The Difficulties of Despair: Dan Di and Chinese Literary Production in Manchukuo

Norman Smith

Journal of Women's History, Volume 18, Number 1, Spring 2006, pp. 77-100 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2006.0025

The Difficulties of Despair

Dan Di and Chinese Literary Production in Manchukuo

Norman Smith

In the Japanese colonial state of Manchukuo (1932–45) a critical Chinese-language literature emerged to shine a light on the failure of colonial authorities to actualize the socio-political ideology through which they sought to legitimize their rule. This article analyzes Dan Di's literary legacy to problematize received interpretations of Japanese rule in Manchukuo. Dan was partly educated in Manchukuo and in Japan, and used the educational and career opportunities offered her to establish a career as a cultural critic. Under Japanese colonial auspices, she aspired to realize her potential as a Chinese new woman writer, determined to act as a spokesperson for the underprivileged. Ironically, the critical nature of her writings fueled the anti-Manchukuo narratives that led to her own downfall, as any success in such an oppressive context was deemed suspect. Dan Di's career underscores the vital endurance of Chinese May Fourth-inspired ideals of the new woman in a Japanese colonial context.

Hope is born from the difficulties of despair,
New life is born within the lament of destruction's echo.
Dan Di, "My Song"[1]

As the Japanese empire attained its peak territorial expanse in the early 1940s, a critical Chinese-language literature developed within that enabled Chinese writers to engage in critical reflection on the social context within which they established their careers. The conflicted nature of that fleeting literary world is perhaps best epitomized by the legacy of one of the most distinguished writers from the Japanese colonial state of Manchukuo (1932–45), Dan Di (1916–95).[2] Dan was raised in Manchuria before the Japanese occupation began, spent her formative teenage years under Japanese rule in Manchukuo, and pursued advanced education in Japan, where she cemented her reputation as a writer.[3] In 1942, she returned to Manchukuo where within a year she was incarcerated, the first of three terms of imprisonment she suffered for her career aspirations. This article highlights the complex environment in which Dan Di forged much of her literary legacy as well as the critical tone of that work, to reveal disjunctures in received interpretations of Japanese colonial rule in Manchukuo.

Dan Di's critical stance had its genesis in China's May Fourth movement (circa 1915–25) and a similar dissonance that shook early-twentieth-

© 2006 Journal of Women's History, Vol. 18 No. 1, 77–100.

century Japan. In China, May Fourth emerged from domestic dissatisfaction with the country's weak international position, spawning calls to radically rejuvenate all aspects of society, from self-identities to literary styles. The centrality of gender to reform in the Chinese Republic (1912–49) has been argued by scholar Wang Zheng in *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*; Wang has suggested that the "gender issue . . . shape[d] Chinese society in the twentieth century."[4] Vera Schwarcz has also demonstrated how "internalized passivity," especially that of women, was condemned by Chinese youth during the 1910s and 1920s as a defining element of China's national weakness.[5] They prescribed "independent personhood" (*duli renge*) to overcome China's Confucian and authoritarian past.[6] The "new woman" (Chinese: *xin nüxing*; Japanese: *atarashii onna*), who pursued formal education, chose her own partner, and established a career outside the home was cited as a visible manifestation of a modernizing social order. From the 1920s, new women were among the most articulate critics of the Republic's inherently patriarchal New Life Movement, Manchukuo's "Kingly Way" (*Wangdao*), and Japanese militarism, each of which resurrected conservative Confucian ideals for women. Their antagonistic stances were forged in conjunction with the popularization of social realism, a literary form that enabled writers to expose in their work what they believed to be the failings of contemporary society. The reconstitution of conservative, patriarchal polities on both sides of the Sea of Japan became a key target of women writers, like Dan Di, who seized the opportunity to voice their opposition.

Especially virulent social critiques emanated from the pens of Japanese women in the Taishō (1912–26) and early Showa (1926–88) eras. In 1926, writer Takamure Itsue condemned "men, modern society, and the West [as] . . . all equally hateful."[7] In 1932, anarchist Yagi Akiko condemned the newly established Manchukuo as a "slave" state, urging socialists to denounce the military's expansion of the Japanese empire.[8] Ichikawa Fusae pleaded with "mothers of humanity" to join hands and end the wars that were ravaging Asia.[9] These Japanese women explicitly articulated their contempt for the patriarchal foundations of Japanese militarism, which they denounced for betraying Japan's responsibilities to the rest of Asia.

The Japanese colonial state of Manchukuo was thus born amidst intense debate over the future of Asia and the fate of its women. Manchukuo was the product of military force, but was subsequently justified by its defenders as the most modern antidote to the communism, fascism, and warlordism that they argued threatened regional stability. Scholar Prasenjit Duara has provided an important reminder that the raison d'être of the Concordia Association (Xiehe hui), the institution that manifested Manchukuo ideology, was "to realize a visionary modern polity."[10] The goal to modernize the region's women into "good wives, wise mothers" (*xianqi liangmu*) was

a foundational element of Japan's East Asian modernity project. In Manchukuo, officials promoted the Confucian concept of the Kingly Way as a Confucian "return to tradition" in which "every man would have his rights and every woman her home."[11] This "tradition within modernity" model was envisioned to legitimize Manchukuo sovereignty claims by twinning eternal Confucian truths with an ambitious modernity project.[12] But whatever appeal Japanese-sponsored discourses of modern morality held for the local population was mitigated by the reality of brutal military occupation, and has since been completely overshadowed by the latter.

The Kingly Way idealized ethnic harmony as a defining characteristic of modern life. Local officials promoted Sino-Japanese cultural exchange so that "pure and lively youth could learn from each other by exchanging views and spending time together."[13] Manchukuo students, female and male, were encouraged to pursue advanced study in Japan "in order to attain the significant mission of training qualified personnel, and to adopt the strong points of the friendly country of Japan in order to advance the national culture."[14] During the 1930s, thousands of Chinese from all walks of life traveled to Japan for study, work, or leisure, including Manchukuo's famous exile, Xiao Hong, whose novel *Shengsi chang* (Field of Life and Death) was banned in the colony. But despite the official advocation of "friendly" cultural exchange, Manchukuo was stained by militarism and an unseemly segregation that elevated the ruling Japanese above all others, making Chinese accommodation essential. Dan Di discovered, at great personal cost, the empowering yet profoundly alienating nature of a Chinese new woman's cultural exchange with the "friendly country of Japan."

