

**RADIANT REPRESENTATIONS:
JAPANESE VISUAL PROPAGANDA IN MALAYA AND ITS
ALIGNMENT WITH THE GREATER EAST ASIA CO-
PROSPERITY SPHERE, 1940–1945.**

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**CULTURAL CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
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ABSTRACT

This is a visual studies research on a significant historical event in the Asian region, specifically the Japanese militarist occupation across Malaya and her neighbouring regions between the years 1940 to 1945. Through visual analyses, this research investigates the ways by which Japanese visual propaganda materials during the Japanese occupation communicate their main ideology, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS) to the people of these occupied territories. This research demonstrates the reliance of the visual propaganda materials on subject matters and their representation to communicate the propaganda narratives of the GEACPS ideology.

Sourced from national and independent archival organisations as well as online archival databases, the visual materials studied comprise of various forms of print materials produced during the period of occupation, including propaganda magazines, posters, leaflets, postcards, currency design and stamps. This research first identifies the different propaganda narratives under the overarching ideology of the GEACPS, and then proceeds to conduct a survey on the visual propaganda materials to understand how these propaganda narratives were communicated visually through its subject matters and their representation.

To aid the analyses of the visual propaganda materials, the research will also refer to different aspects of Japanese culture and society of that period, including aspects of

Japanese spirituality, gender roles and Japanese modern identity, as these aspects play a relevant role in the narratives of their propaganda ideology.

Keywords: Japanese propaganda, visual representation, visual propaganda materials, Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

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ABSTRAK

Tesis ini merupai penyelidikan visual mengenai peristiwa bersejarah di rantau Asia, khususnya pendudukan Jepun di Tanah Melayu dan kawasan-kawasan berdekatnya yang membentuk Kawasan Persemakmuran Bersama Asia Timur Raya antara tahun 1940 hingga 1945. Melalui analisis visual, penyelidikan ini mengkaji cara di mana reka bentuk visual digunakan dalam bahan-bahan propaganda visual Jepun pada masa penjajahan untuk menyebarkan ideologi propaganda mereka, – iaitu ideologi Kawasan Persemakmuran Bersama Asia Timur Raya – kepada rakyat di kawasan-kawasan yang dijajahi mereka.

Bahan-bahan visual yang dikaji terdiri daripada pelbagai jenis terutamanya bahan-bahan cetak yang dihasilkan semasa tempoh pendudukan, termasuk majalah-majalah propaganda, poster, risalah, poskad, mata wang dan setem. Bahan-bahan tersebut diperolehi daripada organisasi arkib nasional serta NGO. Penyelidikan ini mengenal pasti tema-tema propaganda di bawah liputan ideologi Kawasan Persemakmuran Bersama Asia Timur Raya, dan kemudiannya menjalankan analisis atas bahan-bahan propaganda visual yang dihasilkan dalam tempoh penjajahan untuk memahami bagaimana tema-tema propaganda tersebut disampaikan secara visual.

Untuk menjalani analisis bahan propaganda visual, kajian ini juga membincangkan aspek-aspek budaya dan masyarakat Jepun, termasuk aspek-aspek kerohanian Jepun, peranan jantina dan identiti moden Jepun.

Kata Kunci: propaganda Jepun, representasi visual, bahan propaganda visual, Kawasan Persemakmuran Bersama Asia Timur Raya

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GEACPS : Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This is a visual studies research on a significant historical event in the Asian region, specifically the Japanese militarist occupation across Malaya and her neighbouring regions between the years 1940 to 1945. Through visual analyses, this research investigates the ways by which Japanese visual propaganda materials during the Japanese occupation communicate their main ideology, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS) to the people of these occupied territories. This research demonstrates the reliance of the visual propaganda materials on subject matters and their representation to communicate the propaganda narratives of the GEACPS ideology.

Sourced from national and independent archival organisations as well as online archival databases, the visual materials studied comprise of various forms of print materials produced during the period of occupation, including propaganda magazines, posters, leaflets, postcards, currency design and stamps. This research first identifies the different propaganda narratives under the overarching ideology of the GEACPS, and then proceeds to conduct a survey on the visual propaganda materials to understand how these propaganda narratives were communicated visually through its subject matters and their representation.

To aid the analyses of the visual propaganda materials, the research also refers to different aspects of Japanese culture and society of that period, including aspects of Japanese spirituality, gender roles and Japanese modern identity, as these aspects play a relevant role in the narratives of their propaganda ideology.

1.1 Background of Research

During the World War II period between the years of 1940 and 1945, Japanese rapid militant expansion across Asia has seen them occupy large regions of East Asia and Southeast Asia, including Malaya, Indonesia, Korea, Manchuria, and French Indochina. Motivated by the ideologies of Pan-Asianism, the Japanese sought to create a unified region in Asia called the GEACPS and with this region under their leadership, the Japanese aimed to strengthen a weak Asia and eliminate the Westerns colonisers' exploitative activity in the region. In their attempts, the Japanese did not only rely on military means against the Allied, but also utilised propaganda targeted at the occupied locals in hope to convince them of their ideology and obtain support, making their expansionist efforts across Asia easier.

This research as a visual study focuses on the visual propaganda materials produced during the occupation period which were targeted at the occupied locals. It first details the different propaganda narratives under the GEACPS ideology by looking into its root, which is the ideologies of Pan-Asianism – particularly from the viewpoints of the Japanese writer Okakura Tenshin (1862 – 1913). The research then conducts visual analyses on the visual propaganda materials sourced and seek to understand how the visuals communicate the different propaganda narratives through the choice of subject matters and how they are portrayed.

As we will see throughout this research how Japanese society and culture constitutes a significant part in their propaganda narratives, different topics relating to them are discussed in relation to the visual analyses in order to elaborate on how the different propaganda narratives are communicated visually. Such topics include aspects of Japanese spirituality, gender roles in the Japanese society of that period, as well as the Japanese modern identity.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Being an important moment in the history of Malaysia and Singapore, the Japanese Occupation and its propaganda effort in Malaya is a well-researched and much-published historical event. However, most of these studies are done through historical, sociological, economical and even religious perspectives. Very little research and writing has been carried out through the approach of visual studies.

Acknowledging the importance of studying our history visually, archival efforts has been emergent, such as the Malaysian Design Archive (MDA) which was founded in 2008 with the aim to document, preserve and create a resource of Malaysia's visual history and culture. Although possessing a designated section for visual materials belonging to the Occupation period in their online catalogue, founder of the archive Ezrena Marwan notes that there is a lack of writing and research conducted on the archives.

1.3 Purpose of Research

By sourcing visual propaganda materials from these archival institutions and conducting visual analyses, this research contributes a visual approach of looking at history, particularly at the propaganda efforts of the Japanese during their occupation of Malaya and her neighbouring Asian regions, in context of the GEACPS. Therefore, this research adds to the many resources available on this topic, but most importantly through the point of view of visual studies.

Besides, visual propaganda as we will see later in the research allows for a layer of symbolism and aestheticisation of the propaganda narratives through visual representation. Hence, a research on Japanese propaganda through a visual approach

will allow us to discern how an ideology is communicated through latent meanings created through visual representation. Another notable fact is that the Japanese language is not widely picked up by the occupied locals during the occupation period. Therefore, visuals come to carry an important role in communicating their messages.

Taking a macro perspective view, through the study of visual propaganda, this research will shed light on how ideologies are represented and communicated through visuals to the public masses. This will contribute to knowledge in other fields such as Visual Communications, Graphic Design, Advertising, Public Relations and Marketing.

1.4 Research Questions

The objective of this research is to investigate through visual analyses how the propaganda narratives under the GEACPS ideology is communicated through the subject matters and their representation in the Japanese propaganda visuals materials. Through these analyses, an interpretation of how the visual materials aligns with the GEACPS ideology is made.

To guide this research, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are the different propaganda narratives under the overarching Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere ideology?
2. What are the subject matters in the visual propaganda materials?
3. How do these subject matters come to represent the narratives of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere ideology?

1.5 Delimitations and Limitations

1.5.1 Delimitations

The data studied in this research is mostly comprised of visual propaganda materials produced for the consumption of the occupied locals during the Japanese Occupation of Malaya from 1941 to 1945. However, as this research studies the visual materials in context of the GEACPS, some visual propaganda materials targeted at neighbouring nations which were also under Japanese rule is also consulted to aid the research.

This research neither examine the morals, ethics or truthfulness behind the messages propagated nor the effectiveness of the visuals in achieving its goals (garnering support from locals). It only seeks to understand how propaganda messages is visualised and communicated through visual propaganda materials.

The term visual materials in this research refers to posters, postcards, stamps, magazines, leaflets, currency, advertisements, comic strips, photographs, prints and paintings.

1.5.2 Limitations

As the GEACPS stretches across regions of East and Southeast Asia, relevant sources and visual materials are located across different countries. Due to the limitations of resources and time, visual propaganda materials examined for this research is only sourced from Malaysia and Singapore. For farther locations, online archival databases are consulted.

There is also a language barrier that serves as a limitation in this research as some of the propaganda visuals produced are in Japanese and Chinese. For minor translations of

the materials, a translator is approached. However, this research project also acknowledges that there are vast resources and references in other languages that due to the researcher's lack of language proficiency, is unable to access.

1.6 Thesis overview

As stated in the Introduction and the Background of Research, the research first looks into the origins and the formations of the GEACPS ideology. Therefore, Chapter 3 explores the different variations of Pan-Asianism before focusing on the writings of prominent Japanese art and cultural writer Okakura Tenshin, whose ideas on Pan-Asianism has been employed as justifications for ultranationalist and expansionist military aggression across Asia by the Japanese imperial government. Here, we identify as well three different propaganda narratives that are prominent in the GEACPS ideology, which are Japan as Asia, Asia for Asia and Japan as Modern. These three propaganda narratives form the subsequent three chapters of the thesis where each chapter analyses how each propaganda narrative is communicated through the visual propaganda materials.

For instance, Chapter 4 looks at Japan as Asia, the notion where Japan sees themselves as the epitome of Asiatic consciousness due to their superiority of culture, and more importantly, the empire's sovereignty. Unlike the rest of Asia which is considered weak, Japan's superiority is based on the notion that they have never been colonised, exploited and polluted by Western influences, hence preserving a pure Asiatic consciousness. Therefore, in this chapter we investigate how this narrative of superiority and sovereignty is communicated through visual propaganda materials to the occupied locals, as authentication of their position as the leader of Asia in their attempts to liberate and strengthen the Asian region from the clutches of Western colonisation. In

the depiction of Self (Japan) and Other (occupied and opposition), we look at the use of the female body in propaganda magazines as well as the iconography of the red rising sun in representing the Self. In regards to the Others, we look at how the opposition (Allied forces) were treated visually along with the use of stock imageries such as villages and coconut trees for when the occupied locals are portrayed.

In Chapter 5, we look into Asia for Asia, where the Japanese aims to propagate a sense of brotherhood among Asian nations in hope of gaining more support from the people that they occupy. Believing in the need to revitalise an Asiatic consciousness, we analyse how the Japanese attempts to create sense of unity and brotherhood among the territories in the GEACPS through the visualisation of local cultures, illustrations in magazines and postcards, as well as through the logoisation of map.

Chapter 6 investigates the propaganda narrative of Japan being the most modern nation in Asia. This chapter first looks into the struggle of identity that the Japanese find themselves in as they undergo the process of modernising the state. To be modern is believed to be Occident, hence this lead to multiple discourses by Japanese intellectuals to rediscover the Self or to retain their pure Japanese consciousness. This is to be done whilst being a modern state, as being modern whilst maintaining their traditions and virtues is seen as transcending them above the West. The chapter also investigate how modernity and the modern consciousness is visually represented through the use of the advertisements for medical products as well as the female body, including discussions of a modern anxiety in the form of degeneration of civilisation and how this influences the imagery used as propaganda.

1.7 Methodologies

To answer the proposed research objectives, this research utilises contextual analysis, and borrows conceptual tools from Gender, Post-Colonialism and Modernity in studying the visual materials.

In terms of the gender context, this research discusses certain elements pertaining to gender roles in the Japanese society during the war period. Research journals and books on this topic is perused, particularly focusing on the roles of the ideal woman in the Japanese war period society. This provides background information for the discourse and visual analyses relating to the utilisation of the female body which are present in the visual propaganda materials.

For Post-colonialism, the construct of the Self and the Other helps shed light on how the Japanese view themselves against the Other (opposition and occupied). Influences of Hegelian dialectics on Tenshin is also noted.¹ Tenshin, an intellectual whose ideas we also look into in relation to the formulation of GEACPS, is an important figure who had contributed hugely to Japanese Pan-Asiatic thought. Hence, the research also looks into the theories pertaining to constructions of one's identity, be it an identity based on the nation-state (Japanese) or one that is based on the regional and communal sense (GEACPS). Through this, this research identifies the ways by which the visuals tried to inculcate a sense of nationalism and patriotism for Japan and the GEACPS among the occupied locals.

¹ John Clark, 'Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism', in *Since Meiji: Perspectives on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000*, ed. J T Rimer and T M McCallum (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 217.

Another aspect of identity we look into as well is that of the modern. By understanding the modern consciousness of Japanese society during the war period and the anxieties that comes along with it, the research discusses the notion of Japan being the most modern Asian nation, and how this propaganda narrative is communicated visually through the propaganda materials.

Iconographical analysis is utilised alongside with this conceptual framework while studying the subject matters of the visual materials, as it deals with the 'image' and what they symbolise. As propaganda deals a lot with both manifest and latent meanings in order to mould public opinion, this is an apt approach to study the visuals. The subject matters used in the visual propaganda effort is identified, analysed and contextualised within the theories above, thereby analysing the delivery and communication of the ideology of the GEACPS.

1.8 Data Collection

The visual materials for this research are sourced through national and independently run archival bodies such as Arkib Negara Malaysia, National Archives of Singapore and Malaysia Design Archive. Due to limitations in terms of travelling, regular consultations are made to published materials on digital archives such as National Heritage Board Singapore's online database. Physical copies from the Archives of visual materials are scanned and digitised, whereas already digitised materials online are downloaded from the online archival databases for the purposes of this research. These digitised visual materials are then perused and tagged with relevant keywords to assist in cataloguing and organising them for the convenience of conducting visual analysis.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Japanese Propaganda

Literatures reviewed on Japanese Propaganda suggests that studies conducted on the topic could be categorised into two areas, local Japanese propaganda and foreign Japanese propaganda. Both seek to garner support for the Japanese war effort, but local Japanese propaganda are targeted at Japanese citizens in their home nation, whereas foreign Japanese propaganda are targeted at citizens in their occupied nations.

In terms of local propaganda, Kushner's *The Thought War* provides a comprehensive look into the different aspects of Japanese propaganda, including one of its major narrative which is Japan as the leader of Asia. Discussing the lateral nature of how propaganda in Japan is organised (not from a main body or ministry), Kushner notes that it was the overarching ideology of Japan as the superior nation in Asia that mobilised the society to be participatory in the propaganda effort, comparing with the more structuralised, organised and top-down nature of German Nazi propaganda. Besides that, Kushner also discussed the different areas propaganda was exhibited, such as through tourism, advertising, humour and the entertainment industry. In terms of foreign propaganda, Kushner's book did not discuss further than China, focusing on their strategies, problems faced and the effectiveness.²

In other writings about Japanese propaganda, Navarro provided a critical comparison between Japanese propaganda and US propaganda. Highlighting different themes used

² Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006).

as propaganda, Navarro discusses the different and similar approaches taken by both sides, such as the use of emotions and race as ways to incite hatred against the opposition, or garner support from the people they occupy.³ Older writings on Japanese propaganda are also available, such as Menefee and Lomas. Menefee details the advantages of Japanese in their ability to spread propaganda due to their location, particularly through radio,⁴ whereas Lomas details the changes in patterns of Japanese propaganda, the roles that media play in the propaganda effort.⁵

It is clear that one common thread that is found between these discourses is the main rhetoric of Japanese propaganda, the GEACPS. In Jacques Ellul's prominent publication on propaganda studies entitled *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, one of the key ideas highlighted is the concept of the 'guiding myth'. In this book, Ellul provided a few examples of 'myths', including the myth of the Hero, the Führer, myth of Progress, and of the Nation.⁶ Kushner underlined similarities between Ellul's theories with Japanese propaganda, with Ellul's theories being published almost 40 years after Japan went into war in the 1930s.

³ Anthony V. Navarro, 'A Critical Comparison Between Japanese and American Propaganda during World War II', accessed 19 January 2017, <https://msu.edu/~navarro6/srop.html>.

