

## Editorial Foreword

Issue 65:3 of *JAS* brings together three articles that delve into the history of nation-building in Asia. Two other studies consider the discourses of sexuality in early twentieth century Japan.

### The Nation: Its Signs and Its Predicaments

The traveling nationalisms and nation-building projects of the twentieth century posed innumerable problems for their proponents. ETHAN MARK'S essay on the ideology of inter-and transwar "Asianism" reminds us of the dilemmas that perennially befall those in the so-called "non-West" who seek a distinctive national subjectivity in the modern world order. Looking at the work of Indonesian nationalist writer Sanusi Pané, we see an effort to articulate an alternative Asian model of modernity, a transnational model wedded to ideas of cultural and racial distinctiveness, conditioned by the global crises of class and capital, and responsive to the appeals of Marxism and Theosophy. Transcending and controlling history's dialectic may have been one goal of this reach toward an authentically non-Western cultural heritage, but the limits and contradictions of Asianism held in check its proponents' idealism and effort to overcome the Western-dominated, capitalist global order.

SRIRUPA ROY traces changes in Indian nationalist ideology and discourse through a look at the debates and political interventions around that nation's flag and at its shifting design over the past century. She finds in that history a story of India's transition from internationalist to global order, from "stateless" to "stated" ideological expression, and from pluralist to monolithic views of nationhood. She finds, too, a tale about how inward and outward inflections of national identity—in addressing a home *and* a world—respond to the persuasive power of the state in tightening or relaxing its hold on culture and citizenship.

ROBERT CULP looks at how China's Nationalist Party portrayed schooling and military training as vehicles for promoting cultural citizenship and nation-building during the so-called "Nanjing decade" (1927–37). Factionalism and ideological pluralism within the Chiang Kai-shek regime undermined a unified and uniform system of disciplinary power, such that there were, within the dynamics of governmentality, competing modalities of civic and moral cultivation. The tension and diversity within the project of cultivating national citizens in the long run did produce citizens. Yet these were citizens the Nationalist Party could not control, for in and between the disparate programs of cultivation and training, students gained the flexibility to decide for themselves how they would act as citizens.

### Sexual Utopias in Early Twentieth Century Japan

Finding the "truth about sex" was for many Japanese of the early twentieth century a way to imagine utopic identities and destinies. TERESA ALGOSO sees in Miyatake Gaikotsu's *Thoughts on Hermaphroditism* (1922) the era's panic and optimism about sexual identities in which male and female were merged. Grappling with the possibility of transitory and converging sexual categories, some writers fretted over civilizational collapse while others saw signs of evolutionary progress. Gaikotsu sug-

gested that psychic hermaphroditism was key to understanding the past and future of ambiguous bodies and same-sex desire. For *Gaikotsu*, the psychic convergence of male and female in a cultural hermaphroditism would lead, evolutionarily, to anatomic hermaphroditism. Ambiguity is human destiny and should be welcomed as such.

MICHIKO SUZUKI examines the early fiction of novelist Yoshiya Nobuko (1896–1973) to learn how same-sex love—specifically between girls—captured public interest and became a focal topic in sexological discourse. Yoshiya Nobuko’s immensely popular stories plumbed the purity and danger of girls in love with girls and did so by making tactical borrowings from the scientific sexological literature on “abnormality.” The stutters and pauses of her lovesick adolescent characters, rendered in dashes and ellipses, suggest the inadequacy of language to represent the erotic and emotional “real.” Yet it is in and around those silences that the novelist may hint at virtuous and enduring possibilities for modern identity, love, and experience.