

Satō Haruo's "Ajia no ko" and Yu Dafu's Response: Literature, Friendship, and Nationalism

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In the March 1938 issue of *Nippon hyōron* 日本評論 there appeared an essay by Mushanokōji Saneatsu 武者小路実篤 (1885-1976) about his friend, the Chinese writer Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885-1967). In the essay, Zhou is praised as a refined man of peace, espousing the same Tolstoyan creed of nonviolence adhered to by Mushanokōji himself. Despite the enmity between the two warring nations, Mushanokōji expressed his intent to remain loyal to a friend with whom he felt a strong personal and intellectual, if not political, kinship. Unabashedly propagandistic, Mushanokōji's essay nevertheless depicted a positive relationship between the two literary communities.¹

Given the generally sympathetic tone of Mushanokōji's essay, the inclusion in the same issue of *Nippon hyōron* of Satō Haruo's 佐藤春夫 "Ajia no ko" アジアの子 (Children of Asia), an inflammatory story which provided an unflattering portrayal of events in the lives of Yu Dafu 郁達夫 (1896-1945) and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978), was bitterly ironic and underscored the unsettled state of relations between the Japanese and Chinese literary communities during the 1930s. Yu, in particular, took exception to his portrayal in the story and gave vent to his ire in an essay called "Ribei de wenshi yu changfu" 日本人的文士與娼婦 (Japanese literary men and whores). The essay was more than a simple criticism of Satō's story. It was also a formal declaration of the termination of a literary association and friendship that already had spanned fifteen years. The relationship was further complicated by the matter of literary influence—specifically the influence of Satō's self-referential fiction on Yu Dafu during his formative years as a writer. It is impossible to gauge with any accuracy the nature of the two writers' relationship during those years, but it apparently took the form, at least initially, of a mentor-disciple relationship between the established *bundan* 文壇 figure Satō (1892-1964) and the young initiate, Yu.

Yu acknowledged genuine admiration for Satō's work on several occasions, and this admiration was to dictate the way the two writers were to relate to one another thereafter.²

¹ Mushanokōji's essay was an introduction to Zhou Zuoren and included an explanation of his role in disseminating information about contemporary Japanese literary trends to Chinese readers. Mushanokōji Saneatsu, "Shū Sakunin" (Zhou Zuoren), *Nippon hyōron* (March 1938).

² Although scholarship in English concerning the influence of Japanese literature on Yu Dafu and the relationship between Yu and Satō Haruo is rather limited, there are several articles of note. One article which focuses on the relationship between the two writers and the question of influence is Kurt Radtke's "Chaos and Coherence? Satō Haruo's Novel *Den'en no yūtsu* and Yu Dafu's Trilogy *Chenlun*," in Adriana Bosaro, et al., eds., *Rethinking Japan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), vol. 1, pp. 86-101. Also worth noting are two chapters in Merle Goldman, ed., *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977); Michael Egan's essay, "Yu Dafu and the Transition to Modern Chinese Literature" (pp. 309-24), examines Yu's contribution to the development of modern literary expression in

A Literary Friendship

Yu first expressed his respect for Satō Haruo's writing in a brief essay entitled "Haishang tongxin" 海上通信 (Correspondence from the sea) in the *Creation Weekly* in October of 1923. In the essay, Yu professed a genuine preference for Satō among contemporary Japanese writers while admitting that there were many writers better known and more highly lauded in China than Satō Haruo.³ It is likely that the two writers were introduced in 1922 by Tian Han 田漢 (1898-1979) who was already acquainted with Satō. Satō, who visited Taiwan in 1920, had a well-documented affection for classical Chinese literature and was familiar with several young Chinese writers and intellectuals.⁴

Yu, no doubt, also felt a certain debt of gratitude to Satō whose literary works had served as an inspiration and touchstone for his own early efforts. In 1927, when Satō Haruo, his wife, and niece came to visit Shanghai, Yu made a determined effort to guide the Satōs to various sites of cultural interest. Both writers were, by that time, relatively influential figures in their respective literary communities and this visit marked the high point of their friendship.