⁴ Selden C Menefee, 'Japan's Psychological War', *Social Forces* 21, no. 4 (1943): 425–36, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2571175>.

⁵ Charles W Lomas, 'The Rhetoric of Japanese War Propaganda', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 1949, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335634909381454>.

⁶ J Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, A Vintage Book (Vintage Books, 1973).

2.2 Japanese Occupation and Propaganda in Malaya

The Japanese Occupation in Malaya during the early 1940s is a well-researched topic due to its significance in Malaysia's and Singapore's history. However, the studies mostly took on historical, economical, sociological, and religious approaches rather than visual. Studies by Kratoska⁷ provided economical perspectives and its influences on Malayan society in general, whereas sociologically, studies by Ahmad⁸ and Akashi⁹ demonstrated the contrasts in the policies used by the Japanese in treating different groups of the society such as the Malay-Muslims and the Chinese. Study on Japanese Occupation through cultural approach is present as well, with Berreman¹⁰ discussing how local cultures such as native languages and English were relegated, with the Japanese attempting to establish the Japanese language (Nippon-Go) as the main language in Asia. In Malaya and many other occupied nations, Nippon-Go is considered the key to replace unworthy native cultures with the superior Japanese culture which involved restructuring the education policy of the occupied nations and organising events such as Nippon-Go Week.¹¹

⁷ Paul H Kratoska, 'Banana Money: Consequences of the Demonetization of Wartime Japanese Currency in British Malaya', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 23, no. 2 (1992): 322–45, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463400006214>; Paul H Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: A Social and Economic History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).

⁸ Abu Talib Ahmad, 'Japanese Policy Towards Islam in Malaya during the Occupation: A Reassessment', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2002): 107–22, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20072390>.

⁹ Yoji Akashi, 'Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 1, no. 2 (1970): 61–89, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463400020257>.

¹⁰ Joel V. Berreman, 'The Japanization of Far Eastern Occupied Areas', *Pacific Affairs* 17, no. 2 (1944): 168–80, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2751663>.

¹¹ G K Goodman, *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1991).

As Japanese propaganda plays a big role in the Japanese Occupation, most of the studies often includes discourses on Japanese propaganda, although it doesn't take precedence. For example, Ahmad by citing archival sources demonstrated how Islam was used as a Japanese propaganda tool to gain support for the war from the Malay-Muslims,¹² while Akashi highlighted the Japanese's inconclusiveness in deciding whether propaganda is an effective tool to garner support from the Malayan Chinese, given the strong negative feelings pre-existing among the Chinese due to the Nanking Massacre in 1937.¹³

In relations to this research however, there are lacking in research and discourse regarding the propaganda during the Japanese Occupation in Malaya through visual studies approaches. If any, the discussions on propaganda visuals are merely anecdotal and used to support a discussion that runs along the different approaches mentioned above.

2.3 Visual Approaches in Studying Japanese Propaganda

In visual form, propaganda deals with how images and visual elements are represented and manipulated to convey certain messages. Review of literature suggests that visual propaganda could be both direct and/or indirect. Examples of direct representations would be an illustration of the enemy portrayed with stereotypical nuances, such as Jews with gold in their hands and Japanese with slit eyes resembling

¹² Ahmad, 'Japanese Policy Towards Islam in Malaya during the Occupation: A Reassessment'.

¹³ Akashi, 'Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945'.

monsters or most commonly monkeys.¹⁴ This directly references the enemy with unfavourable traits such as greed and being uncivilised. An example of indirect visual propaganda comes in the form of advertisements, where the message is not directly clear. As the primary sources in this research comes in different forms and media of visual materials, it is important to understand how visual propaganda works, be it directly and/or indirectly. A study by Weisenfeld conducted on Japanese advertisements during the 1930s discussed how the boundaries between publicity and propaganda are blurred through the application of the modernist method in advertisement by Japanese commercial artists and photographers. Modernist techniques such as montages, exaggerations in scale and distortions of perspectives all contribute to the manipulation of the image, which results in the images no longer representing the subject matter as is. Instead, these manipulations presented the subject matter in a certain manner to reflect certain attitudes or values to sell the product. The modernist approach also helps to portray a modern, new and progressive look which supports the Japanese with their rhetoric of being the most modern nation in Asia.¹⁵ Another study by Germer on Japanese female magazines produced during wartime, the author studied how the layout of the magazine are manipulated to influence the way information were represented, aiming to reflect the overall Japanese propaganda ideologies, such as the superiority of the Japanese culture in comparison with the cultures from other nations.¹⁶ The essay *Fuchikami Hakuyō's Evening Sun: Manchuria, Memory, and the Aesthetic Abstraction of War* by Kari Shepherdson-Scott demonstrated how the abstraction of the setting sun

¹⁴ Navarro, 'A Critical Comparison Between Japanese and American Propaganda during World War II'.

¹⁵ Gennifer Weisenfeld, 'Publicity and Propaganda in 1930s Japan: Modernism as Method', *Design Issues* 25, no. 4 (2009): 13–28, <https://doi.org/10.1162/desi.2009.25.4.13>.

¹⁶ Andrea Germer, 'Visible Cultures, Invisible Politics: Propaganda in the Magazine Nippon Fujin , 1942–1945' 25, no. January 2014 (2013): 505–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2013.783092>.

is used to evoke and romanticise the sacrifices of the Japanese soldier at the battlefield during the Great Asian War.¹⁷ Ikeda, in her essay *Modern Girls and Militarism Japanese-Style Machine-ist Paintings* discussed the relationship between the paintings of modern Japanese girls in relation to the militarism of Japan, and how the militaristic attitude is reflected in the paintings.¹⁸

Therefore, studying Japanese propaganda through a visual approach is not non-existent. However, much of these visual studies are regarding local Japanese propaganda rather than on the propaganda targeted at the citizens of Malaya during the Japanese Occupation, an issue in which this research aims to address.

Researches through visual analysis on other contexts demonstrates the viability of utilising such an approach in studying their subject matter in relation to their propaganda message. By conducting a research on four Chinese women's magazines through visual analysis, Yin investigated how females were portrayed in order to reflect the ideologies of women in the Chinese society across different eras – the 'Iron Girl', the 'Considerate Wife' and the 'Stylish Woman'.¹⁹ In a separate study by Kivimaa, she demonstrated how female images have evolved and were utilised in socialist realist art as national signifiers, to represent and invoke national identity in the complex socio-

¹⁷ Kari Shepherdson-Scott, 'Fuchikami Hakuyō's Evening Sun: Manchuria, Memory, and the Aesthetic Abstraction of War', in *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*, ed. Asato Ikeda, A L McDonald, and M Tiampo (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), 275–91.

¹⁸ Asato Ikeda, 'Modern Girls and Militarism Japanese-Style Machine-Ist Paintings', in *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*, ed. Asato Ikeda, Aya Louisa McDonald, and Ming Tiampo (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 91–109.

¹⁹ Yue Yin, 'Cultural Changes as Reflected in Portrayals of Women and Gender in Chinese Magazines Published in Three Eras', 2010.

political landscape of the time, where Estonia was under Soviet rule during the post-WWII-period.²⁰

2.4 Conclusion

The literature reviewed here regarding Japanese Propaganda provides background information for the research. It is key to understanding the main ideology behind their main propaganda effort, the GEACPS.

In the case of the Japanese Occupation and Propaganda in Malaya, the rich resources available on this topic reflects the importance of the event. However, most of the studies conducted on this topic utilises approaches other than visual. Considering the importance of visuals as a recording of culture and history, this research attempts to address this gap and contribute a further understanding on this topic through the lens of visual studies, and at the same time understand the how the visual materials communicate the main propaganda narrative through the reliance on the subject matters and representation.

In relation to this, to be answered are questions posed in this research. What are the main subject matter used in theses visual propaganda materials? Why are they used and what do they signify? How are they represented and how do these representations align with the Japanese propaganda narratives of the GEACPS?

²⁰ Katrin Kivimaa, 'Images of Women as the Signifiers of the Soviet and National Identity in Estonian Socialist Realist Painting and Graphic Art', *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi* 16, no. 3 (2007): 41–45.

CHAPTER 3: GEACPS AS PROPAGANDA

The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS) is a political ideology that was propagated by the Japanese during their war effort in the 1940s and was first officially announced in 1940, by the then Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yosuke who was credited for the coining of the term.²¹ An expanded version of an earlier socio-economic policy named New Order of East Asia – conceived in 1938 but was limited to East Asia – the GEACPS is comprised of Japan and its occupied territories, which includes the Dutch Indies, British Malaya, and French Indochina in Southeast Asia, in addition to the East Asian territories such as Taiwan, Manchuria, Korea. The GEACPS is seen as vital for the survival of Japan's empire, both in terms of defence against the threats of Western colonisation as well as for economic purposes, due the wealth of natural materials in the occupied regions which bodes well for the empire's longevity and their vision of the GEACPS.²²

Although widely discussed as war propaganda, the GEACPS wasn't conceptualised purely for military expansion or propaganda purposes. Instead, its core ideologies stemmed from the ideas of Pan-Asianism in the 19th century. According to Hotta in her book *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*, Japanese Pan-Asianism – the belief

²¹ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*, Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2007), 186.

²² Janis Mimura, 'Japan's New Order and Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: Planning for Empire', *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 9, no. 49 (2011): 10.

that Asia has in its nature a certain a singular cultural essence – can be described mainly in three categories namely ‘Teaist’, ‘Sinic’, and ‘Meishuron’.²³

Teaist Pan-Asianism describes the singular cultural essence of Asia to be found in the philosophical, spiritual and cultural qualities shared by the Asian civilisation. ‘Asia’ here incorporates East Asia, China and India, and is often regarded for its peaceful and spiritual nature, influenced by Buddhism. The practice of their shared culture is appreciated at a high level, such as the tradition of tea-drinking which is considered a spiritual and aesthetic experience.²⁴

Meanwhile, Sinic Pan-Asianism’s singular cultural essence is based on racial grounds. It seeks to create an alliance amongst the Sinic race, also known as Yellow race, particularly between Japan, Korea and China. Discussions based on race features heavily in this category, and the alliance’s main purpose is to result in a stronger China – which is seen as weak – for Asia to be in equal footing with the West. This is to be achieved through a Sino-Japanese solidarity without being detrimental to each country’s respective nationalisms.²⁵

Meishuron Pan-Asianism however sees Japan having an active leadership role in trying to rectify Asia’s weaknesses. It is seen as Japan’s duty to save the rest of Asia from the clutches of Western imperialism and exploitation. Much more ultranationalist in their approach, they believe that the way to liberate Asia is to mould other Asian nations in the image of Japan. This is justified by their superiority of being able to

²³ Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War 1931-1945*, 30.

²⁴ Hotta, 30.

²⁵ Hotta, 41.

modernise themselves yet maintain their ancestral Japanese values and tradition which is reflected by their imperial sovereignty from Western colonisation. Violence and military action is seen as an acceptable way to achieve these noble goals.²⁶

Hotta however also noted the inadequacy of these three categorisations, due to the vast variety of ways intellectuals conceptualised Pan-Asianism. This makes it difficult to categorise all facets of Pan-Asianism.²⁷ Despite this, three key notions remain in Japanese Pan-Asianism thought, and these notions are consistent with the ideologies of the GEACPS:

- i. There is a singular cultural essence to Asia – sharing proximity not only in terms of geographical location, but as well as cultural lineage, in areas such as spirituality, virtues, language, and art.²⁸
- ii. Asia has a certain weakness that needs to be rectified under the leadership of Japan and this weakness is often apparent when Asia is pegged against the Other/coloniser (the West).²⁹
- iii. Pan-Asianism is *for* modernisation. Although Pan-Asianists see Asia's strength in her shared traditions such as spirituality and culture, being a modern Asia, particularly a modern Japan is seen as vital to Japanese Pan-Asianists.³⁰

²⁶ Hotta, 47.

²⁷ Hotta, 52.

²⁸ Hotta, 23.

²⁹ Hotta, 23.

³⁰ Hotta, 49.

3.1 Okakura Tenshin and The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS)

One of the more well-known of Pan-Asianist intellectuals who expressed these ideas of Pan-Asianism was Okakura Kakuzo, also known as Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913). Much cited by academics for starting his renowned book *The Ideals of The East* with the phrase ‘Asia is One’, his writings were interpreted widely by both Pan-Asian pacifists and ultranationalists to justify their respective agendas. This dichotomy and ambivalence in Tenshin’s text were highlighted both by Hotta³¹ as well as Clark.³² To pacifist Pan-Asianist, his ideologies were described as based on peace, ideas that were drawn mostly from his books *The Book of Tea (1906)* and *The Ideals of the East (1904)*. Here, Tenshin is interpreted to attribute peace to Asia, elaborating on the common and binding genealogy of spirituality, virtues and culture that all nations in the Asian region share, such as Buddhism, Art and Tea.³³

However, Tenshin also addressed Japan’s involvement in the conflicts of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars between the late 19th century and early 20th century through his text *The Awakening of Japan (1904)*³⁴. In this text, he was more receptive towards aggression as a mean to carry out Japan’s duty to liberate Asia from Western colonisation. According to Tenshin, war and aggression were taught by the West to Japan, and Japan had no option but to retaliate using the same methods to defend

³¹ Hotta, 35.

³² Clark, ‘Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism’, 217.

³³ Masako N. Racel, ‘Okakura Kakuzō’s Art History: Cross-Cultural Encounters, Hegelian Dialectics and Darwinian Evolution’, *Asian Review of World Histories* 2, no. 1 (2014): 32, <https://doi.org/10.12773/arwh.2014.2.1.017>.

³⁴ Racel, 33.

Japan's empire and sovereignty.³⁵ It is not surprising therefore to have ultranationalists militants latch onto these ideas by Tenshin – republishing *The Awakening of Japan* in English as *The Awakening of the East* posthumously in 1942.³⁶ Through this, they justify their expansionist aggressions throughout the war period, involving the annexation of Korea, invasion of China and establishing the puppet state Manchuria, leading to the eventual occupation of Southeast Asian territories.

Perhaps Tenshin's ambivalence in his writings can be attributed to his influence by Hegel, particularly Hegelian dialectics. Masako Racel in her article *Okakura Kakuzō's Art History: Cross-Cultural Encounters, Hegelian Dialectics and Darwinian Evolution*, proposed how Tenshin's ideas reflected Hegel's notion of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis. Tenshin's idea of Asia's self-identity is always seen in relationship to the Other (the West) and this is where we can see the Hegelian dialectics come into play in Tenshin's thoughts. For example, whereas peace is attributed to Asia, war and aggression is attributed to the West.³⁷ This thesis and antithesis eventually leads to synthesis, where we see how Tenshin, and later Japan dealt with the struggles of identifying the Other in the Self, as they participate in aggressive military expansion as well as modernisation, both seen as the Occidentalisation of the Self. Hence, this dialectical nature of Tenshin's Pan-Asianism manifests itself in three main propaganda rhetoric of GEACPS that this research looks at, namely Asia for Asia, Japan as Asia and Japan as Modern.

³⁵ Kakuzo Okakura, *The Awakening of Japan* (New York: Century Company, 1904), 223.

³⁶ Clark, 'Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism', 223.

³⁷ Racel, 'Okakura Kakuzō's Art History: Cross-Cultural Encounters, Hegelian Dialectics and Darwinian Evolution', 32.

3.2 Asia for Asia

In Tenshin's *The Awakening of the East*, Asia's strength or weakness becomes apparent when pegged against the West – the Self materialises when seen in a zero-sum relationship to the Other. The glory of the West can only mean the humiliation of Asia.³⁸ However, he sees the cultural difference between East and West as a great catalyst for cross-cultural interaction which contributes to the growth of one's own art and culture. This demonstrates Racel's suggestion of Hegelian dialectics in Tenshin's thoughts, where the anti-thesis and thesis meets to generate synthesis.³⁹ Therefore, in this case we should note that Tenshin's arguments were never to have Asian culture supersede Western culture, instead his arguments were rooted in his fear that Asians will forsake their own culture in favour of Western culture.⁴⁰

It is out of this fear that Tenshin argues for a certain renewal of consciousness on what it means to be Asiatic in all Asians. Addressing his fellow Asians as “Brothers and Sisters of Asia!” and utilising the possessive pronoun ‘our’ in his texts, “*our* ancestral ideals, *our* family institutions, *our* ethics, *our* religions” [emphasis mine],⁴¹ he promotes the idea that all Asians share the same ancestry and establishes a kinship between all Asian regions. As Kinoshita in interpreting Tenshin would put it, Asian cultures are “meshes from one web”.⁴² Through this kinship and brotherhood, Japan rallies the other

³⁸ Clark, ‘Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism’, 226.

