on the incompatibility of ideology and art: "Although ideology was gained, what was lost is art." Pak's statement appeared in a series of articles published in *TongaIlbo* from January 2 to

January 11, 1934, in which Pak addressed the developments within KAPF since its beginnings. Pak's statement reveals not only his position amongst changing consciousness of Japanese and Korean nationalisms, but also the ways in which culture is organized along these political lines. Pak's position as an intellectual, artist, etc. is also a site of negotiation as the anxiety of cultural production is brought to the forefront of discussion. Scholars like Kim Yun-sik have pointed out that this statement can be interpreted in two ways: on one hand, as others have, one can understand the ideology lost as Korean nationalism. At the same time, this statement can also be comprehended as a "return" to literary formalism. In this formulation, Kim reinterprets Pak's understanding of proletarian literature and the infusion of politics in literature as not a return but a loss of aesthetics: the "ideological acquisition of literary consciousness" (116).

Although Namhee Lee discussed the Korean democratization movements during the 1970s and 1980s, I find her understanding of the split between intellectuals and the working class during the Minjung movement very useful in understanding the role of the intellectual in revolutionary movements. Lee points out that during the dissipation of the 1968-1969 German protest movement, intellectuals began to question their "assumed identity" as the "revolutionary vanguard" (N. Lee 4). Her comparison of the Minjung movement and the German protest movement helps us understand the formulation of the intellectual and mass politics as both local and universal. In this manner, we can understand the nuanced formulation of KAPF intellectuals and mass politics as both vanguard and split from the working class as particular to the Korean intellectual class, but also in sync with the ideological

problematic of Marxism as an international movement. Pak's "conversion" can be understood as a "crisis" at the end of the KAPF movement: the culmination of multiple anxieties emerging from their own "agency," exhibiting the tension between the intellectuals and the masses they "represent."

This chapter addresses themes that occur chronologically after the previous three chapters, and makes what I consider the necessary exploration of the dissolution of KAPF in 1935. Although in my previous chapters, I attempted to show the political alternatives within the proletarian culture movement, I have also been keenly aware of the limitations of studying mass politics through intellectuals who often are not from the "proletarian class." In this chapter, I will address the anxiety of intellectual production and the role of the intellectual, which I argue was brought to the forefront in the ideological "conversion" of Pak Yŏng-hŭi in the mid 1930's.

This chapter recalls postcolonial critic Gayatri Spivak's conversation about the intellectual's "ventriloquism" of the speaking subaltern (28) and difference between the intellectual's role as being an "influence" and "representative" (30). Working off of Antonio Gramsci's concentration on the role of the intellectual in the cultural and political structure of hegemony,[52] Spivak is critical of the intellectual's role in the epistemic construction of the subaltern, especially under essentialist constructions by leftist intellectuals. This idea makes us conscious in the Korean context as well of the leftist intellectuals' representation of the proletarian as both subject forming, and in part a "speaking for" the subaltern class. Spivak asks whether the subaltern can speak,

[52] For Antonio Gramsci's use of the term "subaltern," refer to Gramsci, A., Hoare, Q., and Nowell, G.

and determines it cannot within dominant discourse. In this sense, I also keep in mind that the medium of criticism and literature are "forms of a class specialization and control of a general social practice" (Williams 49). Especially at the dissolution of KAPF, it becomes clear that intellectuals are located within the cultural apparatus of the state. At the same time, this negotiation does not undermine the ways in which the representation of the proletarian subject challenges the diametric opposition between subject and object, "mark[ing] the place of 'disappearance' with something other than silence and nonexistence" (Spivak 102).

With these key issues in mind, I situate the ideological conversion of Pak Yŏng-hŭi within the unfolding developments of the Korean Artist Proletarian Federation (KAPF) and colonial policies. As the communist movement and the joint alliances with nationalist groups within Sin'ganhoe[53] and peasant and labor groups gained more ground in the late 1920s, the colonial police simultaneously became increasingly watchful of nationalist and socialist groups. The pressure that resulted from concentrated surveillance also affected the momentum of the proletarian culture movement. Starting from the late 1920s and into the 1930s, there was a series of mass arrests (*kŏmgŏ sakŏn)* targeting suspected members of the Communist party. In February of 1928, there were mass arrests of the members of KAPF, and, although the majority arrested were released, it led to the group's momentary decline (Scalapino and Lee 122). Although KAPF was later reorganized in 1930 under previous members Im Hwa, Kwŏn Hwan, An Mak and Kim Hyo-sik, during the following arrests in

[53] Sin'ganhoe, otherwise known as New Korea Society, was launched on February 15, 1927, and was meant to be a nationalist-Communist alliance. From the outset, however, it was clear that it leaned toward "accommodating a leftist front." For more on Sin'ganhoe, refer to Scalapino, R. and Lee, C. Also refer to Wells, K.

1931, the Japanese police were able to procure a "detailed account of the policies, activities, and personnel involved in the Federation" (Scalapino and Lee 122) and the group's progress was further stalled.

In all, the period from 1931 to 1934 was punctuated by the surveillance and suppression by the Japanese government, and finally in 1935 the Korean Proletarian Artist Federation was disbanded. Although KAPF was disbanded in 1935, scholars discuss the gradual end of KAPF through the writers' ideological "convergence" that some argue started to occur even prior to KAPF's 1935 disbandment.[54] The scholarship on this period defines the ideological changes that occurred during the 1930's with the terms "conversion" (*chŏnhyang),* "pro-Japanese" (*chin'il*), and "surface conversion" (*wijang chŏnhyang).* Although, in its general definition, "conversion" can mean any ideological "conversion," such as the importation and subsequent naturalization of foreign ideology; in this case, it has a specific historical connotation located within the 1930s when communist/socialist intellectuals "relinquished" their socialist ideology. The specific historical context, however, has fallen away in contemporary scholarship, and, as I discuss in the conclusion, "pro-Japanese" has become synonymous with intimacy (親) with the Japanese nation, and "traitor" to the Korean nation.

The ideological shift during the 193's occurred amidst rapidly changing conditions in Japanese imperial policy and colonial development that provided the foundation for these changes. A turning point was Japanese imperial expansion into

[54] For scholars that discuss the end of KAPF through ideological conversion in early 1930's, see Kim, Y., Kim, C. Y.

Manchuria, which was marked by the Manchurian incident in 1931.[55] Historians like Prasenjit Duara and Louise Young have written on the crucial site of Manchuria as the "puppet state" of the Japanese empire. For war preparations, Japan utilized the colonies for both resources in the development of industry and supplies for the war effort, but also for manpower (Ho 376).

The differences in imperial policy and shift in leadership to Governor-General Minami Jirō from 1936 is described in scholarship as the period of "cultural rule" to "total war." In terms of policy, this shift to "total war" is most exemplified by the often discussed "naissen itai" policy, which reorganized Japanese and Koreans under the rhetoric of "one body." Historians such as Leo Ching have described the change as "imperialization," through the evolution in colonial policy from "doka," otherwise known as assimilation policy during "cultural rule," to "kominka" policy in the 1930's, also termed "imperialization," which suggests the increased internal surveillance of the state.[56] This chapter examines what happens to the intellectual under the "one body" policy, and how, in the Korean case of Pak Yŏng-hŭi, it involved the mobilization of the intellectual as a "soldier of culture" for the state. This change not only required the submersion of leftist ideology, but the complete erasure of the Korean state in Pak's formulation of culture.

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[55] The Manchurian Incident (or the Mukden Incident) refers to the staged explosion of Japan's South Manchurian Railway near Mukden by Japanese officer, Lt. Kawamoto Suemori. This incident was used to justify Japan's invasion and occupation of Manchuria.

[56] Leo Ching discusses the different articulations of identity by the state. Kominka policy specifically involved the making of imperial subjects through reimagination of the japanese subject, under imperialization, imperial surveillance and interiority. For more on "kominka" and "doka," refer to Ching, L.