Forging A Colonial Career

Dan Di was born on 15 August 1916, in Tangyuan county, Heilongjiang.[15] Her father, Tian Guotang, had migrated from Hunan to Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), for work as a soldier. After the war, he married a young Korean orphan and settled in the region. Together, they had two boys and two girls; Dan was the youngest, and at birth was named Furong (Lotus). The following year, Tian secured a position as a middle school teacher in Qiqihaer, and the family settled into a life of scholarly poverty. Dan later recounted how her early life was shaped by education and poverty as her father's teaching salary proved inadequate for a family of six.[16] Her childhood was spent happily consumed in study, but the family's dire economic circumstances dictated that she bear the extra burden of earning money to help supplement her father's income. Dan collected wood, leaves, and mushrooms in the forest, sold pig's blood in the market, and worked in the fields during harvest.[17] She often had to

accompany her mother to local pawn shops, learning at a young age the odious cost of credit, different strategies to deal with long-term poverty, and the untenable position of the lower classes.[18]

Dan's parents stressed the importance of educating all of their children. Dan was thus introduced in her home at an early age to Confucian classics and contemporary May Fourth literature through private tutorials and casual reading. She dated her writing ambitions to her study of Tang poetry and classical literature, begun under her father's tutelage at the age of three.[19] In 1922, at the age of six, Dan entered primary school and graduated four years later. In the fall of 1928, she was enrolled in Heilongjiang Provincial First Women's Teacher Training Institute, where she established a life-long friendship with fellow student Lan Ling, who also became a teacher and one of Qiqihaer's most famous writers.[20] In the Republican period, teaching was considered among the most modern occupations for women, especially suitable for those who aspired to careers in writing. At the teacher training institute, Dan was inspired by authors as diverse as Ding Ling, Maxim Gorky, Henrich Ibsen, and Lu Xun, whose work and promotion of new woman ideals fired the young student's ambitions.

Dan's formal education was begun during the Republican period and completed in Manchukuo. Local schools were briefly closed, but deeply affected, by the Japanese invasion. Like many young women in urban Manchuria, Dan attended school, but unlike most she completed middle school and even pursued higher education in Japan. Her experiences set her apart from most women in the region although she used her privileged position to critique the restraints (including contemporary education) that she believed burdened the less fortunate. Both the Republican and Manchukuo regimes publicly lauded women's education, but it remained controversial. The Republic's basic curriculum was dominated by Confucian classics while May Fourth-influenced writings filtered into the higher levels. Manchukuo education fortified the conservatism of its predecessor, especially for women. Parents who were hesitant to consign their daughters to the requisite dormitory life and potentially disrupting influences were placated by an education that vowed to make good wives and wise mothers out of their daughters. As a senior student in the colonial education system, Dan found herself torn between the personally inspiring new woman ideals that surrounded her in popular culture and the conservative Confucian education espoused by officialdom.

In the early 1930s, Manchukuo education retained Republican structures and texts, although promotion of the Republic was banned in its entirety; until 1941, a relatively wide selection of Western and Russian books circulated. Extensive alteration of the education system began in the mid-1930s, however, as liberal arts programs were dismantled in conjunction

with announced expansions of primary and vocational education.[21] In June 1937, implementation of the New Education System formally divided liberal arts programs from vocational training, and limited access to the former. Most students were channeled into teacher-training or vocational schools. Colonial officials promoted New Education as the bedrock of successful career development, but Chinese critics dismissed it as a guarantor of their continued subjugation. British missionaries, active until their incarceration following the outbreak of "Sacred War" in 1941, also loudly condemned the dismantling of academic education, arguing that vocational studies left the Chinese little chance of position in the colonial order.[22]

As Manchukuo's education system began changing dramatically, Dan completed her teaching degree and embarked on her writing career. 1935 was a year of great consequence for the aspiring author; at the age of eighteen, she published her first essay, "Zaohun" (Summoning Spirits). In the spring, she submitted it to *Wutian* (Grassland), a literary supplement of the *Heilongjiang minbao* (Heilongjiang's People's Herald) edited by Jin Jianxiao, an underground Communist Party member who was active in the local Chinese cultural world.[23] Jin suggested that the budding writer join a drama troupe he was organizing but, committed to her teaching and literary ambitions, she abstained. With Jin's support, Dan published several more essays and poems in *Wutian*.[24] In the autumn, she graduated and began teaching primary school. Buoyed by the positive reception of her publications, Dan quit her job after a year and moved back home to live with her parents, which helped her to prepare for the onerous university entrance exams. She aspired to the most advanced education available—and that meant moving to Japan. In December 1936, she passed the qualifying exams to obtain rare state funding for study in Japan. In the spring of 1937, she left Manchukuo to attend Nara's Women's Senior Middle Teacher Training Institute. In the midst of her preparations, her mentor Jin Jianxiao was executed for subversion, doubtless a sobering experience for the young writer as she departed for the colonial metropole.

In Japan, Dan was exposed to an even greater diversity of literature as its literary world was less restricted than that of Manchukuo. She later noted access, in libraries and bookstores (such as Tokyo's Chinese language bookstore), to revolutionary and progressive literature from Asia and the West, including that of Guo Muoruo, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, and Karl Marx; she was also exposed to work by former Manchukuo residents, such as *Ba yue de xiancun* (Village in August) by Xiao Jun, that was banned in the colony.[25] Like many Manchukuo students, Dan found these works, which were increasingly condemned by officials at home as treasonous, both illuminating and stimulating. Émile Zola was a particular favorite of Dan's and was apparently a strong influence on her writing. Ironically, Dan Di

traveled to the heart of the Japanese empire, where she was exposed to the literature deemed most offensive by the government of Manchukuo. Japan thus served as a hub of variant discourses, which inspired and alienated visitors from Manchukuo by revealing to them revolutionary alternatives to the Kingly Way.

Dan's writing aspirations jelled as cultural production across the empire came under intense scrutiny. Within two years of the establishment of Japanese rule, most of Manchukuo's prominent writers, notably Xiao Hong and Xiao Jun, had abandoned the colony. But by the mid-1930s, Chinese literature flourished again, albeit within the confines of an ever-expanding regulatory framework prohibiting pessimistic writing, derision of colonial institutions, and denigration of conservative ideals of womanhood. The ongoing issuance of regulations such as the "Publication Laws" (1932), "Discussion of Public Affairs Controls" (1937), and the "Eight Abstentions" (1941) reflected bureaucratic attempts to stifle dissent across the Japanese empire. But colonial officials' efforts to dictate cultural production were more widely publicized than they were effective.[26] In Manchukuo, as in Japanese-occupied Beijing and Shanghai, "the failure of functionaries to inject writers with a sense of joy, confidence, and militant mission is evident not only from a perusal of the contents of the literature, but from explicit statements by Japanese critics themselves."[27] An addendum to Manchukuo's Eight Abstentions asserts that "there are obviously very many who agitate the people to contrary emotions, write of the dark side, and vigorously describe the red light districts."[28] Jin Jianxiao's career, which lasted to 1937 and ended with his execution, attests to an increasingly heavy-handed application of colonial law since officials discouraged but could not completely contain the critical nature of Manchukuo literature.