³⁹ Racel, ‘Okakura Kakuzō's Art History: Cross-Cultural Encounters, Hegelian Dialectics and Darwinian Evolution’, 43.

⁴⁰ Racel, 41.

⁴¹ Clark, ‘Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism’, 227.

⁴² Clark, 225.

Asian nations as brethren in the noble cause of re-establishing Asiatic culture through renewal of Asian consciousness.

Perhaps one of the more telling dialectical thought by Tenshin is that Asia liberates, whereas the West subjugates. According to him on the topic of art, Asian art is described as spiritual, freeing, and individualistic.⁴³ Aesthetically, it appeals directly to the viewer.⁴⁴ On the other hand, Western art is industrialist, commercialist, and destroys individuality and creativity, resulting in artists losing their freedom to express.⁴⁵

As Japan begins to see their culture as the culmination of Asian culture and themselves as the epitome of the Asiatic, this notion of liberation is then transferred to Japan. Japan – now as Asia, appoint themselves as leaders in the noble cause of liberating Asia from the subjugation of the West.

3.3 Japan as Asia

Japan's superiority and leadership in what it perceived to be the noble fight to liberate and return the Asian consciousness to its fellow Asian brethren is not only justified by the reasoning that they are the culmination of the Asiatic culture, but also by the notion that they managed to modernise and at the same time maintain their traditional and ancestral virtues, reflected by their empire's sovereignty. Therefore, it is seen that other Asian nations who have lost their way due to Western colonisation have

⁴³ Racel, 'Okakura Kakuzō's Art History: Cross-Cultural Encounters, Hegelian Dialectics and Darwinian Evolution', 44.

⁴⁴ Racel, 37.

⁴⁵ Racel, 40.

to be more like Japan to regain their Asiatic consciousness. This sets in motion Japan's ultranationalist agenda to Nipponise other Asian nations,⁴⁶ even if it means through the remedy of the 'The Sword',⁴⁷ an allegory for militarist aggression.

John Clark, by defining aesthetic nationalism in his essay *Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism*, allowed us to observe how the ideologies of GEACPS – stemming from Tenshin and Meishuron Pan-Asianism – goes along with the definition he proposed. By remaking past glory through associating Asiatic culture with their own, Japan then imposes these 'Japan as Asia' values onto other Asians nations – associated through the GEACPS – believing strongly that through this imposition, Asia's weakness would be remedied in the future. We see this in effect during the 1940s where Japanese military administration attempted to relegate local cultures of their occupied territories and introduce their own through changes in cultural and educational policies. For example, efforts to instate the Japanese language (Nippon-Go) as the main lingua franca of the Sphere is key to bring Asians back to the right path. Here, instead of Asia as One, we see Japan as Asia. Referring back to Kinoshita's analogy of Asia being "meshes from one web", Japan now becomes the spider, weaving Asia from of its own body believing themselves to be fixing the web ruined by the Western colonial winds.

3.4 Japan as Modern (the Other in the Self)

Another major rhetoric in the GEACPS propaganda is Japan's superiority as a modern state among other Asian nations. Portraying themselves as the most modern

⁴⁶ Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*, 48.

⁴⁷ Clark, 'Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism', 228.

nation in Asia, their advanced technological, medical and industrialisation capabilities is seen to qualify themselves as the leaders to free Asia from the clutches of Western domination, and to lead Asia through the 20th century.⁴⁸ Fellow Asian nations are seen as backwards, undeveloped and therefore needs to be modernised by the Japanese.

In spite of this, Clark also highlighted that Tenshin was the first Japanese intellectual to note that modernisation is the occidentalisation of the world.⁴⁹ Tenshin was preoccupied with discovering the source and the origin of the Japanese identity and in trying to return to it, Tenshin failed to recognised the Other in the Self despite his mastery of the Other's language. This makes it contradictory when Japan uses Tenshin as justification for their ultranationalist agendas – failing to see that being modern means to be Occidental, the very thing that they are trying to liberate the Orient from.

This contradiction was somewhat reconciled with the reasoning that to have Asia be seen as level pegged with the West, Asia have to beat the West in their own game. The caveat is that Asians at the same time, have to be able to maintain their identity – defined by their ancestral tradition and virtues as Asians – their Asiatic consciousness. This allows for Tenshin's acceptance of Western culture, yet portray and maintain his Japanese identity. This is apparent in his conscious choices of outfits, as a marker for his own Asian identity while exhibiting his mastery in the English language.⁵⁰

In the case of GEACPS during the occupational period, this reconciliation enables the criticism of the West's industrialisation and materialism, yet does not hinder Japan

⁴⁸ Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda*, 15.

⁴⁹ Clark, 'Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism', 242.

⁵⁰ Clark, 220.

from boasting their own modernity. The key is that they are able to be as – or more – modern than the West, but at the same time maintain their ancestral tradition and virtues by defending their empire’s sovereignty.

Another aspect of this Other in the Self can be observed in their acceptance of aggression and violence in their noble effort to modernise and liberate Asia. Meishuron Pan-Asianism – in which GEACPS most resembles – is a category of Pan-Asianism where violent means are justified by the end objectives. It is seen as noble, the act of violence in pursuing liberation of Asia from the grips of Western colonisation.

As stated earlier in the chapter, Tenshin attributed the West with war and aggression, and the East with peace. Therefore, Japan by justifying their aggression on and expansion into other Asian territories for the purposes of beating the West in their own game and liberate Asia to the same level as the West, demonstrates this aspect of the Other in the Self.

3.5 Conclusion: GEACPS as Propaganda

In this chapter, we observed how Tenshin’s dialectical ideas has far reaching effects into forming different and sometimes contradictory conceptualisations of Pan-Asianism. Tenshin’s thoughts and aesthetic nationalism can be traced from his texts to the ultranationalist Meishuron Pan-Asianism nature of GEACPS, which conceives Japan – the only sovereign Asian empire – as the epitome of Asian culture, and therefore carries the responsibility and burden to lead and liberate a weak, colonised and exploited Asia.

Through understanding Pan-Asianism and the intellectuals that written heavily on it, we see how GEAPS became more than just a geographical polity. Its ideologies, rooted in the romanticism of liberation, tradition, virtues, aesthetic nationalism, spirituality,

and modernisation means it works perfectly as propaganda to garner support from both their local and occupied territories for the Great East Asia War.

The three rhetoric of the GEACPS propaganda detailed earlier in this chapter – Asia for Asia, Japan as Asia, and Japan as Modern – are studied through visual analysis of the Japanese visual propaganda materials. How are these narratives portrayed through their visual propaganda? How does Japan – through the visual representation of the Self and the Other – navigate the balance between notions of brotherhood and themes of leadership and superiority? How is the conflict between modernity and ancestral traditions reconciled visually? This research addresses these questions in the following chapters.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 4: JAPAN AS ASIA

4.1 Representations of the Self

From the National Archives of Malaysia and National Archives of Singapore, one is able to access a collection of Japanese propaganda magazines published during the Occupation of Malaya. One of them is entitled *Taiyo* (太陽). Distributed in the areas that make up the GEACPS, the magazine's targeted audience are the locals of the occupied territories, apparent by the fact that the articles written in the magazines are often translated to more than one language from the Japanese, namely Malay, Chinese, English, with some volumes also containing Burmese and Vietnamese translations. A publisher's note in the magazine also notes the locations where the magazine was distributed, which includes Manchuria, China, French-Indochina, Thailand, Malay, Burma, and East Indies.

The contents of the magazine are varied, it contains news articles and updates about the war with accompanying photographs, advertisements for Japanese products, as well as humour in the form of comic strips and caricatures. One particular issue also feature a Japanese fairy tale accompanied by illustrations by an artist named Tjoko Kamoshita. In accordance with the Japanese's attempt to make Japanese language the lingua franca of the GEACPS, visual aids that encourages the learning of the Japanese language is also one of the main contents found in the magazine. Undoubtedly a medium of propaganda, the magazine's main aim is to share and spread Japanese culture through print medium.

An interesting and noteworthy aspect of this particular magazine is that out of the 13 issues in the collection of the National Archives of Malaysia, 12 of them features only women on its magazine covers. Each cover features a different woman doing a different

activity, from rejoicing in leisure – ballet dancing, playing tennis, fishing and playing musical instruments – to engaging in labour as a factory hand or a train conductor. The only issue that does not feature a woman as the main cover features a Japanese male toddler.

The consistent use of the female body across the many front covers of the propaganda magazine demonstrates that it is a curated and conscious choice. One of the main purposes of this research is to understand the motivation behind the choice of subject matter utilised by the visual materials. In this case, how is the female body significant in its representation of Japan (the Self) that aims to be shown to the people of their occupied territories (the Other)? How does the representation of the female body serve as a channel to exhibit Japanese ideals and values and ultimately their propaganda rhetoric of Japan as Asia to the people they are trying to influence?

4.1.1 The Female Body

To answer these questions, we first have to understand the male and female ideals and gender roles of the Japanese society during the war period. Under the imperial rule, all Japanese citizens are considered to be subjects of the emperor. However, their duties to the empire are differentiated by their gender. There is a strong patriarchal ideology embedded among the Japanese people.⁵¹ Generally, the men go outdoors and act as breadwinners while the women stay indoors to keep the house in order. Therefore, in the case of the Japanese women, their role is generally bound to the limits of the domestic

⁵¹ Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 6.

and private sphere.⁵² As an imperial subject, a Japanese woman's chief responsibility is maternal, to reproduce and raise good subjects for the future of the empire. Her sense of patriotism is expressed through her self-sacrificing support of love and care for her son and husband.⁵³ Since women are not allowed to be involved in politics at the time,⁵⁴ women are seen as 'passive' supporters whereas men played a more 'active' role in the direction of the nation.⁵⁵

Protection of women is a persistent notion in the patriarchal society of imperial Japan. For example, although women engaging in waged work is not uncommon, most of their marital status is single and special labour legislations were designed for them and termed as 'protection'. This is to ensure that they will be able to achieve their ultimate objective as Japanese female subjects, which is to aspire to be 'good wives and wise mothers'.⁵⁶ During the war period as well, "waved hair or other forms of 'Western' adornment" and "display of unseemly sexual behaviour" are campaigned against by patriotic women's organisations. They advocated for the preservation of women's chastity, purity and fidelity. Hence, this need of protection justifies military activity – men protecting their faithful women at home.⁵⁷

⁵² Barbara R. Ambros, 'Imperial Japan : Good Wives and Wise Mothers', in *Women in Japanese Religions* (New York, New York: NYU Press, 2015), 117, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15r3zhw>.

⁵³ Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality*, 3.

⁵⁴ Ambros, 'Imperial Japan : Good Wives and Wise Mothers', 117.

⁵⁵ Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality*, 18.

⁵⁶ Mackie, 6.

⁵⁷ Mackie, 110.

Through visual analysis on the magazine covers, we can discern these traits, these ideals of Japanese femininity – domestic, maternal, passive, supportive, and chaste – propagated through the visual language.

For example, we look at the front covers of *Taiyo*'s 7th, 9th and 11th issue from Volume 2 (published in 1943) and 10th issue from Volume 3 (published in 1944). All the front covers feature a masthead consisting of the magazine's title, accompanied by a black and white photograph. In the case of the Volume 2 Issue 7, Volume 2 Issue 11, and Volume 3 Issue 10, photographs of Japanese women were used as the featured image, whereas for the Volume 2 Issue 9, a photograph of a male Japanese toddler is featured instead. Through the captions provided on the magazine covers and cues from the images, we can determine the following about each photograph:

- Fig. 4.1 – Volume 2 Issue 7: A girl student is helping at the factory.
- Fig. 4.2 – Volume 3 Issue 10: A female train conductor in midst of her duty.
- Fig. 4.3 – Volume 2 Issue 9: A Son of Nippon.
- Fig. 4.4 – Volume 2 Issue 11: A maiden working at a factory.



Fig. 4.1: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 2 Issue 7. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.



Fig. 4.2: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 3 Issue 10. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia



Fig. 4.3: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 2 Issue 9. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia



Fig. 4.4: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 2 Issue 11. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia

Looking at Issues 7, 10 and 11, we first recognise visually the similarities in how the women are portrayed. All three photographs were framed to only show the upper half body of the women. Ensuring their shoulder length hair is neatly kept, each woman dons some form of headwear and have their hair tucked behind their ears. They maintained the same formal approach in the way they are dressed as well. Their uniforms are buttoned up to their necks, and from what is visible in the case of the student and train conductor, their arms are concealed by their long sleeves, with the train conductor also wearing a pair of gloves which covers her hands as well. All three women are portrayed to be carrying out their work diligently, focused on their task at hand. Published during the Japanese occupation for the consumption of the peoples of their occupied territories, these photographs open a window to understand how the Japanese navigate their country's gender dichotomy of that period, and how this translates to their ideology and rhetoric in which they are trying to propagate.

As noted earlier, an ideal Japanese woman is expected to remain and perform her duties within the domestic sphere, to produce healthy imperial subjects and provide support as a good wife and wise mother. Any form of education allocated to women in Japan during that period were designed to enable them to better support their husbands, as well as to be the moral and religious guide for their children.⁵⁸ We can discern these maternal ideals through *Taiyo* Issue No.9 which features a Japanese male toddler on the front cover, captioned 'A Son of Nippon'. When the issue is seen by itself, one would not think any of it, but when a photograph of a male toddler is used for a magazine front cover that otherwise consistently feature women, it appears as an implicit display of the maternal and supportive role expected of a woman in a Japanese patriarchal society. In

⁵⁸ Ambros, 'Imperial Japan : Good Wives and Wise Mothers', 118.

the front covers of the other three issues, we see three women outside of their consigned domestic and maternal space. Their youthful appearances and the captions on the magazine covers – which uses the terms ‘maiden’ and ‘student’ in describing the subjects – suggests that demographically, they belong to the legislatively ‘protected’ single women workers. Here, we struggle to identify any attempts by the publishers to exude any maternal characteristics through the photographs that is normatively associated to Japanese women of that period. None of the women – including the front cover photographs of other *Taiyo* issues in other volumes – are portrayed to be wearing a white apron, its symbolism is discussed in Vera Mackie’s book, *Feminism in Modern Japan*:

The aprons were the dress of women who worked in their own kitchens The National Women’s Defence Association transformed the aprons from kitchenwear into garments which could be worn in public... This was appropriate dress for women who were engaged in such activities as serving tea to departing soldiers, or food to people during air-raid drills. By wearing aprons outside the home, they metaphorically took the kitchen with them, thus defusing the anxieties caused by women in public space.⁵⁹

From the excerpt, we understand that despite being in public space, the Japanese women’s role is still seen as maternal, acting as caregivers and supporters. However, in the case of the *Taiyo* magazine covers studied, the photographs position them in public working environments, and the maternal ideal is not directly manifested.

The youthfulness of the women on the front covers may alleviate the need to portray them as maternal despite it being their ultimate objective as an imperial subject. Yet, we may still discern the ideals of Japanese femininity referenced by observing the way the

⁵⁹ Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality*, 104.

women are dressed. With barely any stain or dirt on their uniforms, they are dressed prim and proper. As described earlier, no skin is visible as their collars cover neatly up to their neck in addition to the long sleeves and gloves. The ideal Japanese woman is clean and moral, her body is covered and not vulgar. By limiting any obvious exhibition of sexuality, these photographs show their purity and focuses on their seriousness in performing the task at hand faithfully in service to the empire. Despite being set in an environment full of activity – where one can expect metallic clanking of the factory work and the hustle and bustles of the train station – the style of photography mutes the activity by framing the women in a reposeful tone, further accentuated by the women's gazes, which are all directed melancholically elsewhere instead of engaging directly with the viewer. Here, their passivity is suggested through aesthetics, despite not being in a passive and domestic environment in which the ideal Japanese woman is expected to be in. Therefore, although none of these images represents them as maternal, their femininity is idealised in the images by their passiveness, purity, fidelity and chastity.

From a broader viewpoint, we can deduce a latent Japanese paternal and maternal dichotomy at play. The female subjects are stepping into the gap left by their male counterparts who are on the battlefield. As the men leave the country for battle to expand the empire, the women are left on the homefront, now with the responsibility to care for the homeland and ensure that the society continues to run in an orderly fashion – trains stations still running on schedule and factories continues to be productive – much like a mother caring for her child and ensuring that when the father is away, the home remains orderly. In fact, during the war period, the Japanese government needed to increase national industrial production and women were mobilised to work. Therefore, although women appear active in a public environment, they are still confined within the Japanese society's patriarchal ideology.