Some years later, at the behest of the scholar Itō Toramaru, Satō Haruo's niece, Chieko 佐藤 智恵子, wrote of the 1927 visit to China and her memories of Yu Dafu. According to her account, although the Satōs were entertained by a number of Chinese literary celebrities, it was Yu Dafu who gave them the warmest welcome and spent the most time showing them around both Shanghai and Hangzhou.⁵ Moreover, she recounts how Yu conformed his schedule to satisfy their desire to visit culturally significant sites by taking them to visit Hangzhou and the West Lake when Tian Han canceled a commitment to take them to Nanjing due to political unrest. Again, toward the end of the Satōs' visit, Yu was late for an appointed meal with the Satōs after being detained by the authorities. They later discovered that he had to slip beneath the surveillance of the authorities in order to see them one last time before their departure.⁶

It was during this visit, while at Uchiyama Kanzō's 内山 完造 bookstore in Shanghai, that Satō Haruo learned of the death of his friend and rival in the Japanese

May Fourth era China, though it fails to suggest the significance of contemporary Japanese literature on Yu's development as a writer; Ching-mao Cheng's essay, "The Impact of Japanese Literary Trends on Modern Chinese Writers" (pp. 63-88), briefly treats the influence of the Japanese *shishōsetsu* (I-novel) on Yu Dafu and the other members of the Creation Society.

³ Itō Toramaru 伊藤 虎丸, "Zuoteng Chunfu yu Yu Dafu" 佐藤春夫与郁达夫 (Satō Haruo and Yu Dafu), *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue* 中国现代文学 (February 1993), pp. 206-14.

⁴ In 1920, Satō spent four months in Taiwan in which he exchanged poetry with the educator Chen Jingheng 陳鏡衡 who acted as a guide in much the same way as Yu Dafu would eight years later during Satō's visit to Shanghai. Huang Meizi 黄美滋, *Satō Haruo to Taiwan, Chūgoku: "Hoshi" o megutte* 佐藤春夫と台湾、中国：「星」を巡って (Satō Haruo and Taiwan and China: Concerning "The Star") (Tsukuba: Tsukuba University Master's Thesis, 1983).

⁵ According to Satō Chieko's account, Yu came to greet the Satōs the first day and guided them around on several occasions after that. This information appears in several letters from Satō Chieko to Itō Toramaru, a scholar of the life and work of Yu Dafu, describing the Satōs' 1927 visit. See Itō Toramaru, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben* 郁達夫資料補編 (Edited additional materials on Yu Dafu) (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku bunken sentā, 1975), vol. 2, pp. 199-204.

⁶ Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 201.

bundan, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介 (1892-1927). Akutagawa was another Japanese writer who revered Chinese culture and literature, and the Satōs were, in fact, staying at the same hotel, the Wansuiguan 萬歲館, where Akutagawa had stayed during a visit several years earlier.⁷

The bookstore, run by Uchiyama Kanzō (1885-1959) in Shanghai, was the focal point of lively interaction that had developed between the Chinese and Japanese literary communities. Uchiyama, who had first come to China in 1913, was himself both a writer and student of Chinese literature, and the literary salon that developed in his bookstore in Shanghai facilitated the comings and goings of Japanese writers during their visits to China. From the teens through the mid-thirties a number of important Japanese writers including Satō, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, and Tanizaki Junichirō 谷崎潤一郎 (1886-1968) journeyed to China, continuing a trend of modern Japanese writers and intellectuals visiting China that began in the 1860s.⁸

Also centered in Uchiyama Kanzō's shop in Shanghai was the Chinese Drama Research Society (Zhina ju yanjiuhui 支那劇研究會) which, comprised of both Chinese and Japanese members, was presided over by Tian Han and was dedicated to the study of both traditional and contemporary Chinese drama.⁹ It was through Uchiyama's intercession that Satō was able to reacquaint himself with Yu Dafu and Tian Han and to meet other intellectuals including Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) for the first time. By the time the Satōs returned to Japan after nearly a month in China, Haruo had strengthened his ties with the Chinese literary world, and a conventional literary acquaintance with Yu Dafu had ripened into a genuine friendship.

