

Editor's Introduction

Three essays in this general issue, Ignacio Adriasola's "Megalopolis and Wasteland: Peripheral Geographies of Tokyo (1961/1971)," Peter Tillack's "Concrete Abstractions: Gotô Meisei's Hapless Danchi Dwellers and Japan's Economic Miracle," and Vladimir Tikhonov's "The Images of Russia and Russians in Colonial-Era Korean Literature: The 1930s," present dystopic, even catastrophic scenarios that have in common the absence of Manichean distinctions, clear colors, or even legible boundaries.

Adriasola deliberates on Hosoe Eikoh's *Private Landscape* series and Tange Kenzō's 1960 master plan for Tokyo, "Tokyo Megalopolis," to elicit appreciation for the spatialization of a disaster. What the author calls the threat of extinction underlines "Tange's disavowal and Hosoe's incorporation of the urban periphery" and the literal procedures they adopt to produce alternate landscapes. The reason to place these works side by side is that together they form a dissonant yet similar haunted production of landscape. Very simply, Adriasola notes, Hosoe and Tange's "contiguity is

phantasmatic and physical, because the shared anxiety that is made visible in their descriptions of space is also contingent on their historic and material specificity.” Thus the essay weaves together political protests and cerebral debates, the metabolism architectural movement and nation-directed capital investment, city planning and the ghosts of imperial Tokyo inherited in the desperate immediate post-Pacific War decade and the biomechanical dream of a city composed of an embryonic spine feathering out into a communications mecca, where “hauntological” presences, or what Adriasola calls a toponymical presence built on a haunted landscape of the returning.

Tillack’s “Concrete Abstractions: Gotô Meisei’s Hapless Danchi Dwellers and Japan’s Economic Miracle,” focuses differently on a similarly miraculous period, the reconstruction of Tokyo and the violence of the production of abstract space. The obliteration of vernacular space in the horrific abstraction of value out of real-estate development following the mobilization of labor into Tokyo creates “productivism” (*seisansei*), the affect Tillak pursues in close analysis of Gotô Meisei’s 1970 dystopic story “Who’s There?” Tillak overwhelmingly marshals the practical, historical detail that went into the planning and construction of the grotesquely huge and brutal housing estates where Tokyoites lived as their labor was extracted from them. In the section “The Danchi as a Spatial Dimension of *Seisansei*,” Tillack shows how exploitative physical conditions painfully shape subjectivity. And in much of the rest of the essay, the dailiness of danchi living as Gotô demonstrated is carefully described. If Adriasola shows a forced march into the communication city, Tillack’s analysis of Gotô’s danchi dwellers positions critical readers in its painful physicality.

Tikhonov’s contribution is just as visceral. In his “Images of Russia and Russians in Colonial-Era Korean Literature: The 1930s,” vast and frigid borderlands are barely able to distinguish colonized Korea from colonized “Manchuria” and the bitter poverty of Russian Soviet Union. Laying out a harsh geographic map, Tikhonov introduces readers to a lesser known stream of Korean-language prose literature that focuses on the fun-house mirrors of Korean selves in relation to the Russian Revolution, the skewed racial dynamic of an Oriental country with a white underclass, eroticized Bolshevik white women, Asian-appearing Caucasian wives who marry manly Korean men, and a snakes-and-ladders reality in which wealthy Rus-

sians play at spas, nakedly, like white animals in one moment only to sink into sorrowful beggarm in the next. The catastrophic language of the fiction and travelogues Tikhonov describes forms a hall of mirrors where bourgeois Korean colonial subjects engage in literary dalliances with white strippers in the great phantasmagorical city of Harbin. In this essay everyone is trapped.

In one sense, John Treat's "The Rise and Fall of Homonationalism in Singapore" continues a wholly coincidental focus on politics of space. As savage in its political realism as the previous essays, yet, as a semiautobiographical presentation, wrenchingly caustic, the essay veers from what Treat terms a "long-standing Western penchant for discovering gay enclaves in Sir Richard Francis Burton's hot 'Sotadic Zone' stretching from southern Italy to Polynesia" to detailed enumeration of pinkwashing that invites players to party in the airless queer playground of the on-again, off-again world of capital-extracting Singapore antisodomy law. Sometimes reading queerness as access into the profitable "creative" life, sometimes reiterating the old "Confucian" saw about the homosexual as a parasitic presence on the healthy heteronormative space of Singapore, a part of the cruel nuttiness that Treat describes is anomaly. There is nowhere like this neoliberal extractive city-state among the world's other registered "nations," where citizenship rests on perceived labor value; given the arbitrary legal apparatus, it is difficult for Treat to even imagine what a Singaporean "gay liberation" position might be. In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed poke their other eye out.

Following these savage studies it is almost a meditative relief to read this issue's final three essays. Christopher Weinberger's "Triangulating an Ethos: Ethical Criticism, Novel Alterity, and Mori Ōgai's 'Stereoscopic Vision'" argues that it is time to reevaluate Ōgai's last work of fiction, "Gan" ("The Wild Goose," 1911), because it leads us to an ethics of narrative conventions and hence to possible new methods of ethical criticism. As the author argues, "'Gan' directly asks readers to reflect on their basic assumptions about how novels engage ethics, rather than simply presenting us with ethically freighted representations." The meditation focuses on ethics and form and argues that Ōgai's work became stereoscopic because on the one hand he saw the power of the novel form while on the other he carried out an immanent critique of the very narrative manipulations employed in his own

writing. The redemption of “Gan” rests on Weinberger’s point that “the aesthetics of the novel emerge as part and parcel of the ethics of its formal approaches to the representation of alterity, and that both ethics and aesthetics might be enhanced rather than undermined by self-conscious reflection on the methods through which they are produced.”

Ou-Byung Chae’s “Homology Unleashed: Colonial, Anticolonial, and Postcolonial State Culture in South Korea, 1930–1950” debates the genealogy of postcolonial state culture in South Korea in the context of the changing imperial order in East Asia. Chae argues a theme that has interested a number of historians of Korean postcolonialism, which is why Ilminchuŭi was so similar to Japanese statism. In the movement of colonialism to anticolonial culture to postcolonial state, Chae argues, focusing on the works of Ōkawa Shūmei and Kita Ikki, one element of this Gordian knot is relaxed. Noting the collusion of statist in both Japan and Korea, Chae moves to a second discussion. Here Frantz Fanon’s concept of “reaction” is center, and nativist developers Sin Ch’aeho and An Chaehong are thoroughly debated. Chae raises for sustained debate, Ilminchuŭi, under US hegemony, drawing from the rich work of An Hosang and Yang Ujōng. The payoff comes in Chae’s argument that under Rhee’s regime, the fascist, so-called nationalist democracy was not only heavily indebted to Japanese statist; in the Cold War era, while Ilminchuŭi claimed itself to be a principle beyond the global forces of communism and capitalism that split the nation, the homology of colonial and anticolonial gave rise to epistemological terms for the same ambiguities that Tikhanov noted in his essay on Russians in Korean literature during the 1930s.

This general issue concludes with a commentary by art critic Amjad Majid entitled “Fantastic Dreams: The Art of Chen Haiyan.” Introducing readers to a rising China-based artist, Majid describes Chen’s art of externalizing her dreamscapes. Chen has created an entire world of highly personal and idiosyncratic text-images, rooted in her daily practice of transcribing and annotating her nighttime dreams. Chen chronicles a life of growing confidence in herself as a female artist and the beautiful interior that rises in her dreams night after night. The carefully selected images that accompany the introduction demonstrate why Majid’s enthusiasm is so well placed.

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