Returning to the magazine cover, we see this manifested visually on the black and white photographs. The female body is confined and framed by the square format of the magazine and it is further loaded with the magazine's blockish masthead above it. All the images were shot up-close, the shallow spaces encumbering. We can notice how this contrasts with the cover featuring the male toddler which is composed as a full body low angle shot set in an open area – suggesting more freedom. Making a further observation on the train conductor in particular, whilst she is leaning out of the rectangular carriage doorway and displaying a certain level of freedom from the frame, her natural action is to retreat back into the carriage once her duty is done. Her right hand is holding onto the metallic carriage for balance, the very frame that confines her. She is shown to be dependent on the frame – the patriarchal ideology – that contains her. This ideological frame is not seen as restrictive, instead it is deemed as protection. This notion of protection is one that we have elaborated earlier in the chapter, and will come to once more later, when we look at the Sun as subject matter.

We may interpret why the ideals of the Japanese women is used as propaganda. One of underlying effort of Japanese propaganda as discussed earlier is to establish Japan's superiority and reputation as a worthy leader of Asia, and the correlations of gender roles and its influences on the propaganda approach should be noted. While the images of the male body in the Japanese propaganda magazines and visuals are quite explicit and almost always used to depict superiority in terms of military strength, Japan's use of the female body as propaganda are subtler. The ideal Japanese woman and her virtues – pure, chaste and self-sacrificial – parallels with the empire's vision of themselves.⁶⁰ The

⁶⁰ This concept of 'The Pure Self' according to the Japanese during wartime is well examined by Dower in his book, J W Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1986). One of the aspects discussed is how the idea of 'purity' has not only been a mainstay in Japanese propaganda rhetoric, but also evolved to adapt accordingly to the war's situation. For instance, the act of

pureness of the Japanese race reflects its sovereignty as an empire, one that has never been polluted and exploited by Western powers. This sovereignty means that they preserve their Asiatic consciousness along with its virtues and traditions, unlike the rest of Asia which has lost theirs due to Western influences. This deems themselves superior, and justifies their leadership in the noble and self-sacrificial effort of liberating Asia from Western colonisation.

Another strong reasoning for using the female body as signifier in its visual propaganda materials is the grounding it has in Japanese spirituality. This spiritual relationship can be uncovered by first identifying the other visual element on the magazine's cover – the Sun, located at the magazine's masthead. Accompanied by its appellation *Taiyo* as the magazine's title, the visual of the Sun is composed by radiating white lines on a red background, which through the resulting negative space forms the iconic circular red sun and its far extending sunrays. The iconology of the Sun leads us to understand how the Japanese female ideals is supported by Shintoism and its mythology, and therefore becomes even more significant as propaganda.

4.1.2 The Sun as Subject Matter

One of the key spiritual entity in Shintoism is The Sun Goddess, Amaterasu Omikami. As a female divinity, Amaterasu plays an important role in the Japanese society as she pertains to multiple aspects of Japanese culture. The most well-known myth attributed to her is that of the rock-cave myth, where after a conflict between her

war against the enemies is seen as a purification – a cleansing ritual ridding of pollutants. However, when the Japanese were close to losing the war, the act of self-sacrifice, is seen as the 'ultimate state of purification'.

and her brother Susanoo, she retreated inside a cave and caused the entire realm to be enveloped in darkness.⁶¹ It is only when Amaterasu was lured out from hiding that her radiant light and purifying brightness returns and therefore enables the rapid growth of agriculture. Amaterasu is also attributed to sericulture, the weaving of silk which as a form of labour falls into the domain of maidens in East Asian cultures. According to Ambros,

Amaterasu emerges as the one who not just orders the proliferation of agriculture but also begins the practice of sericulture by placing silkworm cocoons in her mouth to pull off the silk thread. She is thus taking on the role of a food and sericulture goddess. In her seclusion, she behaves like a silkworm herself. The silkworm spins silk, retreats into a cocoon, and emerges as a moth. Likewise, Amaterasu spins and weaves, then retreats into her cave and emerges radiantly after being ritually lured out of seclusion.⁶²

Amaterasu as the Sun Goddess is seen as a symbol of purity and the Sun and its rays is revered for its purifying powers. In addition, her father Inazagi before having her had to purify himself of the pollution of death and darkness.⁶³

Returning to the magazine cover photographs, we observe these idealistic qualities of Amaterasu reflected through the use of the female body. The magazine emphasises the purity as well as the maiden status of the women in the photographs, whilst exhibiting their involvement in labour for the nation. Similar to how Amaterasu had to emerge from her seclusion and provide light to encourage agriculture and sustenance for her

⁶¹ Barbara R. Ambros, 'Ancient Japanese Mythology : Female Divinities and Immortals', in *Women in Japanese Religions* (New York, New York: NYU Press, 2015), 33, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15r3zhw>.

⁶² Ambros, 35.

⁶³ Elizabeth Schultz and Fumiko Yamamoto, 'Japan: Land of the Rising and Setting Sun: A Study of the Image of the Sun in Japanese Culture', *The Journal of Popular Culture* 18, no. 2 (1984): 118.

realm, the Japanese women at the homeland are now ‘coming out’ from their domestic spaces to the public space to encourage the modern nation’s industrial production, by working in factories and train stations.

Another vital aspect of Amaterasu is that she is believed to be the direct ancestor of the royal family.⁶⁴ It is written in the Ancient Japanese texts, *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* that she founded Japan by sending her grandson, Prince Ninigi to rule the islands.⁶⁵ Therefore, the Sun Goddess not only served as the ideal of Japanese femininity, she was also used to legitimise the patriarchal position of the emperor and the royal family, as a way to divinise and therefore authenticate the emperor, garnering unquestioned loyalty and support from his subjects. Through the Sun Goddess, the iconic red sun has come to symbolise the royal family, as a symbol of the Japanese imperial rule. We observe this symbolisation throughout the propaganda visuals collected from the archives, where none of them feature any image of the emperor, concurring with Kushner’s observation of Japanese propaganda in general.⁶⁶ Instead, the symbolic red sun comes to stand in for the empire, with its far-reaching and purifying sunrays symbolic of the empire’s strong militarist expansion throughout Asia and their noble cause of purifying Asians from the pollutions of the West.

Here, the Sun as subject matter becomes propaganda with a latent rhetoric. The constant repetition of the rising sun is a constant assertion of the rising empire. The Rising Sun flag, used as the official flag of the Japanese Army and Navy during the War

⁶⁴ Ambros, ‘Ancient Japanese Mythology : Female Divinities and Immortals’, 35.

⁶⁵ Schultz and Yamamoto, ‘Japan: Land of the Rising and Setting Sun: A Study of the Image of the Sun in Japanese Culture’, 118.

⁶⁶ Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda*, 10.

– and usage in more contemporary times causes controversy⁶⁷ – has spiritual if not superstitious connotation. Alluding to the importance of having the sun as an ally during the war, the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* notes that in battles where Emperor Jimmu’s army fought in the direction against the sun, he lost⁶⁸ whereas once he fought with the sun behind him, he is victorious.⁶⁹ Therefore, it is unsurprising that the iconic red sun, particularly with its sunrays are a mainstay in the aesthetics of the Japanese Army paraphernalia during WWII.

Again, this protective notion of the Sun offers an additional perspective when we return to the *Taiyo* magazine covers. While also symbolising the Japanese empire, the overbearing sun and its rays above the female body in the magazine’s masthead denotes that the women are under the protection of the imperial powers, at the battlefield fighting for the sake of the women in the homeland. As we have seen how the female body has come to embody the virtues of the nation, this protection of Japanese women by the patriarchal empire alludes to the protection of the Japan’s sovereignty along with its virtuous Asiatic consciousness.

4.2 Representations of the Other

In their attempts to disseminate and reiterate their propaganda rhetoric visually, the Japanese do not only depict the Self in their images, but also depict the Other – the

⁶⁷ Takashi Yoshida, ‘Why Do Flags Matter? The Case of Japan’, *The Conversation*, 2015, <http://theconversation.com/why-do-flags-matter-the-case-of-japan-44500>.

⁶⁸ Schultz and Yamamoto, ‘Japan: Land of the Rising and Setting Sun: A Study of the Image of the Sun in Japanese Culture’, 119.

⁶⁹ Marina A. Shtan’ko et al., ‘The Origins of Japanese National Symbols’, *SHS Web of Conferences* 28 (2016): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20162801094>.

Occupied and the Allied. The propaganda rhetoric discussed earlier in this chapter positions the Self – the Japanese – as the most superior, a pure unexploited and sovereign empire, the purifying reach of their sunrays makes them the best force to liberate a weak Asia against Western exploitation. As we shall observe later through analysing the portrayal of the Other, it becomes an indirect portrayal of the Self as well.

Japanese propaganda magazine publishers do not only feature Japanese women on their magazine cover, instead they also feature the local women of the territories that they occupy. Take for example *Taiyo*'s Volume 1 Issue 2 and *Syonan Gaho*'s Volume 1 Issue 4, both published in 1942. By looking at the front covers of these two different Japanese propaganda magazines distributed in Malaya, we notice how one of the propaganda narratives of GEACPS, which is the notion that other Asia nations are undeveloped and weak, hence requiring superior Japanese help are manifested again through the use of the female body.

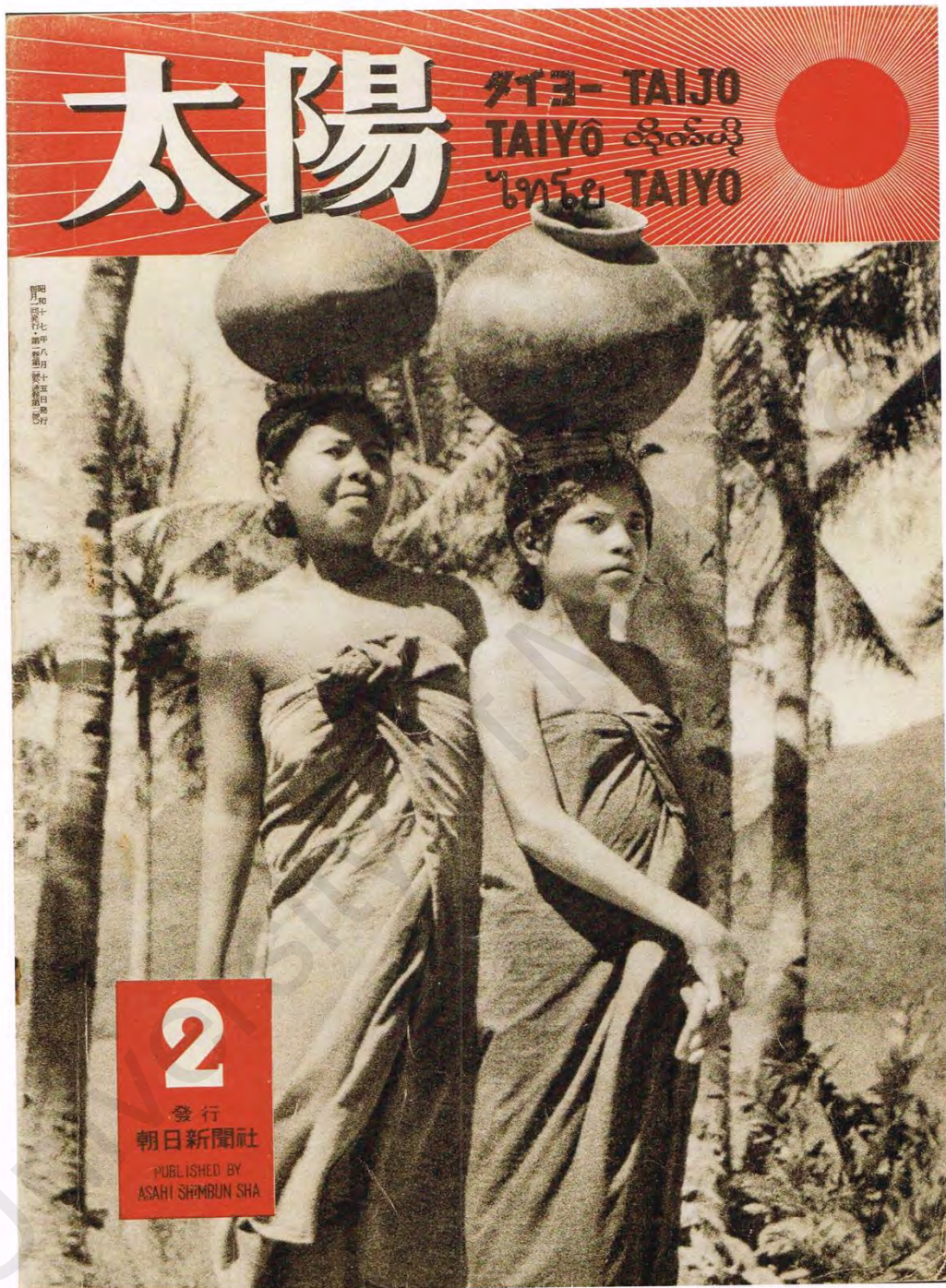


Fig. 4.5: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 1 Issue 2. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.

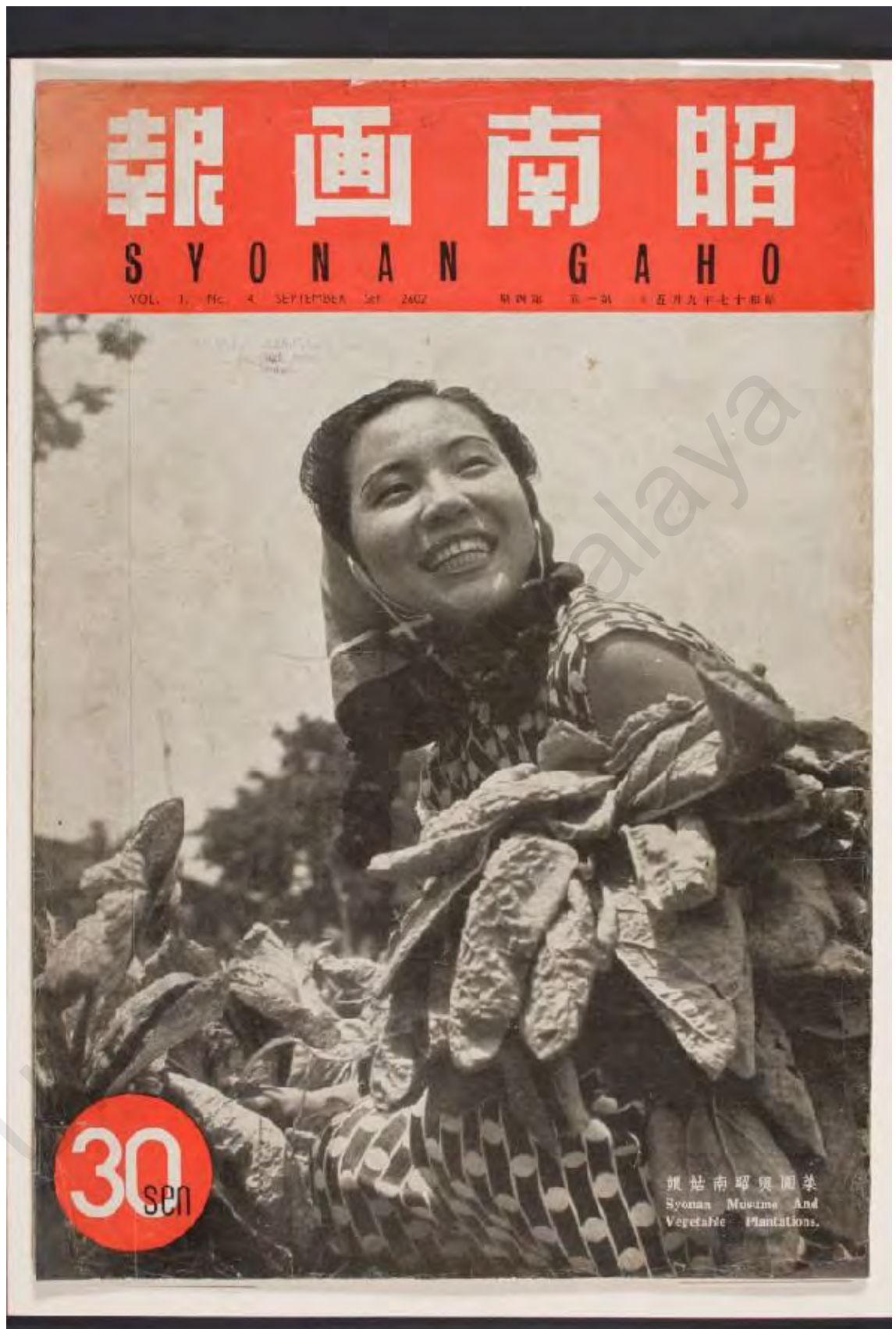


Fig. 4.6: Syonan Gaho Magazine Front Cover, Volume 1 Issue 4, 1942. From: National Museum Singapore, <https://roots.sg/learn/collections/listing/1995-01102> (accessed March 28, 2016).