Thereafter, the two writers continued to exchange letters periodically as evidenced by a letter sent by Yu to Satō the following year. The warmth and familiarity of the letter suggest a continuation of the bond that had developed between the two men the previous year. In the letter Yu, who was still in virtual hiding in a Shanghai suburb, expressed misgivings about the state of Chinese society. Moreover, he implored Satō to contact Mushanokōji Saneatsu on his behalf, and expressed regrets about not being able to send Satō books as intended.¹⁰ Yu was to visit Japan soon after that but, according to this letter, this journey was in jeopardy due to the general unrest in China.

In 1927 and 1928, when the relationship between Yu Dafu and Satō Haruo was at its closest, Yu was a rising literary star in China and Satō was already an established writer in the Japanese *bundan*. At the time, Yu was not only involved with the Creation Society (Chuangzaoshe 創造社) but was also teaching at the Shanghai College of Law and had begun to edit a monthly magazine with Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) called *Benliu* 奔流 (Surging current). After the Creation Society was forced to suspend publication

⁷ At this time Yu, an admirer of Akutagawa, sent a letter of condolence to Akutagawa's family out of deference for Satō Haruo. See Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p.200.

⁸ For more about the phenomenon of Japanese writers journeying to China in the early modern era, including Satō Haruo's visits to China, see Joshua A. Fogel's book *The Literature of Travel in the Japanese Rediscovery of China, 1862-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Also of note is Fogel's essay "Japanese Literary Travelers in Prewar China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 49.2 (1989), pp. 575-602.

⁹ Itō, *Iku Tappu*, p. 200.

¹⁰ From a letter dating from the third year of the Shōwa period (1928), the year following Satō's visit to China. See Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 204.

activities in February 1929, Yu's association with Lu Xun led to the formation of the League of Leftist Writers (Zhongguo zuoyi lianmeng 中國左翼聯盟) in 1930 whose primary objective was the production of Socialist, anti-imperialist literature.¹¹

During these years, the ambivalence toward Japan that Yu had always felt—Japan the exemplar of modernization and bastion of a rich traditional culture juxtaposed with Japan the imperialist aggressor—became particularly acute. Yu arrived in Japan in 1913 at the age of seventeen, and through his involvement in Chinese student groups there became increasingly critical of Japanese imperialism while admiring Japan's economic progress. Like many Chinese intellectuals of his generation, Yu's affection for Japanese culture and the Japanese people was counterpoised by his abhorrence of its military policies.¹² However, as the intensity of Japanese imperialism in Asia increased during the thirties so did Yu Dafu's anti-imperialist activities. Yu's knowledge of Japanese economics and society was a boon to the League of Leftist Writers, and his role in the League soon jeopardized the generally good reputation he enjoyed in Japan. Although his early works of fiction had been praised in Japan, his anti-imperialist writings of the early thirties were soon banned.¹³

Drawing Ideological Lines

Although the focus of Yu's writing shifted in the late twenties along with his contemporaries from "literary revolution" to "revolutionary literature," several of his collections from the late twenties exhibited qualities observable in his earlier fiction. These collections, which included *Guoquji* 過去集 (The past), are comprised of both essays and the self-referential literature which brought Yu much of his early success.

While Yu was becoming ever more involved in anti-Japanese activities, Satō Haruo, whose early writings demonstrated no overt political predilections, quickly became caught up in the political fervor of the era. For Satō, as for Mushanokōji and a number of other established writers of the day, that meant allying oneself with the writers and intellectuals who supported Japan's increasing imperialistic aggression.

In accordance with the cultural climate of Japan in the thirties, Satō's literary production during this era bore testimony to a repudiation of his earlier modernist and *shishōsetsu* 私小説 style narratives and a move toward works consciously steeped in traditional culture. Satō's prose from the thirties and forties tended toward fictional celebrations of Japan's mythic past alongside politically charged essays supportive of Japan's militarism and the creation of a unified Asian cultural sphere centered in Japan and emanating outward to the rest of Asia.

Without any declaration of enmity on the part of either man, Satō and Yu had begun to move irrevocably apart in the early 1930s. Both writers who, at least in the mind of Satō, had occupied unique, unequivocal positions in their respective literary

¹¹ Itō Toramaru, *Sōzōsha shiryō* 創造社資料 (Creation Society materials) (Tokyo: Ajia shuppan, 1979), p. 1.