I understand the terms chŏnhyang, wijang chŏnhyang, and ch'in'il to be "levels" and measurements of the writers' involvements and participation in Japanese nationalism, often mediated in hindsight by the politics surrounding contemporary scholarship. The shift in state policy and reorganization of state ideology represents a traumatic moment in Korean history that has been unilaterally remembered as Korean submission to Japanese imperialism. I argue that this understanding ignores the differences between "colonial subject" and "imperial subject," and the ways in which power is mediated through ethnic/national imperial structures, and the similarities between the organization of leftist politics and imperial rhetoric. In one way, the "new culture" (*sinmunhwa)* imposed by the state was a hegemonic exertion of control and centralization of mass culture, and can be construed as unilaterally applied to both Japanese and Korean citizens, but the addition of "new culture" in the Korean case doubly contains the reorganization of the imagination of the Korean nation against and within Japanese ethnic nationalism.

These issues have informed my exploration in this chapter. In the first section, I will review the scholarship that has been performed on the ideological conversion of leftist intellectuals, and will highlight the trends, differences, and similarities between scholarship performed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, after the Minjung movement and in the present. I understand the different labels surrounding "conversion" as the organization of the past into divisions delimited by present nationalist politics, and revisionary historical scholarship. In the second section, I call for a destabilization of the idea of "conversion," which connotes the change from and to fundamentally oppositional ideologies. In order to do so, I will concentrate on the

ideological "conversion" of Pak Yŏng-hŭi's as a crucial example that embodies the change from artist to a "soldier of culture."

ORGANIZING THE PAST THROUGH "CHŎNHYANG," "WICHŎNHYANG," AND "CH'IN'IL"

In this section, I will review some of the scholarship on "conversion" that has been formulated and been foundational in Korean studies. Despite the recent shift in concentration that has moved from structural emphasis on Japanese imperial policies to the ideological shifts of the "converted" and "partly-converted," the majority of scholarship spanning from the 1980s concentrate on the conversion of writer Pak Yŏng-hŭi as a symbolic figurehead for the "conversion" of leftist intellectuals in the Korean context. For one, this focus shows how pivotal Pak was to the KAPF movement, the critic at the forefront of ideological shifts of the proletarian cultural movement. As I have discussed in previous chapters, Pak was a crucial figure from the beginnings of KAPF when he, along with other members such as Kim Ki-jin, An Suk-yŏng, Kim Hyŏng-wŏn, Yi Ik-sang, and Yŏn- Hak-nyŏn, formed the literary group Paskyula in 1923, the precursor leftist literary group to KAPF. Although in recent scholarship there has been more focus on those writers who are considered partly-"converted" like Im Hwa and Kim Nam-chŏn, the lines around figures like Pak Yŏng-hŭi that define ch'in'il still remain fixed. In the following, I will outline some of scholarship that represents formulations of chŏnhyang, wichŏnhyang, and ch'in'il.

One formulation of chŏnhyang relates to the narration of the ideological flow between Japan and Korea. As scholars such as Heather Bowen-Struyk have pointed

out, a significant amount of scholarship on the Korean proletarian culture movement frame Japan as an ideological center for both Korea and Taiwan. A prolific scholar of colonial Korean literature who follows this line of thought on the topic of chŏnhyang is scholar Kim Yun-sik. Kim represents the trend of Korean scholarship on chŏnhyang during the late 1980's and 1990's. In "A Study on Conversion," Kim concentrates on the two central and symbolic figures of conversion--Pak Yŏng-hŭi (or Hoewŏl) and Paek Ch'ŏl-- and outlines the important structural circumstances that determined their "conversion."

Kim points out that the Korean socialist movement was very dependent ideologically on the Japanese socialist movement, represented by first NAPF (*Nippona Artist Proleta Federacio*) that dissolved in 1931, which was then replaced with KOPF (*Federacio de Proletaj Kurlur-organizoj Japanaj*). Kim points out that the chŏnhyang that occurred in 1934 was a result of losing this "foundation," after the series of mass arrests and public trials from 1932-1934 for Japanese members of KOPF took place. Upon the "conversion" (*tenkō*) of Japanese socialists such as Manabu Sano and Nabeyama Sadachika, the Korean proletariats lost their grounding and ideological foundations in the socialist movement. As Kim points out, chŏnhyang brought to the forefront many of their weaknesses as a movement: their inability to imagine alternative ideological "worlds" apart from those set out by their alliances with their international allies (112). Kim also emphasizes the writers' ethical responsibility, emphasizing that chŏnhyang involved active participation, highlighting the fact that even though the converted intellectuals had the option of being "silent" they still actively engaged with imperial propaganda (113). Even though the foundation in the

Comintern was lost, Kim argues there was space for these writers to resist imperial propaganda, or they had the option of being *wijang chŏnhyang* and "hiding their conversion"(113).

Another foundational scholar on this period who represents the scholarship on "conversion" in the early 1990s, Kwŏn Yŏng-min also emphasizes structural significance by concentrating on the "second ideological shift" in KAPF, which involved the reorganization of KAPF under different leadership in 1931. Kwŏn points out that the ideological shift involved the replacement of the central members of KAPF, and among those who were retired were the leaders, Kim Ki-jin and Pak Yŏng-hŭi, core thinkers from the foundational mid-1920s formation of KAPF (283). In showing how the second shift was a "generational shift" that significantly altered KAPF membership, Kwŏn emphasizes how "conversion" involved the evolving structure of KAPF, the reorganization an attempt to grasp materialist foundations that was growing ever more impossible amidst intensifying censorship of leftist politics. Because of the previous arrests in the late 1920s, the political power of the cultural movement was already undermined; this, coupled with following reorganization suggests that foundational structural weakness led to the collapse of KAPF leadership.

In Pak Yŏng-hŭi's case, Kwŏn points out that Pak was always consistent with his previous criticism of KAPF's weaknesses, and his emphasis on KAPF as a primarily cultural movement. Kwŏn also mentions that Pak never fully recovered from the arrests in the early 1930s. In his writings, Pak notes the lack of ideological freedom under colonialism, and how, even without direct political ties with the communist party, the Japanese police still arrested any members of KAPF (285).

Emphasizing the writers' powerlessness during the period of increased surveillance and concentration on communism, Kwŏn points out that during the dissolution of KAPF in 1935, most of the central intellectuals, Im Hwa, Paek Chŏl, Yi Ki-yŏng, Kim Ki-jin, etc. were in a Chŏnju prison at the time (295). As a result, the dissolution of KAPF happened against the will of many members of the central committee.

Scholar Kim Chae-yong, like Kwŏn and Yun, emphasizes the structural pressures these writers faced. However, Kim contributes to this conversation by extending the historical range from the 1930s to the 1940s, providing an illuminating look at conversion beyond the period of Japanese colonial hegemony. Although the 1934 "conversions" were specifically focused on communism, Kim moves away from the historical specificity of these terms as rooted in the 1930s. For one, Kim emphasizes the term *wijang chŏnhyang,* which suggests the undercover conversion of many of the leftist writers. This term, however, is only determined in hindsight, as many of the writers were deemed wijang chŏnhyang post-division if they resumed their leftist positions. Kim proposes that, even under the change of the state, the term chŏnhyang is still relevant in the post-liberation context. When leftist writers formed the Alliance of Chosŏn Writers (*Chosŏn Munhakka Tongmaeng*) in 1946, they were also compelled to "conversion," albeit not by the Japanese colonial government but by the South Korean government instated in 1948. Many of the leftist writers, artists, performers, etc fled to North Korea after intense opposition from the police and right wing groups (Armstrong 8).