Social realism emerged as the most popular literary form in Manchukuo. One of the leading proponents of the genre was Liang Shanding, who contributed greatly to restoration of the region's Chinese-language literary world. In 1939, in the capital Xinjing (present-day Changchun), Liang was a founding member of the Literary Collective (*Wencong*), a group that encouraged its members to "describe reality" (*miaoxie zhenshe*) and to "expose reality" (*baolü zhenshe*) in their work. The writers engaged in a quest for realism bolstered by Liang's promotion of "native place literature" (*xiangtu wenxue*), a literary form advocated by Lu Xun as an effective tool for social criticism.[29] This faction was applauded by locally-based Japanese intellectuals, including Kobayashi Hideo, Abe Tomoji, and Kishida Kunio. Liang garnered further support from Wu Lang, editor of the popular journal *Si min* (This People), which published his essay "Xiangtu he xiangtu wenxue" (Native Place and Native Place Literature). Liang praises the merits of Manchukuo's "native place literature" rather than the "transplanted litera-

ture" (*yizhi wenxue*) through which colonial bureaucrats aimed to Japanicize the local Chinese-language literary world.[30] Liang forcefully argues that literature must reflect local realities to remain relevant. Colonial officials also recognized the utility of native place literature, to distinguish Chinese literature produced in Manchukuo from that in the rest of China.

Manchukuo's literary world shared with its counterparts in the rest of China a focus on the status of women. Xiao Hong began to publish in the early 1930s and has been credited with being the "first person to open up Manchukuo women's literature and arts" (*kaituo Manzhou nüxing wenyi de di'yi renzhe*).[31] In her writings, Xiao linked the subjugation of women with the domination of patriarchal and nationalist ideals. But Xiao's abandonment of the colony in 1934, her public disavowal of Manchukuo, and her death during the war invested her work with a patriotic stance that has dominated subsequent interpretation, silencing the feminism that contemporaries admired.[32] Xiao Hong exerted a considerable influence over the young writers who appeared on the literary scene after her departure. From 1935, Mei Niang and Wu Ying, both of whom regarded themselves as intellectual heirs of Xiao, published feminist critiques of life in Manchukuo.[33] Both women joined Liang Shanding to found the Literary Collective, which in 1939 published a selection of Wu Ying's short fiction, *Liang ji* (Two Extremes). This volume is consistently ranked as one of the most important books of the Japanese occupation for Wu's dissection of traditional and modern constructs of womanhood; representative titles include "Nü pantu" (Woman Rebel) and "Xin kundao" (New Female Path).[34] The following year, in 1940, the Literary Collective published Mei Niang's second volume of collected works, *Di'er dai* (The Second Generation), which was praised by critics for introducing "liberalism" (*ziyou zhuyi*) to Manchukuo's literary world.[35] Both Mei Niang and Wu Ying followed in Xiao Hong's footsteps to contribute to the vitality of the region's literary world, where women played prominent roles as writers and as objects of critical inquiry.

Writers in Manchukuo, as elsewhere in the Japanese empire, were inspired by the belief that literature could effect political change. New forms of literature impelled writers "to see themselves as social reformers and spokesmen [*sic*] for the national conscience."[36] Scholar Leo Ching, in *Becoming Japanese: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*, has cited Japanese writer Hayama Yoshiki's views on Taiwan's colonial literature in 1937: "[Social realism is] not only the cry of the Taiwanese, but also the cries of all the oppressed classes. It is in the spirit of Pushkin, Gorki, and Lu Hsün; it [has much] in common with Japanese proletarian work. It fully embodies the highest literary principles."[37] Thus, Japanese intellectuals could legitimate critical literature by rationalizing it as an intellectual endeavor in the service of enlightened governance. Among

Japanese writers in Manchukuo, also, "realism seem[ed] to predominate among the main literary trends,"[38] making the likelihood of sympathetic Japanese support for similarly engaged Chinese intellectuals probable. Colonial officials responded by haphazardly applying intimidation in an effort to cow their critics. Writers Zhu Ti and Li Keju have since noted that Manchukuo's Chinese women writers were empowered by a colonial misogyny that devalued their work, sparing most women the close surveillance that haunted their male counterparts.[39] Dan Di, as will be shown below, was allowed to continue her career uninterrupted until 1943 and even after that, under certain restrictions. Her achievements testify to the potential that Manchukuo education, Chinese cultural production, and Japanese colonial rule offered ambitious, talented women.

In 1937, Dan arrived at the Women's Senior Middle Teacher Training Institute in Nara full of expectation but economic hardship, the failure of a long-term relationship, and alienation from the Japanese left her disheartened. As she wrote at the time, "[L]eft to me, all is desolate."[40] Despite her ambition for personal growth in the colonial metropole, she grew disconcerted by Japanese classmates who "rarely sing, rarely smile, [and are] corroded by silent melancholy."[41] Dan Di located the genesis of what she perceived to be the downtrodden condition of Japanese women in regressive gender constructs. In 1942, Dan enrolled in a course in the history of women that underlined, for her, the differences between Chinese and Japanese women. She was appalled by the depiction of women's history as solely the story of "forgotten women, toyed-with women whose fate is already as if they are dead."[42] She noted how contemporary Japanese gender analysis linked the subjugation of women to an "inferior" physiology and the evolution of discriminatory economic structures.[43] Dan refused such negative historical determinism, citing Francis Bacon's inspiration for spurring her to reject Japanese discourses: "truth is the principal of the era."[44] In Japan, Dan was inspired by a European philosopher as officials across the empire, stirred by Sacred War demands, disavowed Western influences. Another outcome of the women's history class was Dan's reflection on her ideal man, who she vowed must be "talented, progressive, kind-hearted, a loyal individual, faithful, steady, and optimistic."[45] Significantly, few men fitting this description can be found in her writings.

Dan Di credited her meager Manchukuo government stipend with compelling her to supplement her income by writing.[46] Dan became a regular contributor to the Japanese-sponsored, Chinese-language journal *Daban Huawen meiri / Osaka mainichi shimbun* (Chinese Osaka Daily). This journal, an initiative of *Osaka Daily* and *Tokyo Daily News*, began publication on 3 November 1938. It was published bi-weekly in Japan (until 1944, and then monthly) and had draft offices in Osaka, Beijing, and Shanghai, for

distribution across the Japanese empire. In the preface to the edition marking its first anniversary, the editors (who eventually included Mei Niang's husband Liu Longguang) stressed that their publication policies were not dictated by the state or by the army, but rather that the editors "stand on a position of freedom" (*zhan zai ziyou de lichang shang*).[47] The literary freedoms advocated by the editors allowed Dan Di's work to be published, gaining her access to readers across East Asia. During school breaks, Dan traveled between Japan and Manchukuo, maintaining connections with family and friends, and keeping abreast of the latest developments in the colony. In the summer of 1941, on one such trip, she met Liang Shanding, who introduced her to other leading lights in Xinjing's literary world, including Wu Ying and her husband, the editor Wu Lang, and arranged the publication of her collected works in 1943.[48] By the time Dan returned permanently to Manchukuo in 1942, the tone of her publications in Japan and her high-profile network of friends in Manchukuo had attracted the scrutiny of local officials.[49]

Dan's forthright behavior in Japan is suggested by Mei Niang in the essay "Jinian Tian Lin" (Remembering Tian Lin). Mei describes Dan coming to terms with the end of her relationship with Tian Lang, a Chinese student from Manchukuo whom she started dating before leaving for Japan.[50] Dan learned that Tian Lang, who was studying in Kyoto and with whom she believed she had a committed relationship, had acceded to his parents' demands that he consummate an arranged marriage. Mortified by his betrayal and by his expectation that she would stay with him, she broke up with him immediately. Dan sought Mei's company, and the two commiserated, swearing that "men running around with wild feudalistic standards are a thing of the past."[51] As new women, their partners' monogamous commitment was an essential component of their self-identities. At the risk of expulsion for having had a boyfriend, Dan informed school authorities of their altercation. Dan's imbrication of her relationships with her Chinese partner Tian Lang (whom she felt had betrayed her) and Japanese authorities (to whom she turned for security, comfort, or revenge) illustrates the diverse influences that acted upon personal behavior in a colonial context. Dan Di was deeply shaken by the end of this long-term relationship, a state that no doubt influenced her writings.