In *Taiyo* Volume 1 Issue 2, the black and white photograph on the front cover features two female locals of Flores Island, Indonesia. In contrast with the Japanese women featured on the magazine covers analysed earlier, the local women of Flores Island wear a single piece of cloth as garment which is secured above the chest area. Their upper chest, shoulders, arms are exposed, which is in contrast with how the Japanese women were depicted – with button up collars, long sleeves and gloves. Set in a tropical environment with coconut trees and a hilly background, the local women (the Other) were again contrasted with the Japanese women (the Self) who were positioned in factories and train stations – settings which are deemed industrial and modern. Therefore, a dichotomy is suggested, one of the undeveloped and native Other, against the modern and civilised Self.

In *Syonan Gaho* Vol. 1 Issue 4, from the caption of the front cover we can identify another occupied woman being depicted – a local Chinese lady of Syonan (Singapore) cheerfully harvesting her crops. Under the brilliant light of the sun which falls on her face, she is seen smiling and rejoicing while she harvests. The bright illumination of the sun brings to mind the rock-cave myth of Amaterasu, where the Sun Goddess emerges from her cave and returned her light that shined and rejuvenated the agriculture of her realm. The Japanese, by symbolically presenting themselves as the sun extends their far-reaching rays across Asia, bringing forth prosperity and growth to the territories they occupy. Both these photographs, in portraying the occupied are composed in low angle shots, hence elevating their position and visually lifting them to a higher status.

We can also see these narratives in other forms of propaganda that receive mass distributions such as stamps (see Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8). With the Sun in the background, its powerful rays are depicted to extend powerfully above locals toiling the field, engaged in agriculture, some also viewed from low angle shots.



Fig. 4.7: Rebirth Stamp Series, 15 cent. 1943. From: Malaysia Design Archive, <http://www.malysiadesignarchive.org/stamps-1943-japanese-occupation-stamp/> (accessed March 21, 2016).



Fig. 4.8: Rebirth Stamp Series, 8 cent. 1944. From: Malaysia Design Archive, <http://www.malysiadesignarchive.org/stamps-1944-japanese-occupation-stamp/> (accessed March 21, 2016).

In other visual materials surveyed from the archives, it is observed that other subject matters that were used to represent the occupied are local flora and landscapes, such as banana trees, coconut trees, and peaceful serene kampong scenes. These in a way also alludes to the abundant growth and peace experienced by the occupied under Japanese rule.

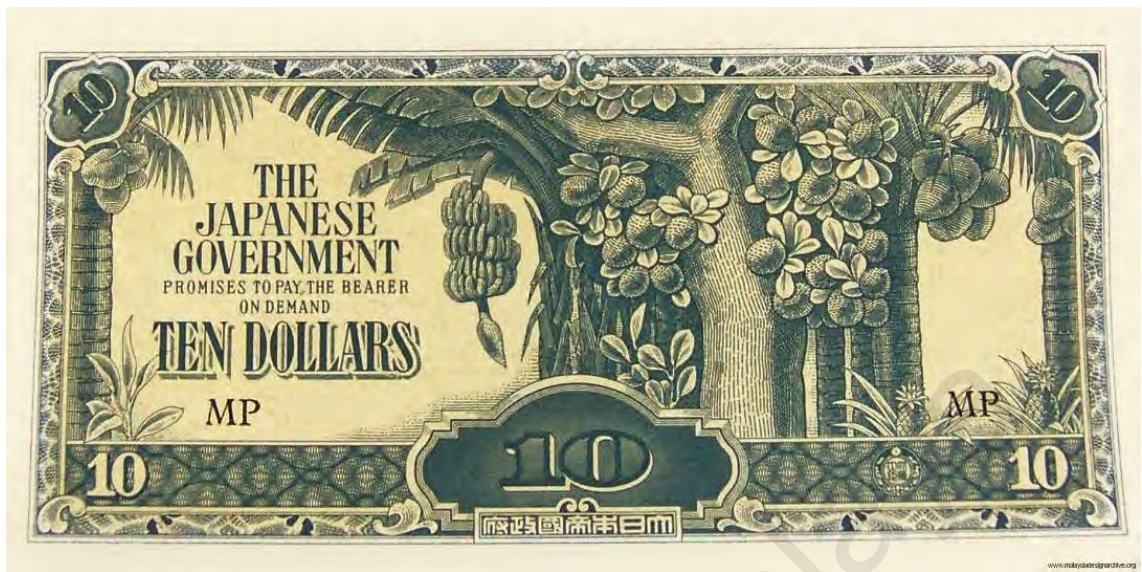


Fig. 4.9: Ten Dollar Japanese Occupation Currency. 1942 – 1945. From: Malaysia Design Archive, <http://www.malaysiadesignarchive.org/10-dollars-banana-money/> (accessed March 21, 2016).



Fig. 4.10: One Dollar Japanese Occupation Currency. 1942 – 1945. From: National Heritage Board Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/1997-00812> (accessed May 22, 2017).



Fig. 4.11: Postcard with painting depicting Johore Singapore Causeway. 1940s. From: Malaysia Design Archive, <http://www.malaysiadesignarchive.org/gallery/nggallery/cards/postcards> (accessed March 21, 2016).



Fig. 4.12: Postcard with painting depicting a kampong scene. 1940s. From: Malaysia Design Archive, <http://www.malaysiadesignarchive.org/gallery/nggallery/cards/postcards> (accessed March 21, 2016).

In the depiction of Self and Others, the magazine publishers also tried to incorporate different approaches such as humour through the inclusion of comic strips (Fig. 4.13 to Fig. 4.17). Comic strips depicting the occupied locals are normally humorous takes on their everyday lives, which are often set against the background of the village life. The way the locals are dressed and the shade applied to their skin in the cartoon characters are often used as racial markers, differentiating them from the Japanese and the Allied. Locals are often shown barefoot, wearing *songkoks*, or turbans and *sarongs*. Although the narratives of the comics strips about the locals are usually jovial to establish the support that the Japanese need from them, the Japanese's portrayal of the locals are limited to the milieu of the kampong life, usually accompanied by stock imageries of local fauna and flora such as elephants and coconut trees. This connotes a stereotypical attitude present in the Japanese publishers towards the people they occupy, unable to see the locals outside of the rural landscapes.⁷⁰ This is in contrast with the depiction of themselves, which is normally presented in more modern and deemed superior positions, often through the depiction of their military and technological prowess.

In the case of depicting the opposition, the focus is largely on trying to paint them in a negative light while highlighting their weakness as a way to shore up the superiority of the Japanese army. In the comics strips, other than the hair colour, one of the markers used to differentiate the Japanese and the opposing forces is through flags and symbols. Planes marked with a circle is easily recognisable as the Japanese red sun, whereas planes marked with a star or the Union Jack represents the Allies. We can still see how

⁷⁰ Colonial cities across Malaya were established as early as 19th century by Western colonisers. Cities such as Georgetown, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, and Ipoh, possesses infrastructures for governmental, educational, commercial, and residential purposes. See Ho Kah Chun, Ahmad Sanusi Hasan, and Norizal M Noordin, *An Influence Of Colonial Architecture To Building Styles And Motifs In Colonial Cities In Malaysia*, 2005.

humour is used as a way to appear light-hearted while criticising the enemy. Humorous scenes depicting the fear of the Allies towards the Japanese armies are part of the common narratives of these comic strips, while other narratives show the failings of the Allies army in the hands of the Japanese, sometimes with the help of the occupied locals. In a sense, by depicting the Other in these comic strips, the strength of the Japanese military is also either directly or indirectly manifested.

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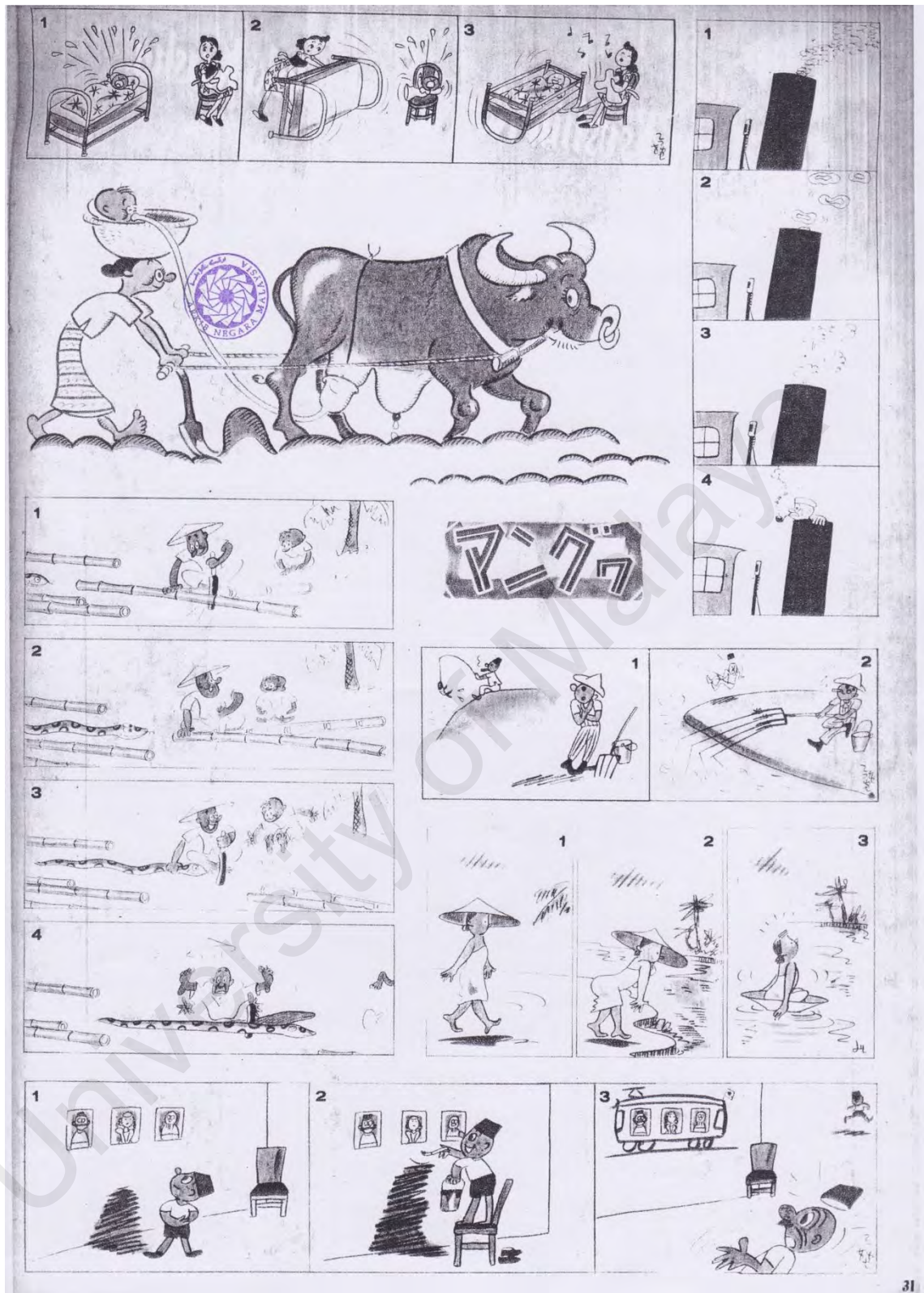


Fig. 4.13: Taiyo Magazine Volume 2 Issue 12, pp. 31. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

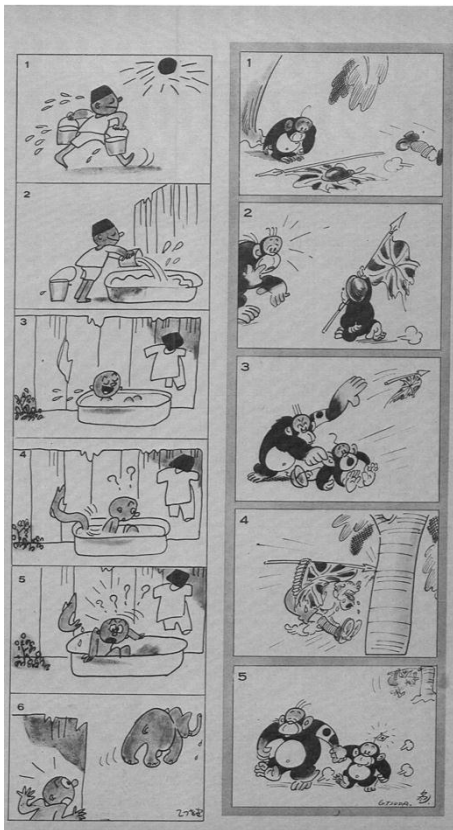


Fig. 4.14: Taiyo Magazine, Volume 1 Issue 2 pp. 31. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.



Fig. 4.15: Taiyo Magazine, Volume 2 Issue 7 pp 32. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

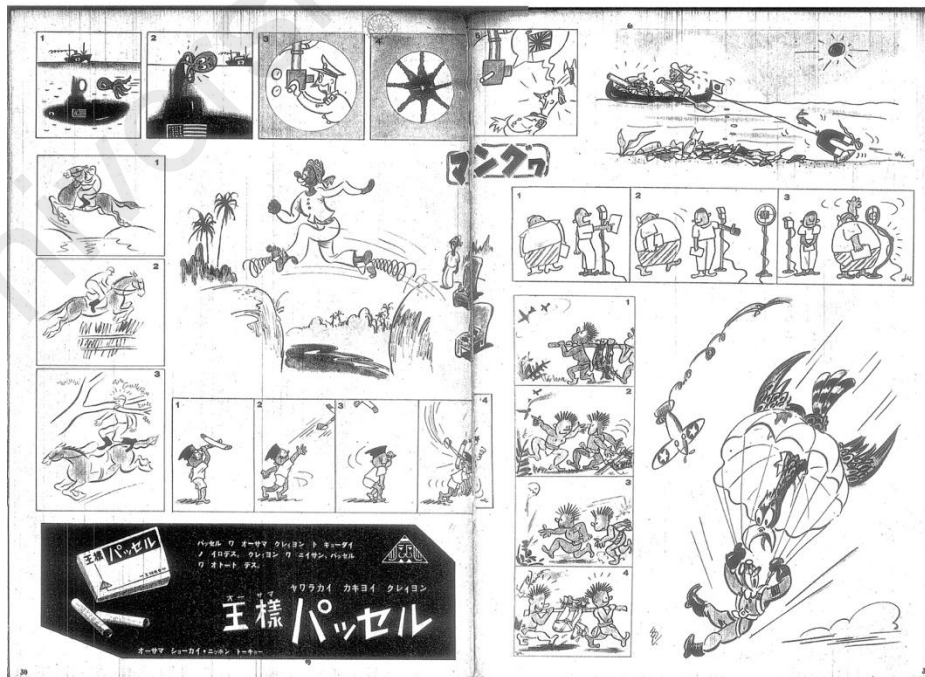


Fig. 4.16: Taiyo Magazine, Volume 2 Issue 11 pp. 30 – 31. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.



Fig. 4.17: Taiyo Magazine, Volume 2 Issue 10 pp. 30. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

Not all depictions of the opposition take on this humorous approach. Darker and more serious approaches are taken through caricatures, to also show how the British and American are in dire and difficult situations under the pressures of the Axis' powers. Such examples can be seen in the works of Abdullah Ariff, a Malaysian artist who worked for a Japanese publishing company during the Japanese Occupation. These caricatures portray a darker and more contemptuous mood, visible through the quality

of lines and strokes of the caricatures. We observe how this is different to the light-hearted comic strips mentioned earlier. In the comics strips of *Taiyo* Magazine, the lines are finer and gentler, creating a more light-hearted effect, whereas in Abdullah Ariff's caricatures, the lines are rough and sketchy to exude a more disdainful effect while representing the negative qualities of the opposing forces.