As a result, Kim's scholarly contribution is the understanding of "conversions" as part of the larger ideological "shifts" by the state. By refocusing ideological

chŏnhyang under the historical trajectory spanning the end of Japanese colonialism, the Korean division, and the beginnings of the South Korean state, Kim understands "conversion" to be another ideological shift along the path of the development of Chosŏn (*Chosŏn t'ŭksusŏng*). In all, Kim understands chŏnhyang as the site of Chosŏn particularity, the gradual departure of the Korean proletarian movement from previous dependence on Russia (the central role of the Comintern) and the Japanese workers' movements; in other words, the development of Korea as a particular case. In this understanding, the "international" aspect of the proletarian literary movement is surpassed by the immediacies of the specific conditions of Korea.

In sum, the scholars outlined above represent a portion of the significant scholarship written in the late 1980s and early 1990s that resituate the proletarian culture movement within the imperial structures that both prohibited leftist ideology and participation in mass organization. The implication of this body of work is the susceptibility of the realm of "culture" to structures of Japanese imperialism. I understand these works, although they do not use Antonio Gramsci's specific formulations, as aligning the concept of "conversion" with Gramsci's use of the term "cultural hegemony" to describe the interplay of consent and force during late 1930s in colonial Korea. Like Gramsci, these scholars understand Japanese imperialism, nationalism, and Marxism in terms of blocs of power and epistemology. And although chŏnhyang does involve hegemonic processes, I argue that this understanding does not complicate the issue of chŏnhyang, in terms of individuals, and how exactly power is dispersed.

Recent scholarship, like Chang Sŏng-kyu's "The Logic of Conversion and Confrontation of KAPF" takes a different approach and criticizes the ethical logic that equates conversion as "defection," and calls for a more genealogical approach to the topic of conversion, reframing the moment as a "progress," a slow ideological adoption. Chang calls for an understanding not colored by contemporary political loyalties, and, through a comparison and excavation of works by literary scholars Im Hwa and Kim Nam- ch'ŏn, Chang understands the imperialization process involved in chŏnhyang as a "negotiation" and "struggle."

Chang organizes chŏnhyang in two ways: first, the type of chŏnhyang defined through the term "parallel alliance" (*P'yŏnghaengjehyuron*) and, secondly, through the term "assimilation" (*Tonghwailch'eron*). An alternative to the term *wijang chŏnhyang*, "parallel alliance" refers to those intellectuals who believed that by traveling on the path of Japanese imperialism they could attain their socialist goals through their participation in the "new Asian order" (*Tongasinjilsŏ).* Assimilation refers to the intellectuals' acquiescence to the imperial rhetoric of "one nation, one body." However, even within this understanding of two types of conversion, Chang argues that "assimilation" is a complicated process. The assimilation "type" of conversion often involved the misunderstanding of imperial citizenship as not containing any inner prejudices. The plans to "abolish the language of Choson" and "erase any vestige of Chosŏn people" under Governor-General Minami Jirō, was understood also by those "assimilators" as gaining the "same rank" as the Japanese people; the "assimilators" imagined the plan as a symbol of equality rather than containing an inherent ethnic prejudices. Chang understands the "parallel alliance" to

be a favorable alternative to the "assimilation" conversion (351). In order to exemplify this comparison, Chang explores the later criticisms by Im Hwa and his continuation of literary history and literary criticisms as an example of "parallel alliance." Instead of seeing Im's support of production novels as aligned with imperial rhetoric, Chang sees it as evidence of Im's alliance with the legacy of Korean aesthetics, in his support of realism and structures of KAPF literature. In this way, Chang understands Im Hwa as allowing for an uncertain "parallel alliance" with Japanese empire (356).

As can be seen by the works outlined above, scholarship on the topic of chŏnhyang has been varied and compelling, and this existing scholarship has both informed my work and questions on the topic of chŏnhyang. I am interested in the topic of chŏnhyang as these scholars are, as a crucial site of the colonial period, but I am also interested in how the scholarship on "conversion" is also a revisionary process that reflects the repositioning of Marxism within postwar formulations of nationalism and contemporary politics.

Because of these nationalist formulations, contemporary scholarship from the 1980s, 1990s have informed the term chŏnhyang as a complex site of overlapping material circumstances. These material circumstances are understood in terms of hegemonic "outside" pressure in the form of imperial policy, the loss of international ideological support, and in the form of "internal" disputes within KAPF: structural "lack" of ideology, the loss of leadership, etc. Although contemporary scholarship has understood the process of conversion as a much more genealogically and complex "assimilation" process, despite these differences, scholarship on chŏnhyang as a whole

has been invested in protecting the boundaries between the Korean state and Japanese imperial state, even under shifting political representations during the "total war" period. This identification has also closely associated chŏnhyang with ch'inilp'a, a loaded term that suggests current designations and decolonization processes that identify individuals as "traitors" to the Korean nation.

This emphasis reveals the importance of chŏnhyang and the historical proletarian movement to present day organization of national consciousness. On one level, the works intercede in the absences created by cold-war binary politics that rendered leftist intellectuals' participation in the nationalist movement during the colonial period invisible. The scholarship produced in the late 1980's and early 1990's represents the ideological space that was created after the height of the Minjung movement, which, as Namhee Lee describes, addressed the necessary "critical reevaluation of Korean history" (Lee 24). In this case, the scholarship addresses the necessary reevaluation of leftist culture, which was erased from the historical imaginary of the nationalist movement during the colonial period.

As Lee points out, the Minjung movement was infused with despair and anxieties about the Korean people's position in a history "that was not their own," reflecting a "crisis in subjectivity." This crisis involved revisiting the absences of history that were created and sustained during the rapid industrialization of post-war South Korea. This absence was cemented during post-war at the removal of leftist intellectuals or their departure to the north. Although, as Lee emphasizes, the Minjung movement was ideologically formulated against the history of this "failed" Marxism and within postwar anticommunism, the exhumation of the past involved also the

necessary re-visitation to pro-communist uprisings like the 4.3 Cheju uprising that were deemed "illegal" by the state well into the 1990's (Lee 61).

In light of this academic climate, and "excavation of" historical absences, we can understand the scholarship on chŏnhyang as part of this conversation that leads into the reexamination of "forgotten individuals," revolutionaries that were communist, socialist, anarchist, etc. However, by acknowledging this investment in the site of chŏnhyang, I believe we should also be conscious of the site of chŏnhyang as a discursive site that is revisited within shifting interests of nationalism. I am particularly interested in how even as the topic of chŏnhyang is blurred by scholars' different approaches of the intellectuals' positions within the oppression of the Japanese state, interestingly the space that is termed ch'inilp'a remains fixed.

Lee's evocative description of the relationship between anticommunism and the performance of Korean War trauma allows us to understand the ways in which collective memory is formed against representations, reenactments of these boundaries and absences. Chungmoo Choi, in her criticisms of the "postcolonial," also shows how in many ways 1980's democratization movements in South Korea dealt with the artificially emplaced term of the "(post)colonial"[57] which implies that the decolonization process has been competed. This of course silences discourses of decolonization, cemented over by the re-narration or elimination of subaltern voices.

In the following section, I will address the unchanging designations of the site of ch'inilp'a through the figure of Pak Yŏng-hŭi who is consistently discussed in

[57] Postcolonial is a term that is used in many different contexts; in this case, Choi evokes the idea of colonized consciousness, which not only implies external uneven social processes, but an extended internal state that "recasts" even the discriminatory powers of the colonial state. For more on Choi's (post)colonial, refer to Choi, C. and Rafael, V.

scholarship on chŏnhyang. Moving away from ethical designations of Pak Yŏng-hŭi as ch'inilp'a that I believe reveal the limits of epistemological structures of nationalism and Marxism within scholarship, I will explore some of the main issues and characteristics of "conversion" through the writings of Pak Yŏng-hŭi. Through this specific example, I would like to call attention to the slippages between contemporary scholarship's designations of the communist movement as anti-democratic, and designations of ch'inilp'a as anti-Marxist. This contradictory relationship between scholarship and official historical memory is an interesting point of tension to keep in mind. Through the examination of Pak's "conversion," I hope to destabilize the term chŏnhyang, and rather unpack the discursive power at work in this moment.