Dan's writings from the Manchukuo era were characteristically pessimistic and negative. The author's pessimism was underscored by her 1940 essay "Yiguo" (Foreign Country), which illuminates her life as a foreign student in Japan: Dan "sings the worries of the people who lost the sun."[52] Subverting the preeminent symbol of the "Empire of the Rising Sun," Dan contrasts the coldness of Japan, the autumn leaves falling, and the sad sound of a flute with her warm childhood memories of life in pre-occupa-

tion Qiqihaer among the "people on the banks of the Nen river. They all dress warmly and have full bellies."[53] Rather than extolling the glory of an empire at its height, Dan tussled with fin-de-siècle sentiments. Despite the camaraderie of fellow Chinese in Japan, Dan suffered from a homesickness exacerbated by the militarization that she decried for degrading life on the continent. Published excerpts from her diaries underline her despair. In 1941, she wrote, "at the end of September, illusions, despair, vexation. A bitter smile. Shaking, war aims, tears, blurred."[54] In the early 1940s, Dan published essays, poems, and jottings in the *Daban Huawen meiri*, but it was her fiction that earned her the greatest recognition, for her interrogation of the plight of the lower classes in Manchukuo.

In January 1940, Dan published her short story "Feng" (Wind), which she dedicated to her mother. "Feng" depicts the impact of a sea storm on the life of a poor fishing woman. The female protagonist is the epitome of misery—she is skeletal, with a grey and emaciated face even as she enters the final stage of pregnancy. With bare feet and only an old torn dress for cover, she searches the beaches in vain for her missing husband. The woman's misery dominates the narrative as the storm silences the poverty-stricken community: "[T]he waves are like the side of a black wall, angrily, threateningly rolling up."[55] Strong winds force dark, thick clouds over the fishing village, "the sky is an evil yellow, and the sun emits only a pale white light. All is as if dead, at a standstill."[56] The storm claims the life of her husband, leaving her widowed and overwhelmed by grief. The natural world, for all its strength, is lit only by a failing sun, another slight of Japanese sun-based propaganda. "Crawling like a dying dog" back to her hut, the protagonist falls to the floor as "her baby enters the world."[57] The woman's pitiful condition contrasts with the destructive power of the storm that forces her to her knees, pressing her to struggle forth, alone, as a mother. The storm is a metaphor for the violence destroying communities and decimating families, burdening women with forces over which they had no control. The story is a testament to the hardships faced by women in Manchukuo.

Later that year, Dan published the short story "Kancaifu" (Wood Chopping Women), a cautionary tale of the dangers associated with outsiders. "Kancaifu" recounts the intrusion of two university students, "a pair of free mountain birds," into the lives of three generations of poor women wood gatherers.[58] The women live "like pitiful squirrels" in a majestic mountain setting, in constant fear of punishment for illegally collecting the wood that affords them a subsistence-level existence.[59] Each of the three women has a different reaction to the intruders: the grandmother acts stiffly towards them, the mother is haunted by memories of her dead husband, and the starving granddaughter innocently accepts their offer of an orange. As the

students merrily walk away, their upbeat mood contrasts with the women's misery as the young girl accidentally drops the orange, chases it, falls into a ravine, and breaks her arm.[60] The students inadvertently devastate the lives of the impoverished women, who are in no position to secure medical treatment for the injury. "Kancaifu" is a thinly-veiled parable that warns of the risks inherent to interaction with outsiders who, even with the best of intentions, cannot help but inflict damage.

In Dan Di's earliest works of fiction, "Feng" and "Kancaifu," several themes that dominate her Manchukuo-era writings are evident. She contrasts the beauty and strength of Manchukuo's natural environment with the abject misery of the lower classes. In both stories, the female protagonists are dehumanized by a lack of agency so overwhelming that the women are likened to animals, a dying dog and pitiful squirrels. The women exercise little control over their lives, which are forced to their nadir by poverty, violence, and subjugation. Neither work explicitly links the female characters' misery with the Japanese occupation but both emphasize the oppression that under-privileged women endured. The women eke out lives of misery in an environment bereft of any benefit of the East Asian modern—hardly the "paradise land" (*letu*) promised by colonial officials. While these works could be construed as promoting precisely the type of modernity that the Japanese advocated for Manchukuo, Dan makes no allusion to it.

At the end of 1940, Dan published the novella that has been hailed her finest work, *Andi he Mahua* (Andi and Mahua), a fictional account of the title characters' struggle to survive in the wake of foreign occupation.[61] Although the Japanese are not explicitly mentioned in this work, it opens with a starkly transparent reference to Japan's invasion of Manchuria in September 1931: "At the end of August, the sun sank into the west."[62] Dan again subverts the symbolic "rising sun" of Japanese propaganda by explicitly linking the setting sun with foreign invasion. The illustration accompanying the original publication, featuring a body of water with a group of islands in the backdrop, is also suggestive of Japan since the bulk of the story is set away from the sea, which serves as the gateway for the invasion. The oceanic genesis of Andi and Mahua's misery, the hopelessness of their lives, and the absence of reference to the Japanese are essential elements of the novella.

Foreign invasion compels Andi and Mahua to abandon their established lives and, as Andi fears, eventually tears them apart. Their downtrodden condition predates the occupation, as Andi's father had been "defeated by life" in Manchuria during his twenty years there—but the invasion forces them into an even more precarious existence on the road.[63] The desperation of the times is articulated by a stranger who consoles Andi that her father's death was not untimely: "[T]o die in this year is lucky!"[64] Another woman

mourns over the body of her dead child, saying, "[T]he dead are dead, but the living still have to suffer."[65] Escalating impoverishment and Andi's failing health pressure Mahua into a tortured decision to leave his family and join a Jewish man in a quest for work in XXX country (presumably the Soviet Union); unwittingly, Mahua embarks on a life that turns men into "savages" (*zhengning*).[66] Mahua is tantalized by the stranger's promises of opportunity in the foreign land, contrasting prosperity there with the difficulty of living in Manchukuo. The Jewish man delivers the death blow to Andi and Mahua's relationship. His ethnicity and lack of local connections mark him as an outsider, but it is his unrealizable tales of prosperity that make him most dangerous as he lures Mahua to his death in a country even more loathsome than Manchukuo. Ultimately, the Jewish man, whose linkage with money and social disruption reflects the anti-Semitism of Japan's ally Nazi Germany, redeems himself by returning to personally inform Andi of Mahua's death.