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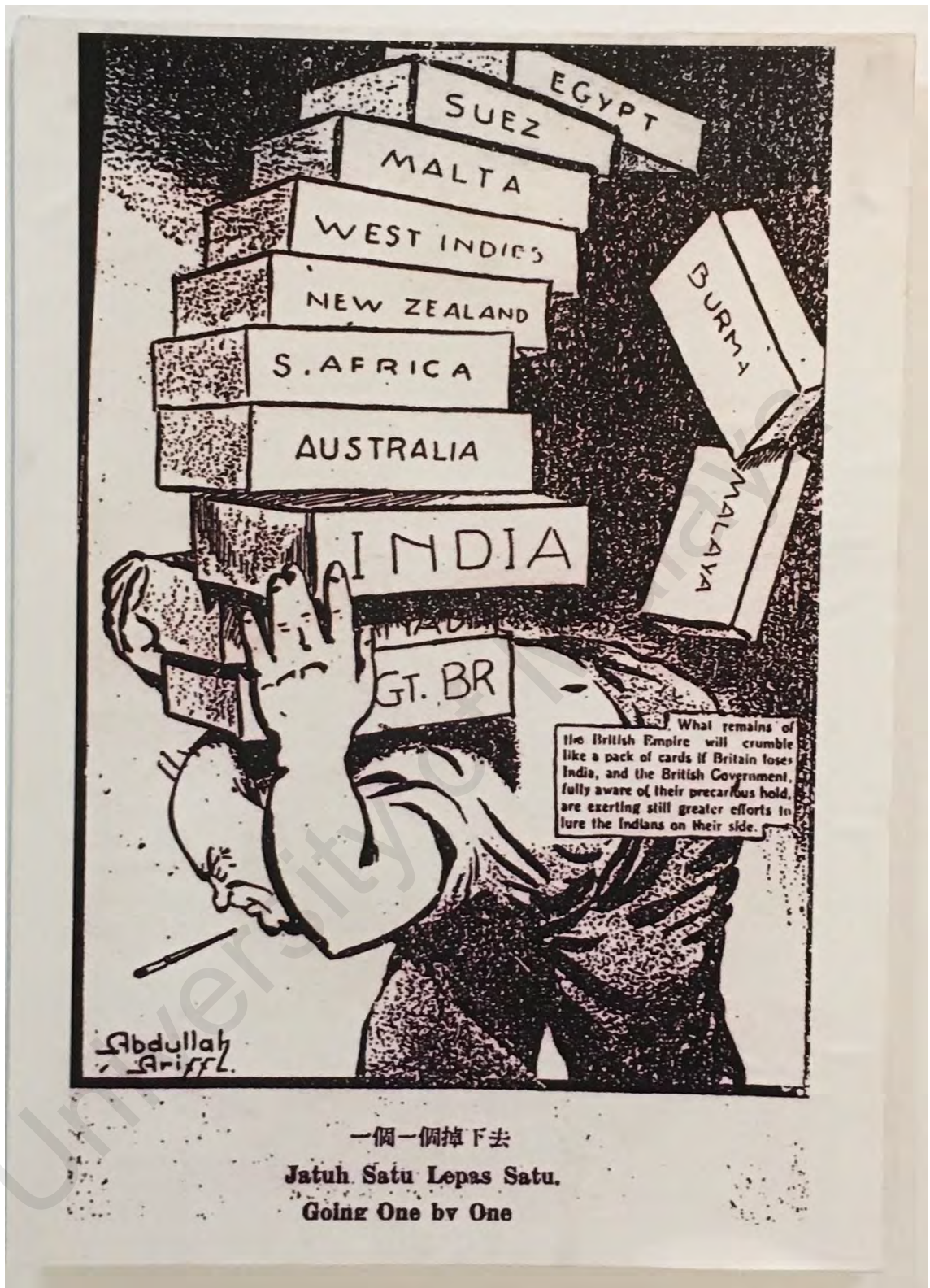


Fig. 4.18: Abdullah Ariff, 'Swept off his feet', in Abdullah Ariff, 1942, *The War As Our Cartoonist Sees It*. Penang: Shu Seicho Shimbun Renraku Jimusho: [no page] From: Balai Seni Visual Negara.



Fig. 4.19: Abdullah Ariff, 'Playing with Fire', in Abdullah Ariff, 1942, *The War As Our Cartoonist Sees It*. Penang: Shu Seicho Shimbun Renraku Jimusho: [no page] From: Balai Seni Visual Negara.

In other batches of illustrated flyers obtained from the online archival database psywar.org, religion and women were also used to garner support from the locals by painting the opposition in a negative light. Illustrations accompanied by defamatory texts in Malay, the White man is described and portrayed as drunk, sinful, exploitative and taking away women from the local men.

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Fig. 4.20: Setan. 1940s. From: Japanese PSYOP During WWII, <http://www.psywarrior.com/JapanPSYOP WW2b.html> (accessed March 6, 2016)



Fig. 4.21: Inilah sikapnya penyokong bagimu. 1940s. From: Japanese PSYOP During WWII, <http://www.psywarrior.com/JapanPSYOP WW2b.html> (accessed March 6, 2016)



Fig. 4.22: Tentera Inggeris Bukannya Penyokong Melainkan Musoh Bagimu. 1940s. From: Japanese PSYOP During WWII, <http://www.psywarrior.com/JapanPSYOP WW2b.html>



Fig. 4.23: Beginilah Meskipun Bekerja Untok Inggeris. 1940s. From: Japanese PSYOP During WWII, <http://www.psywarrior.com/JapanPSYOP WW2b.html>

Famous paintings in large formats such as *Surrender of British Troops in Singapore* and *Meeting of General Yamashita and Percival* by Japanese artist Saburo Miyamoto were also used as propaganda that reiterates Japanese superiority over the opposition. Depicting successful milestones of Japan's war and the opposition's defeats, these paintings were reproduced into easily distributable formats such as flyers and postcards, making the paintings more accessible to the general public due to their otherwise large scale.

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Fig. 4.24: Reproduction of Saburo Miyamoto's *Meeting of General Yamashita and Percival* on a postcard. 1942. From: Australian War Memorial, <https://www.awm.gov.au/blog/2015/02/16/jack-and-singapore-surrender-table/> (accessed May 22, 2017).



Fig. 4.25: Reproduction of Saburo Miyamoto's *Surrender of British Troops in Singapore* on a postcard. 1942. From: https://s19.postimg.org/epa6s45hv/Jap_Card_O.jpg (accessed May 22, 2017).

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have come to understand the utilisation of certain subject matter and its representation to communicate Japan's wartime propaganda rhetoric of Japan as Asia. With the consistent narrative of their superiority over both the occupied and the opposition, the Japanese empire's effort to establish the GEACPS is seen as a noble effort to rectify a weak Asia against the West, to formulate an Asia in the image of a strong Japan. Seeing themselves as sovereign and unexploited by Western powers, the visual propaganda materials portrayed this sense of purity and chasteness with the ideals of Japanese femininity, through the representation of the Japanese female body. Furthermore, in accordance to Tenshin's argument for reaching back to an Asiatic essence, the Japanese's propaganda visuals reach back to their spiritual origins in their depictions of the Self through the iconology of the sun and the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. In the same way of how Amaterasu returns from the cave and provides purifying light to the masses, Japan's militarist expansion through the GEACPS is regarded as purifying and restores the Asiatic consciousness that is deemed lost due to Western exploitations.

Along with this, the occupied locals are often shown flourishing under Japanese rule. Agriculture is abundant through the power of the rising sun, with the depictions of serene local landscapes such as kampong scenes promoting peace and harmony apparently brought by their rule. Despite trying to portray locals in a positive manner, the underlying stereotypical attitudes possessed by the Japanese is still apparent, as the visuals relegates local culture to merely scenes of kampongs and stock imageries such as elephants and coconut trees.

Different visual approaches were also used to spread their propaganda rhetoric of Japanese superiority. Photographs were used for a sense of realism, whereas comic strips were used when a more jovial and light-hearted approach is required. More

cynical style of caricature was used to incite a sense of negativity and uncouthness in the opposing forces whilst presenting their military weaknesses in contrast with Japan's own strength. Famous paintings that commemorates milestones in Japan's war which are in larger scales were made accessible to the masses by reproducing them as easily distributable formats such as postcards.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, despite their belief in their own superiority, the Japanese also retains the belief that all Asian nations share the same cultural ancestry, and therefore it is important to propagate a rhetoric that emphasises on the kinship and brotherhood that the regions under the GEACPS should share. In the next chapter, we will look into their propaganda visual materials and observe how the ideology of Asia for Asia is manifested visually.

University of Malaysia

CHAPTER 5: ASIA FOR ASIA

In the previous chapter, we determined how one of the main narrative of Japanese visual propaganda, which is their sense of superiority is established visually through the representation of the Self and the Other. This superiority – qualified by their notion of the empire’s sovereignty from Western colonisation – justifies their position above other Asian nations, which were considered weak. This weakness means that the other Asian nations require the leadership and guidance of the Japanese empire to liberate them from Western exploitations. In this chapter, we will look into how the second propaganda narrative as elaborated in Chapter 3 – the rhetoric of Asia for Asia – where a sense of brotherhood and togetherness among Asian nations is encouraged by the Japanese through visual propaganda.

5.1 Kinship and Community

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the feeling of kinship and brotherhood among Asian nations were deemed vital from the point of view of Japan, due to their belief in the importance of regaining and maintaining the singular Asian cultural consciousness against the pollution of Western attitudes. This importance is observed in the writings of Tenshin, where he characterised and equated the relationship between the Asian nations with the bonding qualities that is required of a family unit, such as Benevolence, Brotherhood, Loyalty and Courtesy.⁷¹ Hence, in the Japanese’ overarching ideology of

⁷¹ Clark, ‘Okakura Tenshin and Aesthetic Nationalism’, 228.

the GEACPS, in between times of portraying the Self's superiority and leadership as discussed in Chapter 4, attempts were also made to portray themselves as one of the Other – the occupied – through visual propaganda to establish this sense of kinship and brotherhood.

From the visuals, we can observe how this was done through different approaches just like what we have seen earlier in Chapter 4. In cases where a friendly and light-hearted approach is needed such as efforts to establish good relationships between the Japanese and the occupied locals – visuals portraying more jovial scenes are produced and disseminated as propaganda. In a set of graphic postcards found in the collection of National Museum Singapore, we observe how Japanese soldiers were illustrated as engaging cheerfully with the locals and their lifestyle, such as fishing by the river, taking showers with the help of an elephant, and being surrounded by children of the different nationalities under their occupation. Whilst maintaining the stereotypical representations of local milieu as seen in the comic strips discussed in Chapter 4, the Japanese now situate themselves in that position, in hope to have the locals see them as one of them. The caption that accompanies these postcards in the museum display states the following:

This set of five propaganda postcards depicts Japanese soldiers engaging in activities of a light-hearted nature, such as fishing, riding a turtle in the sea and carrying local children. The faces of the soldiers are deliberately left blank for the card recipient to fill in. Such material was aimed at softening the image of Japanese soldiers, with the ultimate goal of urging civilians to accept Japanese rule.

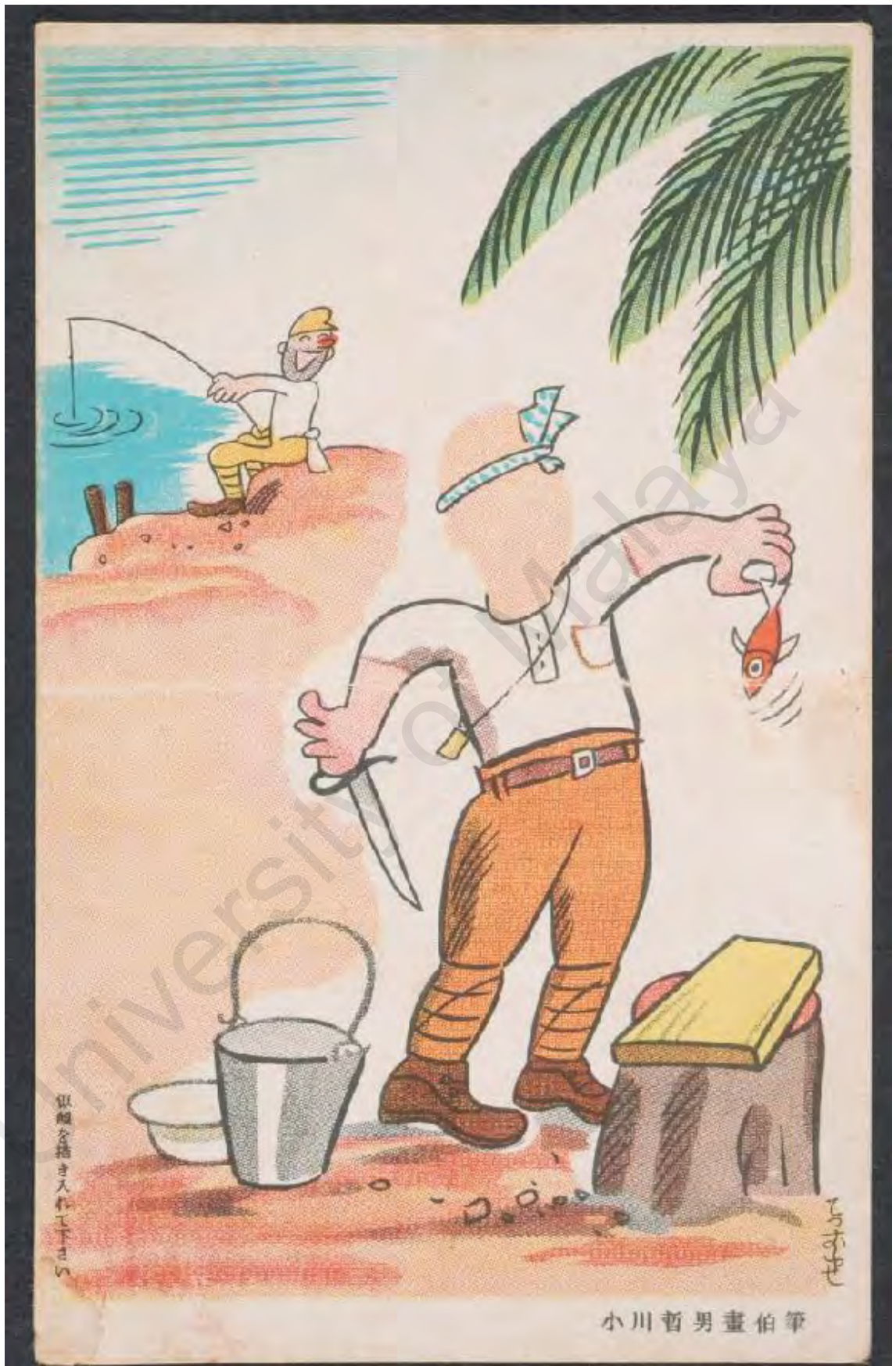


Fig. 5.1: Japanese Occupation Postcard. 1942. From: National Museum of Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/2000-05499> (accessed March 28, 2016).