DESTABILIZING "CONVERSION": THE CASE OF PAK YŎNG-HŬI

In previous chapters, I have concentrated on the important representation of the proletarian body in literature, criticism, and visual culture. In this section, I will develop the formulation that constitutes the other side of this coin: imperial structures and its understanding of populations as bodies. As Takashi Fujitani has discussed, the period during the late 1930s is marked by the change in "total war" imperial policy in dealing with their colonial subjects. Applying the concept of Michel Foucault's bio-power and governmentality, starting from 1937, Fujitani discusses Japanese "one body" (*naissen ittai*) policy as the shifting of the Korean population, from "the outside to the inside of the 'Japanese' population" (16). Under this rearticulation of Japanese populations, the divisions between Japanese nation and Korean nation were

superficially eliminated, and Koreans were productively constituted as part of the Japanese empire rather than negatively constituted as outside.

In light of Fujitani's study of this change, I understand Pak's ideological change as a function of the imperial policy that represents Korean inclusion "in the regime of governmentality and bio-power" (Fujitani 20). As Michel Foucault has developed in his studies on the modern penal system, systems of power not only operate as systems of punishment but are intrinsically concerned with the "political economy of the body": "it is always the body that is at issue—the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission" (25). In this idea, Foucault develops the importance of the idea of individuals as productive bodies. One result of the changes in imperial policy, intellectual chŏnhyang represents not only an ideological conversion, but also the economization of the intellectual body. Although the concept of the militarization of individuals, especially those "outside" populations,[58] is a common understanding of the "total war" period, the negotiations of Korean Marxist criticism and literary tendency are aspects of this period that are often not highlighted within this framework.

From the perspective of Pak, the negotiation of culture is narrated through the intellectual debates from the mid-1920s that concerned politics and art, and ultimately the failures of the proletarian culture movement. In Pak's 1934 series of articles, which are retrospectively understood as the beginning of his conversion, Pak addresses his "retirement" from KAPF and the reasons for his disassociation with the

[58] Takashi Fujitani refers to Korean population as "outsides populations" to the biopolitical regime and Japanese nation. For more on the contradictions of military conscription, refer to Fujtani, T.

movement. A consistent theme in his criticism is KAPF's "lack of cohesion" and problematic formulation of politics and art. In this regard, Pak locates the beginning of KAPF's downfall from 1926 in the debate between his and KAPF member Kim Ki-jin's standpoints on form vs. content (Pak 168). Kim Ki-jin advocated aesthetics over materialist content, while Pak, taking a strictly Marxist criticism of form, supported the latter. Recognizing his own culpability in the direction that KAPF took thereafter, Pak looks back on the 1926 debate as the beginnings of what Kim Yun-sik referred to above as the "ideological acquisition of literary consciousness." Although Pak refers to this debate as the beginning of ideology over art, I think we can also think critically of the context of Pak's apolitical literature stance instead of adopting his assessment.

Pak expresses regret at his past stance, but insists that at the time he was trying to protect proletarian (class-focused) literature (*Kyegŭp munhak*), in line with the Comintern. As politics became the base of content in proletarian literature, Pak confesses that the wholesale adoption of "content" led to the distance between the critic and the artist, as well as, between the intellectual and the masses. Retrospectively, he states that later "as a political person of authority I never thought about art. This has made me decidedly miserable" (164).[59] Thus, returning to the oppositional construction of bourgeois and proletarian art, Pak realigns with bourgeois literature, as advocated by Kim Ki-jin, in the following ways. In his sense, proletarian literature unfaithfully succeeded bourgeois literature and the "truthfulness" in literature is located in this past tradition: "I am thinking about how in the beginning, the search for a true form and the properties of literature was

[59] Some scholarship, as discussed from the 1980's and 1990's, has utilized this moment to parallel the renunciation of ideology with chŏnhyang, beginning in KAPF member and "chŏnhyangpa" Kim Kijin's support of formalism from 1928 in his original criticism of the ideological content in literature. See Kim, Y.S.

located in the past direction (of bourgeois literature)" (170). From this moment, Pak states that literary theory became further distanced from the "aesthetic, particular, and individualism," and the promotion of the "realist and social" aspect of literary left art to "wither and in a sad state" (173). As a result, some scholars, such as Kim Yun-sik, align Pak's chŏnhyang with his criticism of ideology, and have thus connected "conversion" with the adoption of bourgeois literature (119).

As Kevin Doak has discussed of the "cultural renaissance" led by former leftist Japanese writer Hayashi Fusao during the first half of the 1930s, the debate about apolitical literature was central to the conversion of Japanese leftist intellectuals as well. In Doak's formulation, Hayashi's later conversion to Japanese nationalism had less to do with the ideological move from Marxism to nationalism, but rather the "self-conscious turn from the production of goods for society to the production of self for the self" (109). Using a term developed by German romanticism scholars, "the literary absolute,"[60] Doak describes Hayashi's conversion through his (mis)interpretation of Marxism, in his understanding of the proletariat as apart from the structures of social class conflict. Instead, Hayashi imagines the proletariat as "the common masses of Japan" for whom a "single interest represents a harmonious whole" (110). In order for this "cultural renaissance," Hayashi believes that intellectuals need to be organized around a common interest, and thus advocates the Japanese pure novel and the organization around the idea of a social whole, in this case, the emperor: "the only true agent of production" (126).

[60] For more on the "literary absolute," see Lacoue-Labarthe, P. and Nancy, J.

Although Doak concentrates on the Romantic School[61] and its oppositional formulation of literature with the proletarian movement, we can also understand Pak's case as representative of this crisis of culture that occurred amidst overlapping networks of Japanese militarization, the shift to "total war," and "naisen ittai" policy. Amidst the "encroaching and stifling" intellectual environment, Pak suggests that a feeling of despair has pervaded KAPF criticism, and pinpoints the source of this anxiety as the epistemological "fetters" of realism and historical materialism. While promoting the de-emphasis of the literary base in capitalist relations of Marxism, Pak instead reinscribes the importance of emotion and sentiment. This is exemplified in his refusal of the organization of literary depiction around the material base:

> Humans own their emotions and life. However, these emotions are regulated and constrained in their daily lives. This is a commonplace foundational principle. At the same time, emotions and sentiment are not an economic existence. The operations and development of the individual and particular distinctiveness of sentiment/emotions are located in discourse." (171)

By proclaiming the distinctiveness of emotions from material relations and its important location in discourse, Pak questions the Marxist literary basis in social processes that determine human consciousness. What Pak wants to reemphasize is the "truth" of emotion and sentiment, and, through implication, the "individualistic" emphasis previously epitomized by bourgeois literature. Espousing a return to aesthetics of the self, Pak describes the development of proletarian literature post-1927 as the gradual loss of art to politics, the leftist intellectuals' "uncritical" party acceptance of social relations as in fact "the making of their own chains" (Pak 172).

[61] The Japan Romantic School was a literary movement in the 1930's and 1940's, which espoused forms of culture, such as poetry, that moved away from political literary content, and addressed a "crisis of culture." For more on the Japan Romantic School, refer to Doak, K.

Pak points out that as the interest in "social processes" grew, they began to lean on "slogans" of social practice, and "gave their art away to politicians." Pak describes the production of literature after that as the following: "the artist-as-politician contrives artistic production and applies their own slogans to their creations" (172).