In *Andi he Mahua*, Dan Di treats ethnicity with an ambiguity at odds with Manchukuo propaganda that extolled ethnic harmony. The main characters are distinguished by different ethnic backgrounds: Andi is Han, but Mahua is Hui (Chinese Muslim) and Polish, with a "tender soft face, a typical half-breed face."[67] Andi's father expresses his disapproval of the young couple's relationship because, he argues, "white and yellow shouldn't mix."[68] His stance echoes official condemnation of the West, yet stands in contrast to the Concordia Association's inclusion of Europeans at a time when Manchukuo enjoyed diplomatic relations with Poland.[69] Andi's persistence, foreign invasion, and death silence her father, but Andi remains haunted by his words. Mahua's Polish background is underscored by his Christian heritage, which he had abandoned until Andi falls ill and he prays for the first time since his mother's death; the distant ringing of church bells rekindles his memories of childhood security, yet his prayers prove fruitless. His return to Christianity is depicted as a desperate effort to allay the oppression that dominates their lives. Another factor accentuating Mahua's difference is his abandonment of his wife and son, which contrasts with Andi's stress on family unity and suggests that her father's misgivings were not unfounded. Mahua, with the best of intentions, died because of his aspiration to transform his life in a foreign land when he should have remained with his family—a moral relevant not only to Han migrants to Manchukuo (who constituted the bulk of the population), but also to the Japanese. Dan rejects the possibility of ethnic harmony in Manchukuo by stressing the volatility of local society, a theme that resonates in her work from her first published short fiction, "Feng."

Arguably the most destructive conflict in the novella is set between Mahua and his Chinese boss. Mahua eventually finds works in XXX coun-

try under a brutal Chinese man who refuses to pay his workers, beating them instead as they labor to build a prison. Mahua is broken spiritually and physically by his Chinese boss, and dies after realizing that despite all of his suffering and a futile attempt to return home, he will never reunite with his family. Despite Mahua's mistakes, Andi remains committed to him and is devastated by his loss. Dan Di's sympathetic portrayal of the misguided Mahua, who is consistently mistreated by Chinese men, is implicitly critical of the rhetoric that lay at the heart of Japanese justifications for Manchukuo: local people's lives are ruined by the disruptive occupation and heartless Chinese, not by Westerners, communists, or warlords. Significantly, the Japanese are absent from this depiction of life in Manchukuo; they are never mentioned, not even in passing. The disparity between their dominant position in Manchukuo and their absence from a novella that explicitly addresses issues of occupation and ethnicity illustrates the power of mid-twentieth-century literary regulations to prevent Chinese writers from directly criticizing the Japanese.

In *Andi he Mahua*, Dan Di indicts the invasion of Manchuria that turned men into savages by tearing them apart from the families that they were desperate to support. To the end, Andi remains with her son in Manchukuo, poor, utterly dejected, yet still alive. Andi is more resilient than Mahua and able to endure the occupation because of her refusal to leave her family; Andi personifies the self-sacrificing ideal woman. Dan's dark portrait of life in occupied Manchuria violated almost every literary regulation in the colony yet escaped censorship for several reasons. First, *Andi he Mahua* was published in Japan, in the journal *Huawen Daban meiri*, which no doubt contributed to its legitimization as it was distributed in Manchukuo. In addition, although Dan wrote it during her summer vacation in Qiqihaer, she resided in Japan, beyond the arm of colonial officials.[70] Second, the novella favorably compares life in Manchukuo to that in XXX country. The novella implies a preference for remaining poverty-stricken with family and a strong sense of morality rather than engaging in pointless flight, thus validating the experience of the thirty million Chinese who lived under Japanese rule in Manchukuo. Third, and perhaps most relevantly, Dan does not make one explicit reference to Japan. In post-occupation China, each of these factors contributed to the belief that the author had engaged in "traitorous" conduct, although contemporary critics lauded her courage to write unflinchingly of the rigors of life in Manchukuo. The novella was awarded the *Huawen Daban meiri*'s 1942 "First Prize for Best Mid-Length Novel"—corroborating the editors' claims of editorial freedom. The publication of *Andi he Mahua* and its positive reception suggest that even as late as 1942 there existed space in the Japanese empire for Chinese women to reflect critically on life in Manchukuo.

The last short story Dan Di published before her return to Manchukuo, "Huma he zhi ye" (Night on Huma River), highlights the dangers of literary work. In "Huma he zhi ye," the pale and skinny female protagonist, Zhu Nixi, has a final meeting with her lover, Dai Xi, a writer who was banished and tortured for an essay he wrote.[71] The tubercular Nixi staggers miles from Harbin, coughing up blood, as she passes through a majestic mountain landscape, the beauty of which contrasts with the horror of her life. Since the couple was last together seventeen years before, Xi suffered exile as well as the amputation of both hands and his tongue. When Nixi rushes towards him, he can only communicate with her by writing with a pencil lodged in his nostril. Nixi stands dumbstruck, "like a wooden chicken," at the appearance of her once vital lover.[72] Happy at seeing Nixi again, Xi dies holding her in his arms. Nixi is buffeted by emotion upon his death, variously "a hurt cat" and a solemn "stone goddess."[73] Nixi presides over Xi's cremation before jumping to her own death in the Huma River. As Xi's fire burns out, the river's waters swallow Nixi and two lives are extinguished—a tragic loss on account of one essay. "Huma he zhi ye" implicitly acknowledges Dan's understanding of the costs of violating Manchukuo literary regulations.

In October 1942, Dan Di graduated from Nara's Women's Senior Middle Teacher Training Institute. Her return home was anticlimactic. Her literary successes had been noted by Japanese authorities and a security dossier accompanied her to Manchukuo. Dan was assigned to a teaching position in Kaiyuan, Liaoning, at the local Senior Middle Women's School, a relatively insignificant posting for a student who had received five years of rare state funding for advanced education in Japan. Shortly after assuming her duties, she began to moonlight as an editor at a local bookstore, supplementing her meager teaching income while pursuing her artistic aspirations.[74] In addition to this hectic schedule, Dan continued to write and, despite her depiction of state persecution in "Huma he zhi ye," she maintained a critical stance in her writings. Dan returned to Manchukuo to work in two sensitive cultural arenas, education and literary production.