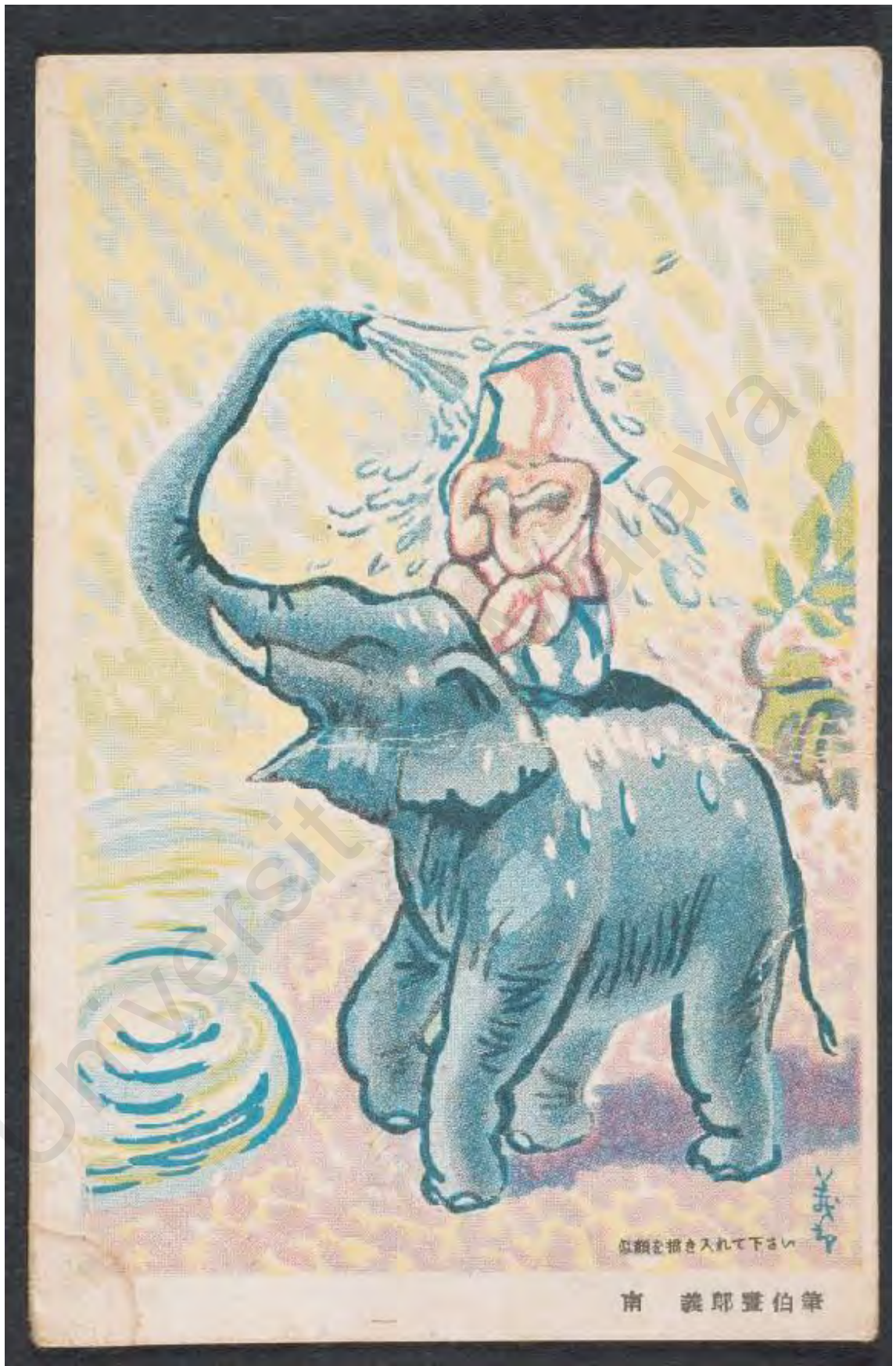


Fig. 5.2: Japanese Occupation Postcard. 1942. From: National Museum of Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/2000-05501> (accessed March 28, 2016)

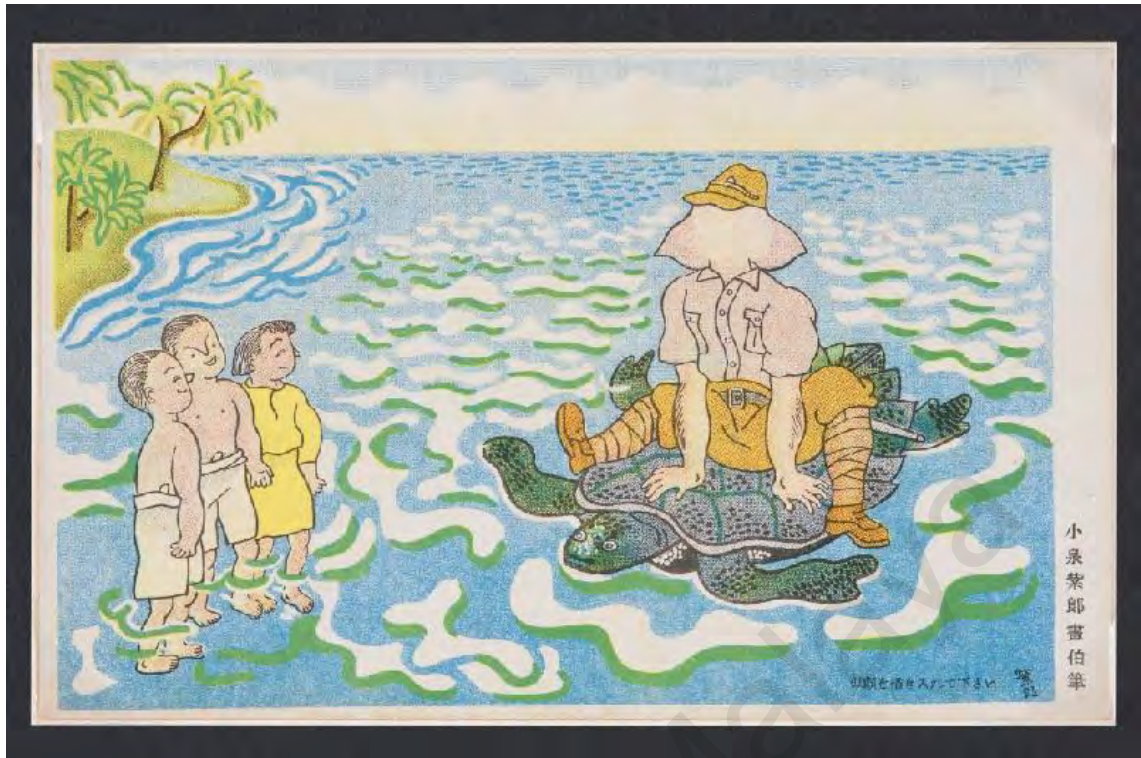


Fig. 5.3: Japanese Occupation propaganda postcard from a set of five. 1940s. From: National Museum of Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/1999-02042-001> (accessed March 28, 2016)



Fig. 5.4: Japanese Propaganda Postcard. 1942. From: National Museum of Singapore.

This inculcation of brotherhood and kinship can also be observed in magazine features run by Japanese propaganda magazines like *Taiyo*. In *Taiyo*'s 5th Issue of Volume 3, the issue ran a feature called '*Dongeng Nippon*' ('Nippon's Fairy tale'). A story which is used as a vehicle to encourage togetherness among different parties, it is coupled with darker undertones such as the endorsement of exacting revenge against a common enemy. This feature is accompanied with illustrations by artist Tjoko Kamoshita, and details a story between a crab and a monkey.

University of Malaya



DONGENG NIPPON **PERKELAIAN ANTARA KERA DAN KEPITING** GAMBARAN OLEH TJOKO KAMOSHITA

Pada soatde hari seekor kepiting dan seekor kera berdjalan-djalan dikaki seboeah goenoeng. Kera tadi mendapat seboeah bidji kesemak diatas djalan. Kepiting djoega mendapat seboeah lemper (koeth nasi) ditepi seboeah soengai.

Kepiting berkata: "Tengoklah, apa jang koedapat," dan diperlihatkan lemper tadi pada kera.

Kera ingin sekali makan lemper tadi dan berkata: "Marilah kita toekarkan bidji kesemak ini dengan lempermoe."

Kepiting mendjawab: Tidak, tidak! Lemper ini lebih² besar."

Kera menjadi soenggoeh² hati dan berkata: "Memang. Bidji kesemak lebih ketjil. Tetapi djika engkau tanam, kelak akan bertoemboeh menjadi pohon besar dan akan berboeah. Boeahnja sangat setap."

Kepiting tadi laloe menjoekal bidji kesemak dan berkata: "Balklah, mari kita toekarkan."

Mereka bertoekaran, dan kera tadi menelan lemper itoe dimoeka kepiting. Setelah habis dimakannja, maka kera tadi berdjalan lagi.

Kepiting menanam bidji itoe dihalaman roemahnja. Dia berkata kepada bidji² tadi:

"Lekaslah bertoenas,

"Bidji kesemak.

"Djika tidak, akan saja potong 'kau

"Dengan angkoep saja."

Bidji tadi laloe bertoenas dengan lekasnja. Kepiting berkata lagi:

"Lekaslah menjadi pohon,

"Toenas kesemak.

"Djika tidak, akan saja potong 'kau

"Dengan angkoep saja."

Fig. 5.5: Dongeng Nippon, Taiyo Volume 3 Issue 5, pp. 31. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.



Kepiting mengoelangi berkali-kali perkataan ini, dan toenas bertoemboeh mendjadi pohon besar dengan dahan-dahan dan daeun-daeun banjak. Kepiting tadi laloe menentangnja, dan berkata:

"Lekastah berboeah,
"Pohon kesemak,
"Djika tdlak, akan saja potong 'kau
"Dengan angkoop saja."
Kemoedian pohon tadi laloe berboeah banjak dan mendjadi masak. Kepiting melihat kesemak tadi dan sangat senanglah hatinja. Dia berkata, "Sangat selap kelihatannja. Saja ingin makan seboeah."
Dia oeloerkan tangannja, tetapi oleh karena

sangat pendek, maka tak sampailah. Laloe dia moelal pandjat pohon itoe, tetapi setelah sampai ditengah, maka dia takoet dan toeroen lagi. Kerena ingin sekali makan, tiap hari dia hanja memandang sadja pada boeah kesemak itoe.
Pada soeatoe hari kera berdjalan dimoeka roemah kepiting, dan melihat pohon kesemak besar dengan boeah-boeahnja jang banjak dan merah masak. Dia ingin sekali makan boeah itoe, dan bertanjak:
"Toean Kepiting. Sedang berboeah apa?"
Kepiting berkata: "O, toean Kerakah? Saja sangat soesah. Boeah kesemak soedah masak

tetapi saja ta' dapat memetiknja."
Kera dengan diam melihat boeah kesemak, dan laloe berkata, "Begotoe bagoes boeah itoe. Sebotoeinja saja haroes tidak pertoe-karkan dengan lempet."
Kepiting mendjadi tida sabar dan berkata, "Petikkanlah boeah saja. Kalau maoe nanti saja beri sepoeloe atau doea poeloe boeah."
"Baiklah, saja petikkan boeah toean," kata kera tadi, dan laloe memandjat pohon. Dia laloe doedoeok disalah satoe tempat jang sangat bagoes diatas pohon dan moelal makan boeah kesemak itoe. Laloe berteriaklah dia dengan sendgaja: "Wah, sedap betoe! rasanja boeah ini!"
Kepiting laloe berkata: "Djanganlah dimakan sendiri. Berilah akoe djoega."
"Baik," kata kera tadi. Dia memetik jang masih hidjau dan lempar kebawah.
Dengan lekas diambilnja boeah kesemak tadi dan digigitnja, tetapi oleh karena sangat pahit, maka tak termakanlah olehnja. Dia berkata: "Jang pahit tida enak. Berilah jang manis."
Kera menjawab: "Baiklah," dan lagi dia memetik jang masih hidjau laloe dilemparkan kebawah.
Kepiting tida dapat memakannja sebah pahitnja dan berkata lagi: "Saja bilang, ini tida enak. Ini semoeh pahit. Berilah jang masak dan jang mani."
"Ah, ini bagaimana," kata kera tadi, dan dipetiknja seboeah jang masih hidjau lagi dan lemparkanlah dengan keras pada kepiting.
Boeah kesemak tadi mengenai belkang kepiting sehingga djatoh. Kera berkata: "Saja lajani sekarang baik." Dia laloe memetik boeah kesemak jang soedah masak semoeh dan lari.
Kepiting tadi mempoenjai anak. Tatkala ini terdjadi, anak kepiting tadi sedang bermain di tepi soengai ketjil. Waktoe kembali poelang dia melihat bapaknja menggelimang diatas kaki pohon kesemak, belakannja patah. Amat takoetlah dia, laloe didekati bapaknja sambil berteriak: "Ada apa? Ada apa?"
Tetapi bapaknja karena merasa sangat sakit, hanja bisa berkata: "Si kera, si kera."
Bapak kepiting tadi kemoedian mati. Anaknja melihat disekitarnja dan mengerti bahwa boeah kesemak jang soedah matang semoeh hilang. Dia berkata dengan marah: "Si kera memboenoech bapak dan mentjoeri boeah kesemak."
Dia menjatohkan badannja atas bapaknja sambil menangis.
Pada waktoe itoe ada lebah terbang diatas-

Fig. 5.6: Dongeng Nippon, Taiyo Volume 3 Issue 5, pp. 32. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

nja. Dia melihat anak keping sedang menangis dan bertanjak: "O, ada apa anak. Ada apa?"

Anak keping menjeriterakan pada lebah apa yang terjadi dan berkata: "Saja ingin membalaskan bapak yang telah mati."

Lebah merasa sangat kasian pada anak keping tadi dan berkata: "Kera yang membentjikan. Saja tolong membalaskannya. Djangan menangis lagi."

Kebetoean pokok berangan lewat disitoe. Dia melihat anak keping menangis dan berkata: "O, ada apa anak keping, ada apa?"

Lebah tadi berkata: "Si kera memboenoh bajak anak keping ini?"

Pokok berangan berbelas kasihan pada anak keping dan berkata: "O, sangat djahat kera itoe. Saja tolong engkau membalaskan. Djangan menangis."

Pada waktoe itoe datang poela setoe. Dia melihat anak keping tadi menangis dan berkata: "O, anak keping, ada apa?"

Pokok berangan berkata: "Si kera memboenoh bapak anak keping ini."

Setoe sangat menaroech belas kasihan pada anak keping tadi dan katanja: "Sangat djahat dan membentjikan kera tadi. Saja tolong engkau membalaskan, soedah diamlah, djangan menangis lagi."

Dan datang poela lesoeng. Setelah melihat anak keping menangis, maka katanja: "O, anak keping, anak keping. Ada apakah?"

Setoe berkata: "Si kera memboenoh bapak anak keping ini."

Lesoeng tadi menaroech kasian pada anak keping tadi dan berkata: "Sangat membentjikan dan djahat, si kera itoe. Soedah diamlah, saja tolong membalaskannya. Diam, djangan menangis lagi."

Mereka laloe doedoek diam berpikir, mentjari akal bagaimana dapat membalas kera yang djahat itoe.

Lebah, yang sangat tjerdik, berkata: "Saja ingin melihat? disekitar sini." Dia laloe terbang ketempat kera tadi.

Tida lama lagi lebah laloe kembali dan berkata: "Si Kera sekarang sedang tidak ada diroemah. Sekarang ini sebaknja. Marilah kita pergi ketempat sikera dan bersemboenji."

Mereka setoedjoe dan pergi bersama ketempat kera.

"Saja bersemboenji disini," kata pokok berangan dan melontjat masoek kedatam aboe didapoer.

"Saja disini," kata lebah dan bersemboenji dibelakang tempat air ini.

"Saja akan berbaring disini," kata setoe dan laloe berbaring disamping pintoe.

"Saja diatas," kata lesoeng dan menalki atap roemah sikera.

Tida lama lagi datanglah kera. Dia doedoek disamping dapoer dan berkata sendirian: "Ah, Soenggoeh heroentoeng besar saja hari ini. Bisa makan banjak yang lezat. Sekarang saja haoes dan ingin minoem air teh."

Kera laloe mengoeloerkan tangannya kepada ketel air teh, dan seketika itoe pokok berangan keloear dan memoekoel pipi kera tadi sekeras-kerasnya.

Kera tadi kesakitan dan bertereak: "Adoeh, adoeh!". Dia lari kepenangah oentoek mentjari air. Tatkala dia akan mengambil air, maka terbanglah lebah keloear dari tempat air dan menjengat kera tadi dibagian matanja.

"Adoeh, adoeh!!" tereak kera tadi, dan dia laloe lari keloear dengan tergesa, tetapi kakinja tergelintjir diatas setoe didekat pintoe dan djatoeh terpelanting.

Pada waktoe itoe lesoeng melontjat dari atap roemah, djatoeh diatas kera dan ditindasnya.

Pada waktoe itoe kera bergerak akan meloskan diri: anak keping laloe datang sambil berkata: "Inilah oepahmoeh oentoek memboenoh bapak saja," dan laloe dipotongjalah leher kera tadi dengan angkoep.

Habis.