Pak's 1934 texts reflect the multiple developments that occurred in the practice and production of literature and criticism. For one, Pak's evocative description of the affective state of "suffocation," and "despair" of intellectuals captures the visceral states that emerged in their intellectual production. Pak describes literary production in the following description:

> The many arts and science works in the daily newspapers, after appearing once in the monthly magazine or newspaper are never seen again. Maybe in several years it will appear in some meager book, but most disappear forever. For that reason, I am troubled with the possibility that even this kind of work is loaded up in massive newspaper bundles and magazine and arranged in some room like a junk shop. (164)

This description is reminiscent of the "rhythm of an iron system" and the "technological rationale" that pervades what Adorno and Horkheimer term as the "culture industry," and its cold appropriation of the cultural commodity. Pak's text reflects upon the commodification of their production, and the "meaninglessness" of their work within the confusion and disorder of literary economy. Although Pak promotes a "unity" of their criticism in order to make a "footprint" within the present state of cultural production, this unification is undermined by the nature of their production and ideology.

This "crisis" of literary production is described affectively as a state of "suffocation." In agreement with another KAPF scholar Paek Chŏl's piece "The Time

of Human Representation," Pak shows how literary production is pervaded with anxiety: "Literature that [compresses] chaotic human emotions and sentiments cannot be considered a vehement resistance and a type of 'human description' because it is based from a place of suffocation (169). Pak argues that this despair and anxiety emerges from the contradiction between the description of human experience and the final product, in which the actual relationship between their work and the social experience is forgotten (169).

Although Doak discusses romanticism, Pak's anxieties reveal a similar intellectual crisis and responding emphasis on the self and the individual in the literary process: "of course, his insistence on the value of 'apolitical' culture was anything but apolitical itself, as it implicated Hayashi in various attempts, both theoretical and nontheoretical, to construct a model of society based on the concept of homogeneity" (128). As Hayashi's conversion is narrated as a renewed interest in apolitical literature, Pak's "conversion" to bourgeois literature can also be considered a false projection of the idea of the 'apolitical.' The false formulation of "apolitical" literature conceals the political implications behind the retreat to bourgeois literature. As Pak's 1941 works show, the renewed interest in formalism and the individual coincides with Pak's increasing reliance on Japanese nationalism as the new source of literary production.

I understand Pak's reversal as a representation of the anxieties that were intrinsic within the proletarian cultural movement from its beginnings, as primarily led by bourgeois intellectuals discursively representing and "speaking for" the subaltern class of the proletariat. The anxieties outlined above reflect not only the

commodification of literary production, but also their "distance" from the masses and readership. As a result, the return to formalism can be also be understood as the return to a past notion of literature that eliminates the social focus, from Marxism, that placed the intellectual at the heart of evolving notions of the masses under modernity.

The comparison between the conversion of Japanese leftist intellectuals and Korean leftist intellectuals is useful in understanding how culture is similarly organized under the encroachment of the state. However, I would also like to elaborate on the significance of "hegemony" in the understanding of "conversion" as a differentiated process. On one hand, we can understand Pak's 1934 statement as what Antonio Gramsci describes as an important facet of domination under "hegemony,"[62] which first requires the "absorption" of the "enemies elites" (59). Gramsci captures the way in which intellectuals are "'mediated' by the whole fabric of society and by the complex of superstructures, of which the intellectuals are, precisely the 'functionaries'" (Gramsci 12). I interpret this in Pak's case as the unification of interests of leftist intellectuals under imperial ideology through the state's coercion and punctuated by the mass arrests of those associated with communism. This coercive aspect of chŏnhyang is concealed behind Pak's "willingness" and mediation of imperial policies through his literary criticisms.

As Miriam Silverberg has written in the Japanese context, the mass arrests of socialist writers represent the increasing "monopolization" of mass media by the imperial authority. Silverberg's application of "hegemony" in the theorizations of

[62] Gramsci's "hegemony" is defined as the domination of one class over the other. This takes the form of not only socioeconomic control, but an ideological struggle between the dominant and subordinate classes. For more on "hegemony," refer to Gramsci, A.

Japanese leftist writer Nakano Shigeharu describes the suppression of the proletarian culture movement as not only political dictatorship, but the compulsion of the ruling class, and movement into the cultural sphere (184). Under this framework, leftist intellectuals and their ideological interests "adopt" the interests of the Japanese imperial state. This moment is particularly significant as the chŏnhyang of the proletarian culture movement epitomizes the subordination of leftist ideology, and the "unification" of intellectual interests under economic and political interests under shifting boundaries of nation.

Silverberg's reading of hegemony in the case of Nakano Shigeharu's "changing song" illuminates the interesting case of Japanese leftist intellectuals, but also highlights the ways in which power is differently applied in the case of Korean leftist intellectuals. Most scholarship on KAPF conversion concentrates on Pak Yŏng-hŭi's famous words "what was gained was ideology and what was lost was aesthetics," noted in the beginning of this chapter. These words have come to represent the critical shift of Pak's chŏnhyang as he renounces "ideology," and is what scholars consider an expression of his return to bourgeois aesthetics.

In light of comparison, however, I argue that these words are significant in illuminating the difference between the chŏnhyang of Japanese subjects and Korean subjects during the 1930s. For one, there is the significant difference between what Silverberg considers Nakano's renouncement of allegiance to the communist party (Silverberg 199), and Pak's 1934 renouncement of ideology altogether. Pak's words bring up the kind of space that was imagined for Korean subjects that disallowed "ideological participation" while in the Japanese case of conversion it involved

forsaking "party politics." In addition, the renouncement of ideology represents the foundational reality of encroaching "total war" and the more stringent ideological apparatus of the imperial state, which compelled the absence of counter-ideology for Koreans.

Secondly, although Pak's ideological chŏnhyang does show the "hegemonic" structures that determine his chŏnhyang, I also believe that Pak's case reveals the complicated ways in which power is dispersed within Japanese imperialism for Korean intellectuals. As Raymond Williams has pointed out, the important legacy of Gramsci's formulation allows us to complicate simplified notions of domination and subordination through concepts of "corruption" and "betrayal" (110). This understanding allows us to move away from ethical designations that label and simultaneously limit the intricate structures that are emergent in Pak's case. Hegemonic structures, in this case, determine the nature of Pak's chŏnhyang and the realm of his critique as a representation of the technologies that determine his chŏnhyang. In the late 1930s, the technologies of power that represent conversion shape Pak's conversion as an artist to "soldier of culture."

Pak's 1934 texts concentrated on the role of literature and the self, and, although texts from the 1940s continue the emphasis on a unified cultural front, 1940s texts center the Japanese emperor as the locus of literary production and, most importantly, previous representations of the masses are replaced with representations of militarized bodies. From the mid-1930s, Pak's espousal of bourgeois literature represented a fundamental departure from Marxist epistemology, which formulates social processes as "truth" and the source of literary production. The new emphasis of

emotions and sentiments directed toward the Japanese nation and emperor locates "truth" in this affective concentration.

As is representative in Pak's espousal of the "East Asian Order" under Japan, "conversion" falsely represents the "difference" in ideological change, when the strength of the change is founded upon the similarity of the perceived "oppositional" positions (Viswanathan 39). Pak's change is undeniably rooted in his understanding of the similarities of Marxism and Japanese nationalism, and his previous opinions on the role of literature and ideology as more parallel than disjunctive with national literature. Fundamentally, Pak argues that the "East Asian Order" does not represent a "loss of nationalism." Pak, in reference to their adoption of Marxist ideology, argues that the intellectuals who understand the new world order as a "loss" of nationalism are "naïve." Pak points out that, all this time, their work had embodied a "longing for world literature," and had falsely understood Marxist literature as a kind of nationalist literature.