¹² Although many Chinese writers who had experienced Japan as students exhibited a similar ambivalence toward Japan (Guo Moruo and Zhou Zuoren, for instance), no Chinese writer wrote as vehemently against Japanese imperialism, while simultaneously exhibiting genuine affection for Japanese culture as did Yu. Xu Zidong 许子东, *Yu Dafu de xinlun* 郁达夫的新论 (New essays about Yu Dafu) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1984), p. 219.

¹³ Xu, *Yu Dafu de xinlun*, p. 221.

communities, proved in the end to be fairly typical writers of their age, firmly entrenched behind the ideological partitions that separated the two countries in the years leading up to the war. Seen in this way, the works written by both men during the thirties can be conceived of as the logical conclusion to their professional and personal relationships.

While Yu's anti-imperialist position was evident in his role as co-founder of the League of Leftist Writers, in no way did it signal his complete disassociation from colleagues in Japan. In 1936, on the eve of Japan's invasion of China, Yu visited Japan and called on Satō. Yu had been invited by the *Yomiuri shinbun* 讀賣新聞 to participate in a symposium concerning contemporary Chinese literature which was held in Taipei the month following Yu's sojourn in Japan.¹⁴ The event took place at the Taiwan Railway Hotel, and each day's activities was recorded in the *Taiwan shimin bao* 台灣市民報 newspaper, a co-sponsor of the event, from December 24 for six consecutive days.¹⁵ In the introduction of Yu Dafu on the first day of the event, he is described as a leading light in Chinese literature, second only to Lu Xun in stature. The ostensible goal of the symposium was to discuss contemporary literary trends in both China and Japan while avoiding political questions. Other participants in the symposium included writers and literary critics from both China and Japan along with representatives from both the *Asahi shinbun* 朝日新聞 and *Mainichi shinbun* 毎日新聞 newspapers.

The intention of eschewing political issues was quickly abandoned on the first day when a participant named Huang Deshi 黃的時 suggested that, whereas literature formerly was equated with values, it could now be equated with politics, a view with which Yu concurred. Yu then introduced the topic of Protectionist Literature with recent examples of Leftist Literature by Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981) and Lao She 老舍 (1899-1978).¹⁶

During the following day's discussion, Yu was asked whether he perceived any contradiction between writing literature and serving in the government, and he replied that he did not believe any such contradiction existed and that literature written in a political vacuum, at a remove from society and its problems, was poor literature. When reminded by Huang Deshi that in the preface of his collection *The Past* he had written that all great literature was no more than the record of the individual writer's experience, Yu made no attempt to rescind his earlier statement but, on the contrary, reiterated his belief that all of his stories were expressions of himself.

On the final day, Yu reexamined some of the similarities and differences between the two literary worlds, emphasizing the need for a positive dialogue between writers on both sides. He continued by citing some of the foreign influences on his own writing which included, by his reckoning, the nineteenth-century Russian novel and Japanese literature of the teens and twenties to which he was exposed as a student in Japan. He

¹⁴ A complete description of the symposium held in Taiwan along with a transcript of selected proceedings is included in Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, pp. 218-28.

¹⁵ Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 218.

¹⁶ Yu, in attempting to show affinities between the two literary communities, provided the example of Oda Takeo 小田嶽夫 (1900-79) who had won the Akutagawa prize for *Jōgai* 城外 (Outside the wall), a novel set in China. Yu admitted that he admired attempts such as these at the creation of truly cross-cultural literature, but feared problems of interpretation given linguistic and cultural differences. See Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 218.

closed his remarks by stating that the Protectionist Literature that was flourishing in Chinese literature of the day should not be seen as anti-Japanese but as anti-imperialist.¹⁷

Yu Dafu would have his last opportunity to visit Japan in 1937, as recounted by Guo Moruo in an essay from that year. Thereafter, Satō Haruo visited China on two occasions, for two weeks in May of 1937 and for about a month in 1938. The May trip was sponsored by the Japanese government and was spent in northern China, whereas during the September journey of 1938 he visited Shanghai and Hangzhou.¹⁸ It was during this same year, 1938, that Satō's "Ajia no ko" appeared. Yu, meanwhile, left Shanghai at the end of 1938 and fled to Singapore where he changed his name and became involved in editing a newspaper.