In 1943, Dan Di published one of her most chilling works, "Jie" (Warning), in the Xinjing journal *Qingnian wenhua* (Youth Culture). "Jie" depicts Qin, a young woman whose life was ruined by men who loved, abused, and rejected her, leaving her pregnant and alone. Qin's mother is frantic over her unwed daughter's future but both women live in fear of Qin's father who blames his daughter for having fallen victim to her lover's "totally base, animalistic seduction."[75] After discovering that Qin was pregnant, her father condemned her for "carrying the disaster of life," drove Qin out of their home, and beat his wife.[76] Qin then gives birth to her baby alone in a field, drenched in blood with her life in tatters, "she is that kind of pitiful,

she is finished."[77] Driven mad because she has been betrayed by every man in her life, Qin abandons her baby in the forest to return to her mother to beg for money; crying "like a cat," it takes three attempts before she is able to leave her baby.[78] Qin's desperation eventually drives her to a nunnery, in front of which she encounters an escaped convict who inspires her to persevere. On the threshold of the religious institution, he vows to her that with "no bending, no yielding, victory will certainly be ours," propelling Qin back to the forest, where she is unable to find her baby. Qin's courage is restored by her convict-inspired belief that she must not submit to her victimization. Qin is not defeated, but rather is inspired to pursue "a pure and holy road" in search of a new life with dignity.[79] Dan Di sympathetically portrays a single unwed woman who forsakes her roles as a daughter and mother for a future that is revealed to her by a convict who, with an unspecified criminal past, is the only man in the story with any morals. The unrelenting violence that characterizes the first half of "Jie" is paralleled in the latter half with Qin's rejection of her continued subjugation by the men in her life. Manchukuo censors cited both the story's negativity and Qin's personal transformation as proof of Dan's transgressive intent.[80]

Dan Di's fiction violated almost all of Manchukuo's literary regulations, which explicitly forbade negativity, pessimism, and the positive depiction of "unchaste" women. Dan consistently contrasted the natural beauty of Manchuria with the degrading nature of contemporary life, regardless of sanctions against overt criticism of Manchukuo or of conservative gender ideals. As an editor and a writer with ties throughout north China's literary worlds, Dan was doubtless aware of permissible topics for publication; "Huma he zhi ye" attests to her understanding of the seriousness of violating state regulations. But despite a weighty regulatory framework, Dan continued to denounce the perilous state of the lower classes and, following the footsteps of Xiao Hong, Mei Niang, and Wu Ying, of women in particular. Her work shared a common critical stance with Japanese leftist writers. Not surprisingly, Dan's fame grew in conjunction with the desire of censors to silence her. In December 1943, Xinjing's Kaiming bookstore published her collected works, *Andi he Mahua*. Dan was acclaimed Manchukuo's "most advanced woman writer" (*nü zuojia zhong qiancheng yaoyuan de yi shi*).[81] She was hailed as being "ahead of her times" (*hou lai zhe ju*).[82] Such praise came with a price. That same month, Dan was jailed for a suspected plot to leave Manchukuo to join the anti-Japanese resistance; the military took her into custody and held her for trial.[83] Ironically, she later noted that this incarceration afforded her unimpeded access to jailed Communist Party members.[84]

After six months of confinement, in June 1944, Dan Di was convicted of the "crime of being a fugitive" (*taowang zui*) and was sentenced to a further

two years' imprisonment.[85] But in the early fall, due to her failing health and consistent with contemporary legal practice in Japan, she was released from prison under the watchful eyes of guarantors who were held accountable for her behavior. Dan was remanded to house arrest in Xinjing. In compliance with the conditions of her probation, she was employed as an editor at the movie magazine *Manzhou yinghua* (Manchukuo Movies). Officials no doubt believed that her employment at a blatantly pro-Manchukuo gossip magazine was not only fitting work for an educated woman, but also a particularly efficacious muzzle for such an outspoken critic; she remained in this position until Japan's defeat in August 1945. Dan Di emerged from the occupation as a Chinese writer who had attained a position of notoriety under Japanese rule, at considerable cost.

Post-Occupation Life

The collapse of the Japanese empire in 1945 irrevocably changed Dan's life: she won her freedom, began publishing again, and moved to Beijing. But by June 1946, she had returned to Manchuria, where she began writing screenplays for the communist-sponsored Northeast Film Factory, which had relocated from Changchun to Xingshan county, Heilongjiang; shortly thereafter she married a coworker. The civil war era (ca. 1945–49) marks the second stage of her writing career, characterized by work that "boils with righteous ardour" against Japanese colonial rule.[86] In addition, Dan also participated in communist rear-guard activities, including hospital work. In 1947, however, she was jailed by the communists for her high-profile colonial career and her husband immediately initiated divorce proceedings.[87] This term of imprisonment, for eighteen months, weakened her health as she suffered enlarged lymph nodes and tuberculosis. For the second time, within two years of her release from Japanese probation, Dan was incarcerated for her Manchukuo career.

The founding of the People's Republic in 1949 ushered in a brief period of acclaim for Dan. She was released from prison and began writing again, under her own name, Tian Lin. This third stage of her writing career was marked by work that hailed the new socialist order. In September 1949, she was assigned to a teaching post in Qiqihaer and began editing the journal *Mengya xue* (Sprouts Studies). In January 1953, she was enrolled in the Heilongjiang Writers' Federation and began work in Harbin as an editor at *Beifang wenxue* (Northern Literature). Dan married in 1960 and gave birth to a daughter a few years later. Dan appeared to have overcome her colonial past. But with the start of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), she was jailed for a third time, as a "literati traitor to China" (*Hanjian wenren*), for alleged ties with the Guomindang.[88] Imprisoned for one and a half years,

she was then sentenced to labor in the countryside of Heilongjiang for the remainder of the Cultural Revolution.

In 1978, after the end of the Maoist era (1949–76) the condemnation of the "writers of the enemy occupation" was repealed *in toto*. Almost unbelievably, upon the reversal of her political verdict, Dan resumed writing, launching the fourth and final phase of her career in 1979. This alienated her daughter, who disapproved of her mother's writing because it had resulted in so much misfortune. Amidst renewed career ambitions, Dan's husband died in 1981. Since the 1980s, Dan Di's novellas, poems, essays, and diary excerpts have been published in anthologies of modern Chinese literature, and were featured in the 1986 volume of women's fiction from Manchukuo, *Changye yinghuo* (Fireflies of the Long Night). Late in life, Dan found love again. In 1990, she married and moved with her husband to Zhejiang province, where she penned her still-unpublished memoirs, "San ru lianyu" (Thrice to Purgatory). Dan Di died in February 1995.

Conclusions

The spread of Japanese imperial power in the first half of the twentieth century brought dramatic ramifications for the Chinese, whose lives were affected in ways still not fully appreciated. The marked military successes through which the Japanese gave birth to Manchukuo were met by ambiguous reactions from the local populace as the Republican government refused to defend the region, in the vain hope that the League of Nations would uphold Chinese sovereignty. But the reality of military occupation swept away any illusions that the Japanese were capable of fulfilling the East Asian modernity project with which they attempted to legitimize their rule. Few Chinese, and not all Japanese, supported the brutal regime that Japanese advocates of empire insisted was for their own good. In Manchukuo, colonial institutions were established to inculcate a Japan-centric Confucian modernity, which instead fostered a generation of disaffected, articulate critics whose lives were inextricably linked with the colonial order. While most of them did not take up arms to dispute Japanese sovereignty, as readers or writers they participated in literary production that consistently critiqued Manchukuo society. Japan's empire thus emerged in tandem with Chinese critics who took advantage of colonial educational and career opportunities to articulate the discrepancies between their own May Fourth-inspired self-identities, Manchukuo ideology, and Japanese militarism.