Pak asserts that Marxism like all "world literature" "is no closer to "public opinion" (Pak 166). This statement, as was previously discussed, again elaborates the ways in which Marxist ideology both aligned and was different from the nationalist movement. As a fundamentally "international" politics, which were closely aligned with post-ethnic configurations, Pak's reasoning advocates adopting Japanese nationalism, a type of "world literature," because of its similar international foundations with Marxist literature. However, at the same time, despite Pak's reasoning that Marxist literature has a similar worldview as national literature, this 1941 statement also rests upon Pak's departure from Marxist ideology by echoing

many of his 1934 criticisms, which criticizes the application of Marxist ideology to literature as the "infiltration" of literature and subsequent domination over aesthetics.

The idea of literature as "world literature" is an essential idea in this new formulation of literature. The proletarian culture movement had until this point taken a priority on class and nationalism over ethnic designations. However, as Jin kyung Lee addresses, although the epistemological universal framework of Marxism posits a "post-ethnic utopia," literary texts belie the impossibilities of this framework in the slippages that emerge in the issue of race. While often times the alliance between Marxism and nationalism had often assumed "Koreanness" and nationalism in the representation of what Lee calls the "the anti-colonial ethnonational proletariat," on the other hand, the framework of the universal proletariatallowed for more trans-ethnic depictions that are not as vilified as in Cultural Nationalist texts that prioritize ethnic-nationalism and Koreanness. This understanding of Marxism as an originally post-nationalist ideological framework suggests how we can study the conversion of leftist intellectuals apart from other intellectuals who were differently positioned.

Although an emphasis on the "emotive" is continued from his 1934 works, what is noticeably absent is "Korea" (*Chosŏn),* and Pak instead adopts the use of the "peninsula" (*Pando*) when referring to Korea. This absence is also emergent in the terms for "nation" that instead signify the Japanese center. "National literature" (*kungminmunhak*) is reconfigured within the "one body, one nation" rhetoric, and refers to the submersion of Korean colonial subjects into the Japanese nation, who are newly termed the "the emperor's subjects" (*Hwangguk sinmin*). Pak defines the

conceptual framework of this change in the following statement about the "Self" (*chaa*) in relation to nation:

> You must not understand the national from the standpoint of a small individual upon a large mass but look at it from a national standpoint that starts from the expansion of individuals. If we understand the strength of the nation from social life, it is not just about the promotion of humanity or giving your body to nation. Instead of the individual becoming dissociated within the nation, you can find your Self in the whole. (164)

The above statement shows the effort to productively connect the individual with the nation. As Kim Chae-yong notes, Pak's change is worded as an adoption of the new times, and posits history as a series of ideological shifts. This is evident through Pak's criticism of those intellectuals and artists who resist, despite being encircled and "surrounded" by "new times."

This notion of the self is maintained through the production of militarized bodies. The concentration on the governing and maintaining of "bodies" is exemplified not only in the dialogue surrounding the conscription of Koreans in the late 1930's, but the accompanying "mobilization" of culture, and intellectuals like Pak for the war effort. Similar to the anxieties resonant in Pak's 1934 frustration with the commodification and "waste" production of their intellectual labor, from the late 1930s "total war" policy represents the co-option of culture in a different direction. In 1939 to 1940, under the favor of the governor-general, organizations such as the Chosŏn Literary Association (*Chosŏnmunin hyŏp'oe*), Chosŏn Film Association (*Chosŏnyŏnghwahyŏp'oe*), and the Chosŏn Theatre Association (*Chosŏnyŏn'gŭkhyŏp'oe*) (Pak 162) were formed to consolidate "culture," in the

efforts to, as Pak says, tap into the population through culture "that has the aesthetic quality to uplift and unify emotions" (Pak 166).

An important development of Pak's 1941 texts is his figurative adoption of the developments of military mobilization and policy developments in the treatment of Koreans. This is emergent in the ways "mobilization" of intellectuals reinterprets their "bodies" as soldiers for the war effort. Urging Koreans to adopt "international consciousness" (*kukchechŏngsin)*, Pak states that only with this in place can they achieve strength:

> The consciousness that represents the wartime of the peninsula will be the strength of the nation, and if each cultural person (*Munhwa-in*) is unified and becomes a "soldier of culture" (*Munhwa-kun*) they will be enlisted and assembled at the frontline of the nation's powerful movement. (170)

As can be seen from the above quote, Pak militarizes the intellectuals, artists, writers, etc. in the war effort, labeling them as a "soldier" in the war effort. Further, Pak urges the writers "like a soldier's bullet to raise their brushes like rifles," and give meaning to the war through literature (173).

Through the case of Pak Yŏng-hŭi, I understand conversion to be less an ideological change from Korean nationalist to Japanese nationalist, but rather a negotiation of the material context, most notably the militarization of the masses, while also a specific organization of previous Marxist ideological structures with Japanese nationalism. As I have discussed, Pak's 1934 chŏnhyang emerged from a crisis in literary production, and from the ideological anxieties of both the uneven application of Marxism in the Korean context and the role of the intellectual in mass politics. Pak's 1941 ideology can also be read as representative of the ideological

mobilization of Korean intellectuals amidst the development of ethnic/nationalist imperial policy that constituted Pak as a productive body for the Japanese nation.

CH‘INILP‘A AS HISTORICAL MEMORY

Throughout this study, I have been conscious of how much contemporary consciousness is present in the excavation of the past, and how much contemporary politics and consciousness relies on a certain explication of a historical moment. This is particularly important in the case of scholarship on Japanese colonialism that is often performing decolonizing work, and with its own constellation of political implications. This is also the case for the topic of ch‘inilp‘a. Although more than 60 years has passed since the release of Pak Yŏng-hŭi’s statement in 1934, his statement has become a standard in scholarship on prior leftist pro-Japanese (*ch’in-il*), and a fixture in the organization and prosecution of past “offenders” of anti-nationalism.

The first committee to define the boundaries of past “offenders” was formed after liberation in 1945, and was called the Special Committee for Prosecution of Anti-National Offenders (*Panminjok haengwi t‘ŭkpyŏl chosa wiwŏnhoe*). This committee, however, was dissolved under the Yi Sŭng-man regime, which re-organized South Korea’s development under the auspices of the U.S. and aligned with corresponding Cold War policy. As a result, the pro-nationalist decolonization endeavors sponsored by the government were halted, and it wasn’t until the 1990s that this topic was revisited for many of the same reasons that leftist literature and criticism was not studied until the late 1980’s.

Beginning in 1992, the Institute for Research in Collaborationist Activities began to hold conferences on this subject, and it was because of this beginning furor that the National Assembly Members' Study Group for Correcting Falsified History began creating a list of ch'inilp'a (Lee 181). In February 28, 2002, this list of 708 collaborationists was released, and "collaborationists" like Pak Yŏng-hŭi were central figures. This initial interest grew into the formalization and legalization of this excavation. Under the presidency of No Mu-hyŏn, this discussion was increasingly sanctioned by the state, and the PCIC (Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism) was established in 2005, under the "Special Law on the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism", which was amended on January 27. 2005. Another "pro-Japanese collaborators list" was released in August of 2005 under the PCIC. Of the figures on the list the most debated are Yi Sŭng-man, who is considered a pro-Japanese collaborator for serving in the Japanese imperial army, along with former president Pak Chŏng-hŭi (1961-1979).

A closer look at what is defined as "ch'inilpa" under this committee is described on the mission statement of the committee's website. The mission statement of the Article is written as follows:

> The purpose of this Act is to clarify the truth of pro-Japanese and anti-national actions committed under the Japanese imperial rule in Korea and thereby to restore national legitimacy and the historical truth as well as to materialize the social justice between the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War that began the deprivation of Korean sovereignty by the Japanese imperialism and August 15, 1945.