"Ajia no ko" which appeared in the March 1938 issue of *Nippon hyōron* was originally intended as a film script.¹⁹ Although Satō never explicitly stated that he was using Yu Dafu and Guo Moruo as models for his fictional characters, even a casual acquaintance with the biographies of the two writers makes it clear that Yu and Guo were the immediate inspiration for these characters.

The story opens with a "theme song" which evidently was meant to be played while the credits rolled at the beginning of the film. The lyrics describe how Asia has been "awakened" from a long stormy night to face the light of a new day dawning in the East. The protagonist, Zhu Mou 注某 (namely, Guo Moruo) is the son of a wealthy family in Hangzhou who has come to study medicine in Kagoshima. There he becomes the object of the attentions of a number of the young nurses at the hospital in which he is serving as an intern. He eventually becomes captivated by a nurse named Yasuda Aiko 安田愛子, a modern, practical-minded young woman with whom he shares an interest in socialism and contemporary poetry. The two eventually marry, against the wishes of their families. After the birth of their second child, Zhu is coaxed by his old friend Zheng 鄭 (namely, Yu Dafu) to take part in his homeland's political struggles. Eventually, he returns to China where he participates in the Communists' conflicts against the northern warlords and Jiang Jieshi's 蔣介石 (1887-1975) Republican forces. There he meets a young woman with whom he has a brief affair. Zhu is forced to flee to Japan and is reunited with his family after several key Communist losses.

The next section treats a period in Zhu's life approximately ten years after the preceding events. Zhu is forty-five and his sons are now twenty and twenty-three. While he is in his study, reading with increasing concern about the escalating instability in China, Zheng, who has also come back to Japan, comes to call. Zheng reminds Zhu of the importance of his status in China as a successful man of letters and, as the logical successor to Lu Xun, a leading light in the Chinese literary world, and he implores Zhu to return again to China with him in order to contribute to forging a new society. The two go out for a stroll and talk long into the night about the state of China and its future. In the end, Zhu becomes convinced that he must return to China.

In the interim, the authorities come to visit Zhu's home and warn his wife to report any suspicious activities involving her husband. Several days later, Zhu takes his

¹⁷ Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 227.

¹⁸ It is not clear from the records of these two journeys precisely which Chinese writers Satō visited during these journeys, but in reminiscences he mentions how he hoped to meet specific writers such as Hu Shi and Lu Xun. See Huang Meizi, *Satō Haruo to Taiwan, Chūgoku*, p. 4.

¹⁹ Satō Haruo, "Ajia no ko," *Nippon hyōron* (March 1938), p. 193.

boys aside and tells them to look after one another and their mother since he will soon be going away for a while. He explains the sense of duty that he feels toward China and swears them to secrecy before bidding them farewell. Before leaving, he writes a long explanatory letter to his wife. While he is on the ferry from Kobe to Shanghai, his sons confront their mother with the content of the previous night's conversation with their father. Soon after that, the boys hear malicious rumors about their father at school, and their mother goes to the police station to volunteer information about her husband's disappearance.

The third and final section describes Zhu's life back in China. Jiang Jieshi is back in power, and friends of Zhu warn him that there is a warrant out for his arrest. Zhu avoids incarceration by promising, despite pangs of conscience, to produce anti-Japanese propaganda for the Republican government. It is a bleak period in Zhu's life in which he feels betrayed by his friend Zheng for convincing him to return to China and guilty about his relationship with the young woman during his previous stay in China.

Through these experiences, Zhu begins to believe that the Communist creed which hitherto had sustained him might not be worthy of his undying devotion. He sends a letter to the Japanese army in Northern China in the hope that he yet may be able to fulfill the dream that he and his wife had long cherished of building a clinic for the needy. Moreover, he sends a letter to his wife and sons back in Japan, requesting that they come and live with him in China. His wife, Aiko, is overjoyed by the prospect of being reunited with her husband and of the possibility of finally realizing their shared dream. The two sons begin to study Chinese at night in the hope that they can open a school for Japanese language and culture near their parents' clinic.