The themes dominating Dan Di's literary legacy highlight a critical endeavor that problematizes received interpretations of Manchukuo. Dan stressed a disenfranchisement of the Chinese in terms of education and employment that until her incarceration by colonial authorities did not

apply to her. Dan was partly educated in Manchukuo and in Japan, and used the educational and career opportunities offered her to establish credentials as a cultural critic. Her work paints a devastating portrait of the lives of the lower classes, and especially of women, that belies the personal freedom she enjoyed for much of the colonial era: Dan attended college in Japan for several years, traveled widely, published frequently, and in 1942 her novella *Andi he Mahua* was acclaimed Best Mid-Length Novel by *Daban Huawen Meiri*. It was not until December 1943, after her return to Manchukuo, that she fell into official disfavor as apprehension regarding the nature of her activities grew. Under Japanese colonial auspices, she aspired to a career as a Chinese new woman writer, determined to fulfill her responsibilities as a spokesperson for the underprivileged. Ironically, the negativity of her writings fuelled the anti-Manchukuo narratives that led to her own downfall, as any success in such an oppressive context was deemed suspect. The widely publicized framework of literary regulations within which Manchukuo's Chinese-language literature was produced, and the negativity fostered by Dan Di and her peers, contributed to the subsequent conflation of success in the colonial literary world with traitorous accommodation with the Japanese.

Dan's years in wartime Japan forever altered the direction of her life. Her experiences in Japan confirmed for her a belief in the superiority of Chinese new woman ideals. She returned to Manchukuo with a greatly increased power to articulate her beliefs, and a security dossier to prove it. May Fourth ideals, and an East Asian modernity project espoused but never realized by officials in Manchukuo, encouraged the young writer to express her own misgivings regarding contemporary society. None of her work lauded the Japanese or depicted colonial life in a positive manner; in her stories, women of the lower classes, in particular, lived in extreme subjugation. Even the regime's much-vaunted ethnic harmony was problematized by this writer whose own family blended Han and Korean heritages. Dan Di's career was not premised upon patriotic support for Manchukuo although it did require cooperation with colonial authorities, a tenuous relationship that continued until the collapse of the Japanese empire when she was pilloried for "traitorous" conduct. But state persecution, by both Manchukuo authorities and their communist successors, could not silence her. The havoc that resulted in her personal life created an irreparable rift with her daughter, who never forgave her mother's persistence at writing, despite three terms of imprisonment. In an ironic twist of fate, the high profile that Dan established by critiquing Manchukuo society delegitimized her wartime activities as postwar Chinese nationalism demanded renunciation of all aspects of colonial society. During the Maoist era, writers were forbidden to engage in the overtly critical social realism

that dominated Manchukuo literature, feminist critiques of patriarchal society were condemned as "bourgeois," and any success achieved under Japanese colonial rule was dismissed as traitorous. Despite supporting the communist cause during the civil war and promoting socialist reconstruction afterwards, Dan Di endured decades of persecution for a legacy that purports to "expose the reality" of Chinese subjugation in Manchukuo but even more forcefully underscores the vital endurance of Chinese May Fourth-inspired ideals and a new woman's pursuit of a meaningful career, in a Japanese colonial context.

NOTES

I thank Glen Peterson, Diana Lary, and Catherine Swatek for their guidance and encouragement. I also acknowledge the unfailing support of Chang Guizhi, Richard Cheng, Li Ruomu, Liu Huijuan, Liu Qing, Ren Yuhua, and Zhao Shuqin. The use of Dan Di's unpublished autobiography, "San ru lianyu," was made possible by Li Zhengzhong (Li Keju) and Zhang Xingjuan (Zhu Ti). Many thanks are extended to the anonymous readers of the *Journal of Women's History* for their comments and suggestions. This research has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation, and the University of British Columbia.

[1]Dan Di, "Wo de ge" [My Song], *Daban Huawen meiri* [Chinese Osaka Daily] 6, no. 9 (1941); reprinted in *Dongbei xiandai wenxue daxi, 1919–49: Shige juan* [Compendium of Modern Northeastern Literature, 1919–49: Poetry Volume], ed. Zhang Yumao (Shenyang: Shenyang chubanshe, 1996), 12:522.

[2]Dan Di is the most famous pen name of Tian Lin; others include An Di, Luo Li, Ma'dini, Ma'erhua, Maruo, Shan Ying, Tian Xiang, Xi Xi, and Xiao Xi.

[3]The term Manchuria is the subject of growing controversy. The reasons for this are succinctly outlined in Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Introduction," in *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, ed. Tamanoi (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 2–3.

[4]Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 4.

[5]Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 117.

[6]Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 20.

[7]Patricia Tsurumi, "Visions of Women and the New Society in Conflict: Yamakawa Kikue Versus Takamure Itsue," in *Japan's Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy, 1900–1930*, ed. Sharon A. Minichiello (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), 342.

[8]Vera Mackie, *Creating Socialist Women in Japan: Gender, Labour, and Activism, 1900–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 93.

[9]Mackie, *Creating Socialist Women in Japan*, 144.

[10]Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 75.

[11]Cited in Austin Fulton, *Through Earthquake, Wind and Fire* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1967), 18.

[12]Duara, *Sovereignty*, 75.

[13]Cited in *Dongbei lunxian shisinian jiaoyushi* [The History of Education in the Northeast's Fourteen Years of Enemy Occupation], ed. Wang Yeping (Changchun: Jilin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1989), 148.

[14]Cited from the 1935 *Manzhoudiguo disanci wenjiao nianling* [Third Annual Report on Education in Manchukuo], in Yeping, *Dongbei lunxian shisinian jiaoyushi*, 148.

[15]Many of the details of Dan Di's life have been culled from her unpublished autobiography, "San ru lianyu" [Thrice Into Purgatory], personal collection, acquired through Li Zhengzhong.

[16]Fu Shangkui, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin" [Searching for Woman Writer Tian Lin], *Dongbei xiandai wenxue shiliao* [Historical Materials of Modern Literature of the Northeast] 5 (1982): 212.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Zhou Qinghe, "Tian Lin de wenxue chuangzuo qingxiong he yishu tesi" [The Production Tendencies and Artistic Characteristics of Tian Lin's Literature], *Dongbei wenxue yanjiu shiliao* [Research Materials on Literature of the Northeast] 6 (1987): 105.

[19]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 212.

[20]For details on Lan Ling's career, see Norman Smith, "Disrupting Narratives: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese Cultural Agenda in Manchuria, 1936–1945," *Modern China* 30, no. 3 (2004): 307–17.

[21]Reform details can be found in *Manchoukuo Yearbook: 1941* (Hsinking: Manchoukuo Yearbook Company, 1942), 671–91.

[22]Fulton, *Through Earthquake, Wind and Fire*, 90.

[23]See Xu Naixiang and Huang Wanhua, *Zhongguo kangzhan shiqi lunxianqu wenxue shi* [History of the Literature of the Enemy Occupied Territories During China's War of Resistance] (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), 297.

[24]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 213.

[25]Dan Di, "Riji chao" [Taking Up a Diary], *Dongbei wenxue yanjiu shiliao* 6 (1987): 174, 176, 179, 180.

[26]As in Shanghai's flourishing literary world during Republican rule in the 1930s, suppression of literature was often stressed by critics "to strengthen a more general, that is, not specifically literary antipathy" against the government. Michel Hockx, *Questions of Style: Literary Societies and Literary Journals in Modern China, 1911–1937* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 250.