3094 Koreans were listed on the first list, which was released in 2005, and has been amended to 1,005 in the past two years. These were divided in 13 subdivisions, such

as police officers, judges and prosecutors, media, religious leaders and artists. In correspondence with this directive, there is a list of "acts" that determine what would be considered "pro-Japanese and anti-national actions", which range from more direct forms of violence, such as: "any act to kill, execute, harass, or arrest the persons of their families participating in the independent movement or anti-Japanese movement, and an act to instruct of order those violences thereto", to acts that do not require an act contributing to violence of any sort:

> Any act to actively leading the internal harmony or colonization of the Japanese imperialism through social and cultural institutions of organizations in a way of actively cooperating with the colonial rule and invasion war of the Japanese imperialists.

In response to those who question the aims of the committee, Kim Dong-guk reports that the committee specified that its aims are not to punish those individuals by law, but to correct inaccuracies of history through an examination mediated by ethic and moral justice.

It should be noted, however, that this committee and another private committee, the Institute for Research in Collaborationist Activities that has released a list of 4,389, do not have the legal power to persecute. This is not to say that these discussions do not have legal repercussions. In 2006, Associated Press reported that the head of the PCIC called for the confiscation of "3.6 billion won (US$3.9 million, 2.8 million) worth of land from the descendants of nine alleged collaborators who worked for Japan during its 1910-45 colonial occupation". The plan involves the selling of the land, and the profit will go to the people and their descendents who assisted in nationalist endeavors and worked toward Korea's independence during

colonialism. Another section of land was again reported by Kim Tae-jong in 2007, involving another 10 collaborators: Since the enactment of the law, the agency has made a list of 452 pro-Japan collaborators and examined the land of 109 among them. The total size of the land is estimated at 13.1 million square meters, worthy almost 100 billion won". However, in recent years the work has become the legal jurisdiction of the Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborators and Choe Sang-hun has reported the recently announcement over 88 million in real estate to be handed over to the Korean state. Lee Jung-sik, a member of the of this committee, in 2007 discusses the end result of their work:

> Even though it has been late, the liquidation matter has historical significance, but one matter is left among the work that we should have done long ago. After 4 years of work, the committee has restored all the pro-Japanese assets back to the state. However, during the 60 years, those properties that have been disposed of have not been brought to justice. It is a shame that there are much more assets than are listed.

In this press release, Lee Jung-san interestingly utilizes history as a site for justice, and verbalizes the work of the committee as the continuation of the work that had begun post-liberation, a "late but necessary" culmination of "work that we should have done long ago."

As scholar Lee Horyong has summarized, this polemic discussion involved a myriad of issues that often had to do less with an historical excavation of this moment. For one, as the discussion approached the subject of liquidation of pro-Japanese assets, there was the debatable issue of whether legal action can be taken on activities done during the colonial period. This of course has many repercussions in understandings of "illegality," "legality" of Japanese imperialism, and the recognition of the Korean

"state" as a legitimate form of government for those collaborationists to be labeled "traitors" to nation. Many scholars understand that with the exception of "crimes against humanity," under the constitution, the "retroactive legislation" of Japanese collaborators should be considered illegal if understood as under the jurisdiction of the Constitution (Lee 184).

Secondly, the redistribution of land highlights the ways in which historical memory mediates and is a tool through which the reorganization of capital is performed by the state. This brings up the contradiction and the illusion of the capitalism as a free market, and uncontrolled space. The "lists" have brought to the forefront the power of Korea's latent decolonization process and the battleground of colonial history, as a site that has been illuminated, reinterpreted, and formulated. The influence through which the issue of historical memory is narrated has far reaches in both politics and the landscape of capital. The focus on land redistribution is interesting as well because of its comparative "clear cut" connection to the colonial period, while the liquidation of assets is a more complicated matter.

Although this conclusion is in no ways a comprehensive summary of this complicated issue, I wanted to provide an example of how the issue of ch'inilp'a, and the ways in which it is discussed mediates present politics. As scholars such as Lisa Yoneyama have shown, the "politics of memory" involves often the "forgetfulness" of a nation's past, the simplification of complex processes, and the absence of memories. The present issue of ch'inilp'a is very similar to the scholarship on the conversion of intellectuals, because I believe that in many ways it deals with the same simplistic designations of individuals in very complex moments of history. As with the topic of

chŏnhyang, we should question present investments in the ethical/national organization of the past, and the critical designations of historiography.

VI. CONCLUSION

The discussion of the proletarian culture movement and its organization, the Korean Artist Proletarian Federation, has been a delicate task for many reasons. For one, the 1920's and 1930's, both in "culture" and discourse, was an extremely experimental time, and the exploration of leftist literature implicates a multitude of other generic and ideological networks. In many ways, my understanding of leftist literature has only skimmed the surface of the "intertexual" relations between generic tendency, mediums, and ideological formations. Especially in formulating an understanding of "mass culture," there is a significant amount of work that has not been done in really understanding the flows and conceptualization of "culture," both its proliferation and reception, within a larger framework of colonial Korea. At the same time, however, my focus has not been on producing an intellectual and cultural history of the colonial period, and has been focused on my beginning questions and formulations that have emphasized two things.

On one level, I have been interested in how, in both the past and present contexts, "nationalism" and "Marxism" loom over cultural studies on the colonial period. This "division" has shaped what has been considered the discourse on culture, and what is considered the "politics" of culture. By this division, I mean, for example, the uncomplicated ways in which "culture" under colonization is reflected back to boundaries of nation-state or to the conceptual West through the "international" politics of Marxism. This division is not only very present and contested in literary

studies during the 1920's and 1930's, but remains pivotal in contemporary studies of literary history.

This question has led me to certain topics discussed within "nationalist" and "Marxist" discourse that represent contradictory points. In the last chapter, I address the topic of "conversion" that occurs at a time of shifting conceptions of "nationalism." Imperial policy during the Wartime period from 1931-1945 not only involved different imperial strategies in "handling" the Korean colony, but also involved shifting definitions of cultural "nationalism," as Korean "nationalism" was arguably "co-opted" by the Japanese nation-state. The "conversion" of intellectuals represent the anxieties during this time, as the reorganization of "nationalism" led to a new set of discourse on how to reconcile this constellation of "nationalism" with previous leftist and Korean nationalist understandings of the "politics" of culture.

By focusing on the leftist intellectual Pak Yŏng-hŭi, I wanted to show how we can understand this shift through Pak's reconciliation and conceptualization of "culture." I argue that this moment is significant for a couple of reasons. First, Pak's case represents how imperial policy affected intellectuals, and how they imagined the role of culture, and their role among shifting ideological alliances. Pak's development reveals how the intellectual population was conceived of and constituted during Japanese wartime mobilization. Pak's case also shows the slippages within "conversion" between leftist politics and Japanese "nationalism," and how leftist "internationalism" is coded within this "conversion" as parallel to Japanese imperialism, modernity, and progress.

Equally important, “conversion” is an example of how present issues of redress and “decolonization” enact and perform an authentic Korean history by identifying those “outside of” or “complicit and traitor” to its development. Although this is just one case, I do believe we can apply these questions to other cases of historical memory that reinforce oppositional strategies of communist, anticommunist, nationalist and pro-Japanese. This example may scratch the surface of the many connections and criticisms we can make of the relationship between the present context and memory of the colonial period, but I think of “conversion” as a telling and divisive topic that needs to be studied for its inconsistencies, rather than reproduced within linear historiography of “nationalism.”

As “conversion” represents one contradictory point that reveals the slippages of structures of “nationalism” and “Marxism,” I have also addressed the spacial organization of modernity and Marxist theory to understand the application, adoption, and slippages of discourse in the Korean case. Asking how we can theorize Marxism in different localities than the West, I believe, in Korea, agrarian proletarian literature represents the unique application of Marxist conceptions of “mass” to the agrarian space. This important development contributes to Marxist studies on conceptualizations of emigration and utopic imaginings in culture. In this way, Korean Marxism both reinforces and surpasses national boundaries in its conception of the “collective,” presenting evocative descriptions of a particular historical moment when Korean populations were both a kind of “pioneers” in a new frontier and simultaneously refugees, who had lost their “home.” This unique experience that I find

in leftist "frontier" literature about the emigration of Koreans to China, Manchuria, and Siberia is a topic that I would like to pursue further in future studies.