Excited about the idea of toiling beside her husband in the north of China, Aiko returns to her parental home in Tōhoku in order to request money from her older brother to pay for the fares to China. Reluctantly, and still bearing a grudge against his sister for marrying Zhu in opposition to her parents' wishes, the older brother gives Aiko the requested money.

Zhu and his family are reunited in dramatic fashion at the port of Kōbe where he and Aiko had celebrated their honeymoon many years earlier. The ship on which they cross to China is decorated with Japanese flags in celebration of the anniversary of a Japanese naval victory. In the end, the family arrives in the northern village in which they are to live and work. A new hospital has already been built for Zhu and his wife by Japanese residents of the area, and another Japanese-style building is under construction to house the boys' Japanese language and culture school.²⁰

Nippon hyōron, originally called *Keizai ōrai* 経済往来 was, initially, an important vehicle for contemporary literature and included works by such major writers as Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴 (1867-1947) and Tokuda Shūsei 徳田秋声 (1871-1943). Insofar as it was not primarily a literary magazine, its readership was considerably larger than contemporary periodicals devoted solely to new literary works. After a temporary suspension of publication, *Nippon hyōron* recommenced publication in 1935 with a more pronounced emphasis on political writing, and those works of fiction that were included possessed, like Satō's story, a decidedly political bent.²¹

²⁰ Satō, "Ajia no ko," p. 393.

²¹ Hasegawa Izumi 長谷川泉, *Kindai bungei zasshi jiten* 近代文芸雑誌辞典 (Dictionary of modern literary periodicals) (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1965), p. 2.

Yu Dafu's Reaction

It is unclear when Yu first read Satō's story, but apparently it was not long after publication. That he had not anticipated Satō producing such a piece, obviously using himself and Guo Moruo as models, can be surmised from the essay that he wrote in response to "Ajia no ko." Yu's rejoinder, an essay entitled "Ribē de wēnshì yu chāngfū," appeared soon afterward in 1938. Yu's essay begins with a strong general denunciation of Japanese intellectuals for having been deceived by the military. Furthermore, he regrets having in his youth attributed to Japanese intellectuals a sensitivity and high-mindedness which, in retrospect, they clearly do not possess. He further indicts the Japanese government and its imperialistic policies which he castigates as utterly hypocritical, likening the Japanese government to a "dressed-up monkey."²²

Yu then identifies the immediate cause of his diatribe against Japanese intellectuals. After introducing Satō's story and describing the characters and plot of "Ajia no ko," Yu criticizes Satō's story for not being properly grounded in fact and for so twisting actual incidents as to create a fiction that invites misunderstanding. Yu confesses that he believes that he and Guo have been reduced in the story to mere caricatures to be used in the service of propaganda. In the story, he asserts, the male Chinese characters are portrayed as weak-willed and conniving and, whereas the Japanese woman Aiko is portrayed as virtuous and self-effacing, the Chinese woman with whom the protagonist Zhu has an affair is not clearly delineated and her character is reduced to a common whore who attempts to separate the protagonist from his virtuous Japanese wife.²³

The remainder of the essay denounces Satō, whom Yu now considers a traitor and who, despite his avowed love of Chinese culture and his association with the Chinese literary community, took advantage of those friendships to slander the Chinese. Yu qualifies his criticism of Satō by stating that for every writer like Satō, cheapening themselves by producing propagandistic literature, there were writers like Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村 (1872-1943) and Shiga Naoya 志賀直哉 (1883-1971) who held true to their art, remaining above the political fray, and were thus worthy of praise.

The bitterness of Yu's essay reflects his wounded pride and sense of betrayal. It is difficult to measure the degree to which Yu's outrage and disbelief at the appearance of "Ajia no ko" were genuine. It seems likely that much of the disappointment conveyed by Yu was the result of the fact that the story in question was written by Yu's friend Satō Haruo, although the contact between the two men after Satō's visit to China seems to have been intermittent. Yu's reproof of the story on the basis of the fact that it was a twisting of events in his life and that of Guo Moruo seems, in retrospect, slightly ironic given that Yu so masterfully handled the contemporary *shishōsetsu* form, and so imaginatively recast incidents in his own life and those of his friends in his most successful stories, such as "Chenlun" 沈論 (Sinking, 1921).