[27]Edward Gunn, Jr., *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking, 1937–45* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 51.

[28]Yu Lei, transl., "Ziliao" [Data], in *Dongbei lunxian shiqi wenxue guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* [Collection of Papers From the International Research Conference on Literature of the Enemy Occupied Northeast], eds. Feng Weiqun, Wang Jianzhong, Li Chunyan, and Li Shuquan (Shenyang: Shenyang chubanshe, 1992), 181.

[29]For a recent discussion of the uses of native place writing, see Prasenjit Duara, "The Poetics and Politics of Native Place in Modern China," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 99, no. 1 (2000): 13–45.

[30]Duara has noted state approval of native place literature. Duara, "Poetics," 34.

[31]Wu Ying, "Manzhou nüxing wenxue de ren yu zuopin" [Women Writers and Writings of Manchukuo], *Qingnian wenhua* [Youth Culture] (May 1944), 24.

[32]The feminist content of Xiao's work is examined in Lydia Liu, "The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: Manchuria in Xiao Hong's *Field of Life and Death*," in *Body, Subject and Power*, ed. Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 158–61.

[33]For more in-depth discussion of their careers, see Norman Smith, "'Only Women Can Change This World Into Heaven': Mei Niang, Male Chauvinist Society, and the Japanese Cultural Agenda in North China, 1939–1941," *Modern Asian Studies* 40, no. 1 (forthcoming, 2006), and Smith, "Regulating Chinese Women's Sexuality During the Japanese Occupation of Manchuria: Between the Lines of Wu Ying's 'Yu' (Lust) and Yang Xu's *Wo de Riji* (*My Diary*)," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13, no. 1 (2004), 49–70.

[34]For example, see Xu and Huang, *Zhongguo kangzhan shiqi lunxianqu wenxue shi*, 284–85.

[35]Han Hu, "*Di'er dai* lun" [Discussion of *The Second Generation*] (1943); reprinted in *Dongbei xiandai wenxue daxi, 1919–49: Sanwen juan* [Compendium of Modern Northeastern Literature, 1919–49: Volume of Essays], ed. Yumao, 9: 456–57.

[36]Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 37.

[37]Hayama Yoshiki refers to Lung Ying-tsung's (Japanese pen name Ryu Eiso) "dark" novel *Papaiya no aru machi* [A Town of Papaya Trees] (1937). Cited in Leo Ching, *Becoming Japanese: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 129.

[38]Shinichi Yamaguchi, "Contemporary Literature in Manchuria," *Concordia and Culture in Manchoukuo* (Xinjing: Manchuria Daily News, 1938), 27.

[39]Zhu Ti and Li Keju, "1942 yu 1945 nian Dongbei wenyijie"/[The Northeast's Literary World, 1942 to 1945 in *Dongbeilunxian*], eds. Feng, Wang, Li, and Li, 408.

[40]Dan Di, "Yiguo" [Foreign Country], *Daban Huawen meiri* 4, no. 3 (1940), 39.

[41]Dan, "Riji," 173.

[42]Ibid., 179.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid., 180.

[45]Ibid., 178.

[46]Ibid., 175.

[47]*Dongbei xiandai wenxue daxi, 1919–1949: Ziliao suoyin* [Compendium of Modern Northeastern Literature, 1919–49: Data Index], ed. Yumao (Shenyang: Shenyang chubanshe, 1996), 14: 63.

[48]Dan, "San," 103–108.

[49]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 214.

[50]Tian Lang, also a noted writer, later organized a "Lu Xun Study Group" in Manchukuo, for which he was arrested and tortured in 1944. He died shortly after release from jail. For details, see Xu and Huang, *Zhongguo kangzhan shiqi lunxianqu wenxue shi*, 170; see also Mei Niang, "Jinian Tian Lin" [Remembering Tian Lin] in *Mei Niang xiaoshuo sanwen ji* [Mei Niang's Collected Fiction and Essays], ed. Zhang Quan (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), 595.

[51]Mei, "Jinian," 595.

[52]Dan, "Yiguo," 39.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Dan, "Riji," 173.

[55]Dan Di, "Feng" [Wind], *Daban Huawen meiri* 4, no. 6 (1940); reprinted in *Changye yinghuo* [Fireflies of the Long Night], ed. Liang Shanding (Shenyang: Chunfeng wenyi chubanshe, 1986), 220.

[56]Ibid., 219.

[57]Ibid., 222.

[58]Dan Di, "Kancaifu" [Wood-Chopping Women], *Daban Huawen meiri* (1940); reprinted in *Changye yinghuo*, ed. Liang, 227.

[59]Ibid., 227.

[60]Ibid., 227–28.

[61]Scholar Liu Aihua has demonstrated how Dan Di compounded the negativity of *Andi he Mahua* by manipulating over two dozen different words to voice emotions such as bitterness, disappointment, and pessimism. Liu Aihua, "Gudu de tiaowu: Dongbei luxian shiqi nüxing zuojia qunti xiaoshuo lun" [The Lonely Dance: A Discussion of the Colonial Fiction of Women Writers from the Northeast Enemy Occupation Period] (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue, 1999), 136.

[62]Dan Di, *Andi he Mahua* [Andi and Mahua], *Daban Huawen meiri* 6, nos. 1, 2 (1940); reprinted in *Changye yinghuo*, ed. Liang, 242.

[63]Ibid., 267.

[64]Ibid., 276.

[65]Ibid., 259.

[66]Ibid., 287.

[67]Ibid., 265, 266, 281, 290–91.

[68]Ibid., 266.

[69]Manchukuo had diplomatic relations with only a few countries, including Poland (from 1938 to 1941). See Thomas Lahusen, "Colonized Colonizers: The Poles in Manchuria" in *Crossed*, ed. Tamanoi, 160.

[70]Dan, "San," 85.

[71]The essay is not described in any detail. Dan Di, "Huma he zhi ye" [Night on the Huma River], *Daban Huawen meiri* 7, no. 4 (1941); reprinted in *Changye yinghuo*, ed. Liang, 238.

[72]Dan, "Huma," 240.

[73]Ibid., 240–1.

[74]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 214.

[75]Dan Di, "Jie" [Warning], *Qingnian wenhua* 1, no. 3 (1943), 83.

[76]Ibid.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid., 85.

[80]A contemporary censor's report on "Jie" is reproduced in Yu, "Ziliao," 159.

[81]Cited in Xu and Huang, *Zhongguo kangzhan shiqi lunxianqu wenxue shi*, 289.

[82]Cited in Shangguang Yin, "Dongbei lunxian shiqi wenxue ceying" [Profile of the Northeast Occupied Territory's Literature] in Shangguang Yin, *Yiwen luantan*, 109.

[83]The details of this imprisonment are recounted in Dan, "San," 116–233.

[84]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 214.

[85]Ibid.

[86]Zhou, "Tian Lin de wenxue chuangzuo qingxiong he yishu tesi," 107.

[87]Fu, "Fang nüzuojia Tian Lin," 215.

[88]These charges are ironic in light of overt Guomindang criticism of her work. See Duara, *Sovereignty*, 149.