Another contradictory point that I have tried to address is the discussion of modernity. Modernity is usually discussed in terms of modernization, which involves of course the emergence of print culture, urbanization, and industrialization. Some scholars refer to Korea's modernity as a "colonial modernity," which Tani Barlow[63] describes as a heterogeneous definition varying between for example scholars who point to the "colonial" within the "modern," or the unidirectional and exploitative capitalist flow from the colonies to the imperial center. My questions, however, on leftist literature deals with modern constructs that have accompanied modernity, as interpreted through works by not only leftist writers, but also modernist writers, Ch'ae Man-sik, Yi Sang and Kim Yu- chŏng.

Modernity, through the writings and essays by these formative modernists is defined by the writers' interactions with the urban landscape—trains, the development of Seoul, passersby-- and corresponding internalization of this urban landscape. The modern subject, typified by Kim and Yi's essays, (mis)comprehends the agrarian landscape, and his interiority is registered through "modernity." Although I use modernist interiority as a comparison point with leftist depictions of the agrarian space, I use this comparison to show the importance of situating the interior form with other literary forms that are commonly separated by politics.

Although this is a point that I would like to pursue further, I have tried to suggest how the "conversion" issue reveals the importance of the split between

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[63] For Tani Barlow's introduction on the term "Colonial Modernity," see Barlow, T.

bourgeois and leftist aesthetics. As Pak Yŏng-hŭi and Kim Ki-jin's argument of "form" and "content" reveals, the separation between understandings of bourgeois aesthetics as devoid of ideology and nonpolitical, while leftist aesthetics is alternatively consumed by ideology presents a false dichotomy between bourgeois and leftist aesthetics. The "retreat" to bourgeois aesthetics during wartime by leftist critics suggests how we can situate leftist and modernist works as both engagements with emerging frameworks of the modern that alternatively engage with the spacial landscape of "Korea." However, as the "conversion" issue stresses, bourgeois aesthetics is not devoid of ideology, but rather interiority is a form of what Louis Althusser defines as the "ideological state apparatus."

As such, I understand the later alignment of bourgeois literature and (Japanese) nationalist literature in the late 1930s to be very provocative of how modernist interiority is falsely associated with the non-political, when the issues of both leftist and bourgeois literature deal with the ideology inherent in "form" as well. For this study, this idea may seem subordinate to my emphasis on the spacial quality of discourse, and the disparate ways in which agrarian landscape is differently mapped in leftist literature, which constructs the agrarian space as microcosm of total socioeconomic structures. However, underlying this focus, I want to draw comparisons between literary tendencies, rather than replicate divisive structures.

The other question that represents a focus and running thread in my dissertation is the important formation of the body in both literary representations by proletarian writers, in other forms of mass culture, and by the state. I became interested in the proletarian culture movement because of the interesting connection

between otherwise seemingly oppositional focuses on the body by revolutionary literature and by the cultural apparatus of the state. This question, throughout my dissertation, has led me to focus on both the ways in which revolutionary politics alternatively considered the "body" through affective description, while the state at different points also formulated the colonial population as bodies as well.

In Chapter four, this is highlighted through the ways Pak Yŏng-hŭi conceptualizes imperial policy during the late 1930s as a mobilization of the populations as part of imperial artillery. Pak's interpretation of imperial ideology shows the ways in which culture mediates the individual with the social, in this case, the intricate representation of the subject under militarization and Japanese imperial policy. This particular case of intellectual "convergence" shows the multiple and layered ideologies at work within the cultural sphere, and how leftist politics converge, are submerged, or interpreted with state ideology. It also shows slippages between "nationalism" and "Marxism," as both are made equivalent politics for betterment and civilization through "international" allegiances.

Although chapter four deals with the representation of the body by state ideology, the other chapters of my dissertation approach the representation of the body in revolutionary literature and mass culture. Proletarian literature alternatively conceives of the body as a process of marginalization, and the body under these processes reveals the "politics" of representations of the affective and affected body. In considering mass culture during the 1920s and 1930s, I have always considered this representation the most distinctive characteristic of proletarian literature, and the most ubiquitous representation of the "masses" that was circulating at the time. Despite the

frequency of such images, both past and present literary criticism has measured revolutionary literature against its politics, and this distinctiveness has always been interpreted as a kind of "lack," a lack of ideology, a lack of aesthetic finesse. I do not mean to undermine the importance of such scholarship, but rather fill in the gaps that were overlooked by these investments.

Through this dissertation, I want to stress that it is essential to consider the proletarian culture movement through its alternative politics, and the ways in which proletarian literature changed the markers, content, and the landscape of literary studies. I consider the literary criticism and debates that characterize the development of KAPF as both reflective of Marxism, and simultaneously particular to the context of Korea. Likewise, I hope that this dissertation contributes both to the understanding of Marxist theory, its alternative and paradigmatic application in other contexts other than the West, as well as, to the understanding of culture, revolutionary literature, and leftist politics during 1920s and 1930s colonial Korea.

Through my dissertation work, I have become more interested in the continuing social debates on the Korean colonial period in the contemporary context. It has become clear that the colonial period serves as both historical trauma and memory that remains central to the political and social formation of present day Korea. The stubbornness of such divisive terms such as pro-Japanese (*ch'inil*), pro-American (*ch'inmi*), and anti-communist (*pan'gong*) in the discussion of colonial Korea reveals the networks of political alignments that have occurred under Japanese imperialism, post-liberation U.S. military occupation, military dictatorship, and democratization movements in the 1980's and 1990's. These terms reflect the

historical conditions of colonial Korea, but are also continuously constituted in the present. At the same time, scholarship on this era is partly reified by the political alignments of the state and global interests, which is particularly palpable in the area of socialist literature of the colonial period.

With this in mind, a significant question and extension to my dissertation work will focus on the question of the legacy of colonial period construction of the masses. In one way, this will involve concentrating on the ambivalence of culture politics in contemporary politics and in post Cold-War law. This question remains also important even in years under U.S. military occupation because, like the colonial government, censorship was perceptible through the proliferation of anticommunist thought, under Cold War policy. Although it similarly placed communism in opposition, we can ask the question: In the transition from Japanese colonialism to U.S. occupation, how do the writers on the right alter their perceptions of Marxism, nationalism, Japanese colonialism, and the Korean war etc.?

Another aspect of this extension will take place in the examination of Korean Marxism in the context of global Marxisms. This will involve theoretical examinations of translation, transnationalism, internationalism, and an intervention in what is commonly understood as official Marxism. I am also interested in the crucial role that socialism played in both expanding and uniting: the conduction of initial "internationalizing" activities abroad, producing pockets of socialist intellectuals in Japan, Manchuria, Siberia, and China, and the later internal spread of socialist influence in Korea through centralizing methods such as newspapers, tours and relations with other political groups. This examination will place Korean socialist

literary works in light of this dialogue and larger historical trajectory, amidst a multitude of shifting global interests.

Lastly, I would like to pursue questions that will involve the Korean post-liberation revival of proletarian culture through the Choson Proletarian Arts Alliance (*Chosŏn p'ŭro yesul tongmaeng*), as well as, the intellectuals that defect to North Korea post-1945. I will focus on both continuations and departures of conceptualizations of the masses, organization of culture, and interpretations of Marxist-Leninism in North Korea from colonial period proletarian culture. Many of the North Korean intellectuals (*wŏlbuk chisigin*), like Han Sŏl-ya, Yi Ki-yŏng, and Yi Puk-myŏng were active in KAPF during the 1920s and 1930s. This aspect of my research will provide what I consider a necessary foray and extension of proletarian literature and visual culture within the post-liberation context and its significance beyond the colonial period.

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