With the appearance of Satō's "Ajia no ko" and Yu's rejoinder, "Ribē de wēnshì yu chāngfū," the relationship between the two men effectively came to an end. The depth of acrimony on both sides made reconciliation during the war virtually impossible and,

²² Yu Dafu, "Ribē de wēnshì yu chāngfū," in *Yu Dafu wenji* 郁達夫文集 (Collected works of Yu Dafu) (Hong Kong: Joint Publishers, 1984), vol. 8, p. 294.

²³ Yu, "Ribē de wēnshì," p. 296.

regrettably, Yu's life was not to outlast the war. Fundamental ideological differences became painfully apparent in these two works and led to the dissolution of a relationship which had existed for over ten years. The last few encounters between Yu and Satō, in 1936 when Yu called on Satō in Japan and in 1938 when Satō met Yu and Guo during a government-sponsored trip to China, do not reveal any overt animosity between the men. However, Satō's visit, in which he came representing the magazine *Kaizō* 改造 and during which Guo and Yu were summoned to provide information about Lu Xun, reveals the degree to which friendship had been reduced to the exigencies of political posturing.

After the rupture of relations with Yu Dafu, Satō Haruo became more deeply involved in politics and cultural activities related to Japan's increasing imperialism in Asia. Starting in 1936, Satō acted as the Chair of the Literature Department at Bunka University. In September of the following year, along with Hayashi Fusao 林房雄 (1903-75), he established the New Japan Culture Society (Shin Nihon bunka no kai 新日本文化の会) and was instrumental in the production of the magazine *Shin Nihon* 新日本 (New Japan) which was to become the organ for the Society. From 1938, the year in which "Ajia no ko" appeared, Satō entered service in the Japanese navy in the "Creative Writer's Division." During his term of enlistment, not only did Satō write reports on the war, but other facets of his literary output were also influenced by his newly-acquired role, and he produced several collections of patriotic poems.

The fact that Satō had hitherto encouraged an eclectic, cosmopolitan approach to choice of subject matter in his writing, as evidenced by his own writing, but was now limiting himself to blatantly jingoistic literature apparently did not constitute a contradiction for Satō. In the years following the war, he returned to a more personal and, consequently, less political literature and produced some of his most remarkable collections of poems, including the collection *Saku no kusabue* 佐久之草笛 (The reed flute of Saku, 1946) and his translation of Chinese poems, *Gyokuteki fu* 玉笛譜 (Poems of the jade flute, 1948).²⁴ In the latter collection in particular, Satō seemed to be attempting to reestablish his earlier ties with Chinese literature while reconnecting his own creative works with what had been until the military period the touchstone for his creative writings.

Ironically, this rejuvenated interest in Chinese literature on the part of Satō came too late to have any effect on his relationships with specific writers in the Chinese literary community. Perhaps the schism that had opened between the two literary communities during the thirties would have been too broad to bridge by this point anyway, but the untimely death of Yu Dafu, Satō's closest link to the Chinese literary scene, spelled the demise of such possibilities.

Toward the end of 1938, Yu left Hangzhou, where he had been living for several years, and went to Singapore where he adopted the pen name Chao Lian 趙廉 and took a position as the editor of the newspaper *Xingzhou ribao* 星州日報 (Singapore news). The decision to go to Singapore was made in part out of the desire to seek a safe haven from the Japanese. Yu's writings had already been banned in Japan, and although he still had influential friends and allies among Japanese writers and editors, he feared the Japanese

²⁴ Takenouchi Shizuo 竹之内静雄, ed., *Satō Haruo shū* 佐藤春夫集 (Satō Haruo's writings), in *Gendai bungaku taikei* (Compendium of modern literature) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1967), vol. 29, pp. 456-57.

military and apparently thought it prudent to flee Shanghai and its environs for a place where he could, under an alias, continue writing.

Among Yu's many activities and plans as a newspaper editor in Singapore were to cooperate with the *Yomiuri shinbun* on a project they had conceived involving an exchange of correspondences between several pairs of Chinese and Japanese writers. Some of the exchanges they attempted to arrange included Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904-1986) and Miyamoto Yuriko 宮本百合子 (1899-1951), between Zhou Zuoren and Mushanokōji Saneatsu, and between Satō Haruo and Yu himself. Although the exchange of essays between Mushanokōji and Zhou did appear, the planned exchanges involving the other writers never came to fruition.²⁵

During the war, another Japanese writer with whom Yu was acquainted, Ibuse Masuji 井伏鱒二 (1898-1993), was sent to Singapore as a correspondent for the newspaper *Shōnan taimuzu* 昭南タイムズ (Shōnan times). Ibuse had learned that Yu had fled Shanghai and that he was somewhere in Singapore.²⁶ Ibuse recounted that at around the time that Singapore fell to Japan in February of 1942 Satō Haruo had visited the president of *Kaizō*, which had offices in Singapore, to enlist his aid in tracking down Yu Dafu. The president of *Kaizō*, Yamamoto by name, had personal ties with a number of Chinese writers and, also sensing that Yu was in imminent danger, gathered together some of his Chinese employees and had them help to search for Yu.

It was discovered from a neighbor of Yu's that he had, on February 3, 1942, taken flight from Singapore to Sumatra.²⁷ When Yu accidentally betrayed the fact that he spoke Japanese, he was enlisted by the Japanese military to act as an interpreter in the interrogation of prisoners. He experienced some financial success in running a wine shop and used the money he earned to bribe an army doctor to give him a certificate indicating he had tuberculosis, thereby relieving him of his duties as an interpreter. In the interim, he married a local woman who bore him two children while his business continued to flourish. However, on August 29, 1945, his true identity was disclosed to the Japanese, whereupon he was taken away by the Japanese authorities and was never heard from again. It was later testified, during the Tokyo trials, that Yu Dafu had been shot on September 17, 1945, a month after the Japanese surrender. His grave has never been found.²⁸

Conclusions

The relationship between Yu Dafu and Satō Haruo represented the kind of productive, amicable interaction that some of the writers in the Chinese and Japanese literary communities seemed to be moving toward in the twenties and early thirties. As late as 1937, during the Yomiuri symposium held in Taiwan alluded to earlier, Yu Dafu repeatedly stressed his conviction that both China and Japan would benefit from literary projects that bridged the gap between the two countries and applauded recent Japanese

²⁵ The essay which Yu had intended to include as part of this exchange was printed in the *Xingzhou ribao*. See Itō, "Zuoteng Chunfu yu Yu Dafu," p. 208.

²⁶ Based on information contained in a letter from Ibuse to Itō Toramaru which appears in Itō's *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 213.

²⁷ Itō, *Iku Tappu shiryō hoben*, vol. 2, p. 213.

²⁸ Anna Dolezalova, *Yu Ta-fu: Specific Traits of his Literary Creation* (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1971), p. 205.

literary works that drew from Chinese cultural sources. In a very real sense, the rupture of relations between Yu and Satō signaled the demise of opportunities for such salubrious contact between the two literary communities.

In the end, Satō Haruo's attempt to find Yu Dafu in Singapore via the offices of *Kaizō* perhaps suggests a desire on Satō's part to salvage their relationship and broach a reconciliation. Such an attempt was rendered futile by Yu's tragic death in Sumatra, and one is left to speculate about the ramifications that such a reconciliation might have had on the cultural relations between the two communities. Although in the postwar period Japanese writers such as Takeda Taijun 武田泰淳 (1912-76) and Inoue Yasushi 井上靖 (1907-96) continued to travel to China and produce fiction set in China or concerned with Chinese history, the two literary communities never again attained the same proximity that had been achieved in the prewar period.

The contact between the two literary communities during the twenties, centered in Uchiyama Kanzō's book shop in Shanghai, was undermined by the nationalism and militarism of the thirties. On the personal level, friendships between writers like Yu and Satō were crushed beneath the juggernaut of ideological orthodoxy. Yu, whose writing had been praised by the Japanese literary community, became a victim of increasing polarization along national and political lines. Moreover, the breaking off of relations between Yu and Satō, and Yu's death in 1945, came to symbolize in a broader sense the demise of intimacy and fellowship between Chinese and Japanese writers in the prewar period.