Fig. 5.7: Dongeng Nippon, Taiyo Volume 3 Issue 5, pp. 33. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

The story begins with a barter trade between a crab who has a *lemper*, a traditional Indonesian delicacy, and a monkey which possesses a Japanese persimmon. The monkey who wants to eat the *lemper*, convinces the crab to make a trade, in which the crab agreed, believing in the potential of the persimmon's seed which can be planted and offer more returns in the future. Hence, the crab traded for the seed and nurtured it until it became a full grown Japanese persimmon tree, bearing fruits. However, unforeseen by the crab, he is unable to reach the fruits of the tree which are located high up in the branches. The monkey, seeing his opportunity, came back and devoured the ripened fruits. In response to the crab's plea to pick some for him, the monkey only picked unripe persimmons and threw them on the ground. At this point, what was initially a light-hearted story took a turn. One of the unripe persimmon which was thrown by the monkey hit the crab and killed him. The son of the crab who soon found out about the death of his father, becomes infuriated and intends to seek revenge. To help him in his mission, he visited and recruited all his friends. His friends, a bee, a mortar, a kettle, a chestnut tree and a seagrass all agreed to help him. Eventually by working together, they managed to exact revenge and kill the monkey in the end.

Despite the obvious 'morals' of the story which involves darker themes such as revenge and deaths, the magazine feature was labelled as '*dongeng*' or 'fairy tale'. The label implies a much more light-hearted feeling – as fairy tales would normally be targeted at children. Visually as well, the illustrations by Tjoko Kamoshita were painted in the style of ink brush painting, the light brushwork and watery effects exuding a soft, harmonious effect, rather than a gory treatment one would expect in relation to the themes of the story. The characters were also drawn anthropomorphically and appears comical in their scramble to kill the monkey, which can be seen as an attempt to humanise the characters, making them more relatable. From this, we notice how the way the subject matters were portrayed visually influences the delivery a story. In this case, a

story that has darker undertones such as deaths and revenge, were made to appear more approachable, thus placing the Japanese in a friendly and positive light whilst encouraging revenge against the enemy. It is apparent that the story is an allegory to the situation of the GEACPS, reflecting Japan's aim to foster unity amongst the nations in the region, as brothers working together to defeat and eliminate the western powers that had been exploiting the resources of the Asian nations.

Another method used by the Japanese to visually portray togetherness and brotherhood is seen through a booklet published by Kodansha Company in 1944, entitled Declaration of the Greater East Asian Cooperation (大東亜共同宣言). Here, to exhibit a united region, the Japanese publisher showed the people of different nationalities in the region coming together – identifiable through cultural and identity markers such as national costumes, as seen on the front cover of the booklet (Fig. 5.8) as well as in page 22 and 23 (Fig. 5.11). The children portrayed on the front cover are multiracial, all clothed in different national outfits. For example, a Chinese girl with bobbed hair is dressed in a *cheong sam*, whereas a Malay Muslim boy dons a *songkok*. Framed from a low angle, they are all orientated to face and move towards the left, as the book is read from right to left. By using children on the cover, coupled with the way it is composed, the overall visual effect that is achieved suggests hope – a progressive and advanced future together. While the front cover uses people of multiple nationalities, the back cover uses another identity marker, which is the flags of the different nations – Philippines, Thailand, Japan, Republic of China, as well as puppet states of Manchukuo and Burma – arranged in a diagonally upward manner against a white semi-circle resembling a rising sun. Again, the arrangements of the flags create a diagonal implied line which suggests the bright future of the region when they come together as one, with the rising sun behind them.

Besides that, similar to the *Taiyo* propaganda magazines which has every article translated to multiple languages, we can also see that as a demonstration of inclusiveness, a phrase in the booklet was translated into the languages used in the region (Fig. 5.10) which are Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Burmese, Tagalog, Malay and Vietnamese (excluding English). The phrases all translates to “Together in Prosperity”.



Fig. 5.8: Declaration of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Booklet, front cover. 1944. From: The Wolfsonian – FIU, <http://www.wolfsonian.org/explore/collections/declaration-greater-east-asian-cooperation> (accessed March 3rd, 2017).



Fig. 5.9: Declaration of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Booklet, back cover. 1944. From: The Wolfsonian – FIU, <http://www.wolfsonian.org/explore/collections/declaration-greater-east-asian-cooperation> (accessed March 3rd, 2017).



Fig. 5.10: Declaration of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Booklet, pp. 14 – 15. 1944. From: The Wolfsonian – FIU, <http://www.wolfsonian.org/explore/collections/declaration-greater-east-asian-cooperation> (accessed March 3rd, 2017).



Fig. 5.11: Declaration of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Booklet, pp. 22 – 23. 1944. From: The Wolfsonian – FIU, <http://www.wolfsonian.org/explore/collections/declaration-greater-east-asian-cooperation> (accessed March 3rd, 2017).

5.2 Logoisation of the Map

Despite this strategy of visually portraying the many as one to instil a sense of togetherness, the Japanese still required a symbol, a unifying singular sign for the region rather than having to constantly resort to using the different separate identity markers. Therefore, much like how the iconic use of the red sun has come to be a logo for the Japanese empire, a logo for the Self, a sign was needed to symbolise the region of the GEACPS. Here is where we see the logoisation of the map occur, a theory discussed by Benedict Anderson.

As the GEACPS doesn't have a flag or a strong symbol like that of the red sun, the outline of the region is taken and utilised for that purpose of identification. Stemmed from the doctoral thesis of Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul, Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* discussed the map-as-logo, where the imagined boundaries of a colony can be separated from the bigger piece.⁷² The outline of this colony becomes pure sign, detached from the Other. This act of detaching the region from the other is a statement of Self, of the region as a unit. We should also note that within the regions outlines, there are no delineation between individual nations. This can be seen as an amalgamation the regions under the Japanese rule, the effort to establish one region, working together under the leadership of Japan.

By looking at the different materials sourced from the archives, we see this sign being visually reproduced across various items that receive mass distribution to the public as indirect propaganda, such as stamps, lottery tickets, and even advertisements which superimposes the map on top of Japanese products. As noted by Anderson, the

⁷² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 175.

sign when “transferred to posters, official seals, letterheads, magazines...”⁷³ constructs an imagined identity, which in this case, a GEACPS identity that possesses a convenient singular identity marker for the region, rather than having to constantly portray the diverse nationalities and their individual markers that exists within the region.

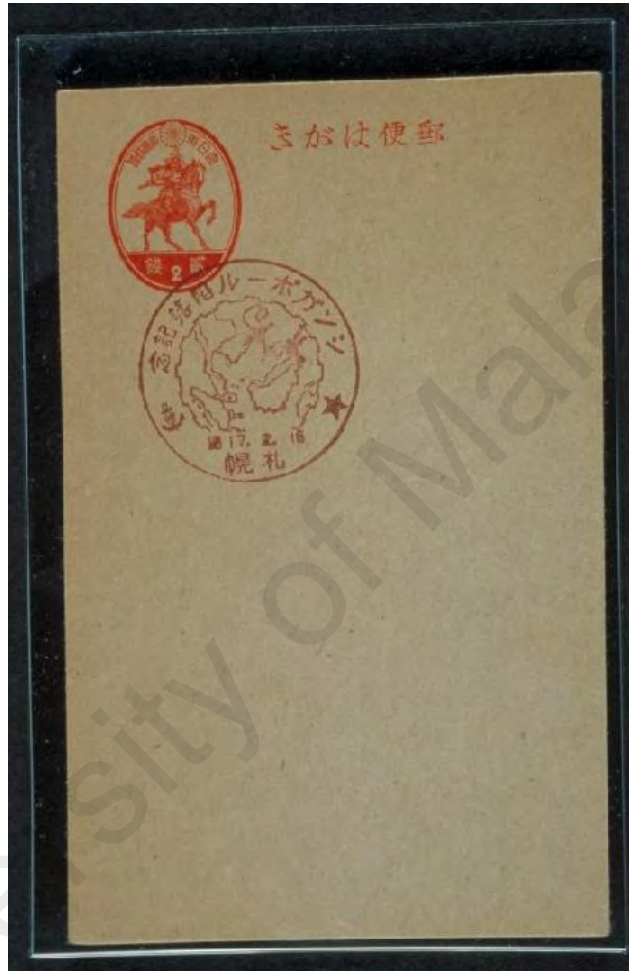


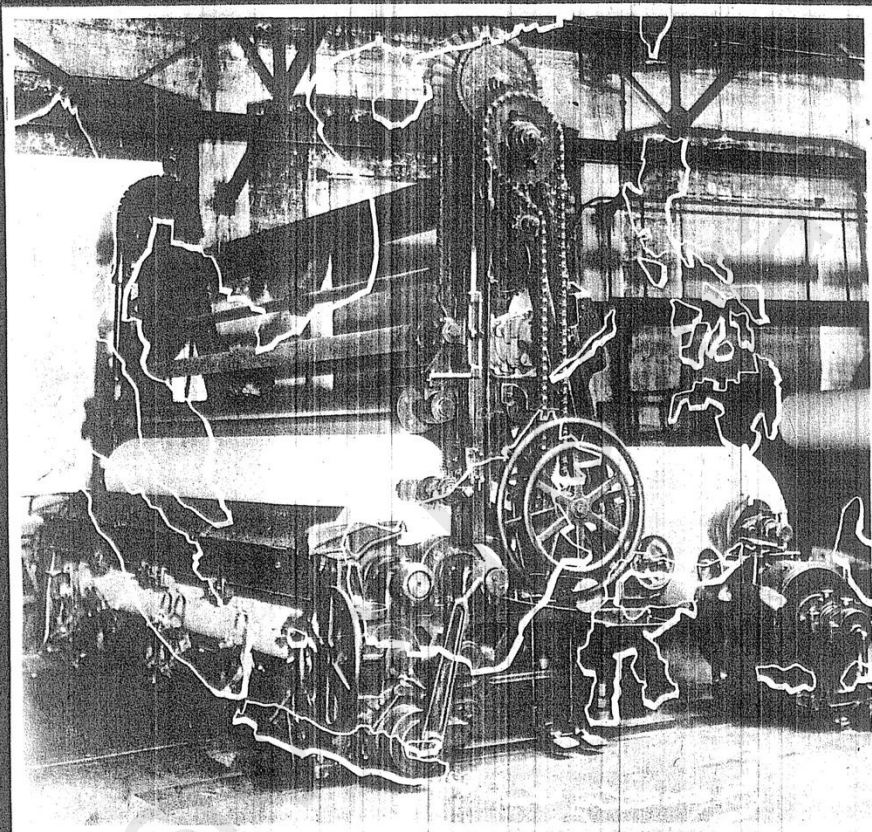
Fig. 5.12: Map of GEACPS region on a stamp behind a postcard. 1942. From: National Heritage Board Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/1999-00485> (accessed March 28, 2016).

⁷³ Anderson, 175.



Fig. 5.13: Map of GEACPS region on lottery tickets. 1940s . From: National Heritage Board Singapore, <https://roots.sg/Roots/learn/collections/listing/1997-01983> (accessed March 28, 2016).

ダイトウアノケンセツハカミカラ



Oji Paper Manufacturing Co., Ltd.

President :
TADASHI ADACHI

OJI SEISHI K.K.

HEAD OFFICE :
Oji-cho, Oji-ku, Tokyo, Nippon

Business Office :
Sanshin Bldg, Yuraku-cho, Kojimachi-ku,
Tokyo, Nippon

Fig. 5.14: An advertisement for a famous Japanese paper company which still exists till this day, – ‘Oji Paper’ – is composed of a superimposed map of the GEACPS region over their machinery in Taiyo Magazine, Volume 3 Issue 5. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, we understood that despite the Japanese seeing themselves as the leader of the GEACPS, they tried to inculcate a sense of kinship and brotherhood among the nations that is under their territory through visual propaganda for multiple possible reasons. One of which is that they sincerely believed in the notion of a united Asia – sharing a common spiritual and cultural consciousness – against the western colonisers. Furthermore, gaining the cooperation from the people they colonise also makes the militarist expansion of their empire easier.

Visually, to manifest this sense of brotherhood and kinship, they relied on more jovial approaches as this portrays themselves as friendly and one of the occupied. We see this in the way they presented messages that would be deemed negative – such as themes of death and revenge – which were treated with the softer effect of ink brush painting. Besides that, this sense of togetherness which is considered vital is explicitly demonstrated through images of diverse people of multiple races coming together in harmony and prosperity. In instances where a singular identity marker is required, the outline of the GEACPS region is used as a logo that presents the region as a singular body, much in line with the Japanese Pan-Asiatic vision of a shared consciousness.

In the next chapter, we will analyse the third and final narrative of the Japanese propaganda ideology, which is the notion of the Japan being the most modern nation in the Asia and how this is communicated visually in their propaganda materials. Despite strong rejections of Western attitudes in their propaganda rhetoric, we will explore the manifestations of western attitudes within in their own visual propaganda rhetoric, in other words, studying the manifestation of the Other in the Self.

CHAPTER 6: JAPAN AS MODERN

As outlined in Chapter 3, the third rhetoric of Japanese propaganda under the overarching GEACPS ideology is the narrative that they are the most modern nation in Asia, hence the most civilised. This not only alludes to the superiority that they assume amongst the other ‘less developed’ nations in the region, but also positions them above the West as they believe that they are able to modernise – to rival the West – but at the same time maintain their Asiatic consciousness and virtues which transcends mere modernity. Through visual analysis, we shall see in this chapter how the propaganda materials visualise the modern consciousness of the Japanese society, whilst reinforcing their notion of modernity for the sake of portraying their superiority.

To help our analysis of the visual propaganda materials in this chapter, we first ought to understand the ideas of modernity from the Japanese perspective. These are perceivable in their process of modernisation as well as their eventual struggles with identity, resultant of their encounter with the West – the Other.

Japan’s transformation to a modern state began during the Meiji Restoration, catalysed by the fear and threat of Western intervention. The need to establish a self-reliant and economically competitive state resulted in the decline of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the reinstatement of the Emperor as the symbolic leader of the state. In Ahmed’s article *Basis of Japan’s Modernisation*,⁷⁴ he outlined several key factors to Japan’s process of modernisation. With a central government in place, better infrastructures for communications were implemented, including railways, telegraphic and postal systems, as well as improved accessibility to news and information. A

⁷⁴ A K N Ahmed, ‘Basis of Japan’s Modernisation’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 23, no. 33 (1988): 1674–76, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4378887>.

standardised national language encouraged literacy rate, and new standardised systems of measurements were also introduced against those of the feudal past. This paralleled the government's efforts to achieve universal literacy, which saw an increase in the number of schools established throughout the country. The feudal class system was abolished, providing equal opportunities for all, hence improving social mobility. Finally, in spite of the concerns of Western intervention, the Japanese understood the need of foreign expertise and influence in modernisation, and therefore participated in hiring foreigners in positions of legal, economic and military fields to introduce Western ideas. Japanese students were also sent abroad to be educated and were expected to hold high leadership positions within the government upon their return.

However, this modernisation and its rapid pursuit eventually resulted in an identity struggle. With the frame of modernity based on the Other, the Japanese suffered from the loss of the sense of Self – a “loss with nature, the totality of being, and ‘things Japanese’”.⁷⁵ Hence, this ignited efforts by Japanese intellectuals to consider ways of transcending modernity, to rise above having themselves be defined by modernity alone, as it was seen as the occidentalisation of the state. This struggle and need to transcend modernity lead to its ultimate manifestation in 1942, where a symposium entitled ‘Overcoming Modernity’ was organised and witnessed a gathering of Japanese intellectuals to re-look at the modern, Japanese tradition and Japanese identity. This symposium – as well as multiple discourses by Japanese intellectuals that happened prior to it – emanated several differing ideas, but ideas that stood out were those similar to Tenshin's in his *The Awakening of the East*. Tenshin's notion of Asia losing their Asiatic consciousness due to Western influences lead him to rally for the recovery of

⁷⁵ Yumiko Iida, *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism as Aesthetics*, Routledge/Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) East Asian Series (London: Taylor & Francis, 2013), 24.

their cultural roots, as this amalgamation of Asiatic consciousness and Western modernity meant Japan would transcend the West. This influential idea served as the remedy to their struggle with modern identity, as Japanese intellectuals began to champion the need to reach back and revitalise their Asiatic consciousness, which is rooted in Japanese tradition, virtues and culture.

6.1 Negotiating the Modern

It is this strive for balance between the traditional and the modern that we observe in the Japanese visual propaganda materials. We return to the magazine covers of *Taiyo* magazine, where we can observe the manifestation of this dichotomy. In the same magazine that featured black and white photographs of Japanese working maidens on its covers, we also find portrayals of Japanese modern girls engaged in Western cultures and activities, in their plight to portray themselves as a modern nation. For this analysis, we will look into the covers of *Taiyo* magazine's Issue 3, 4, 5 and 6, all from its 3rd volume, which were published in 1944.



Fig. 6.1: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 3 Issue 3. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.



Fig. 6.2: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 3 Issue 4. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.



Fig. 6.3: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 3 Issue 5. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

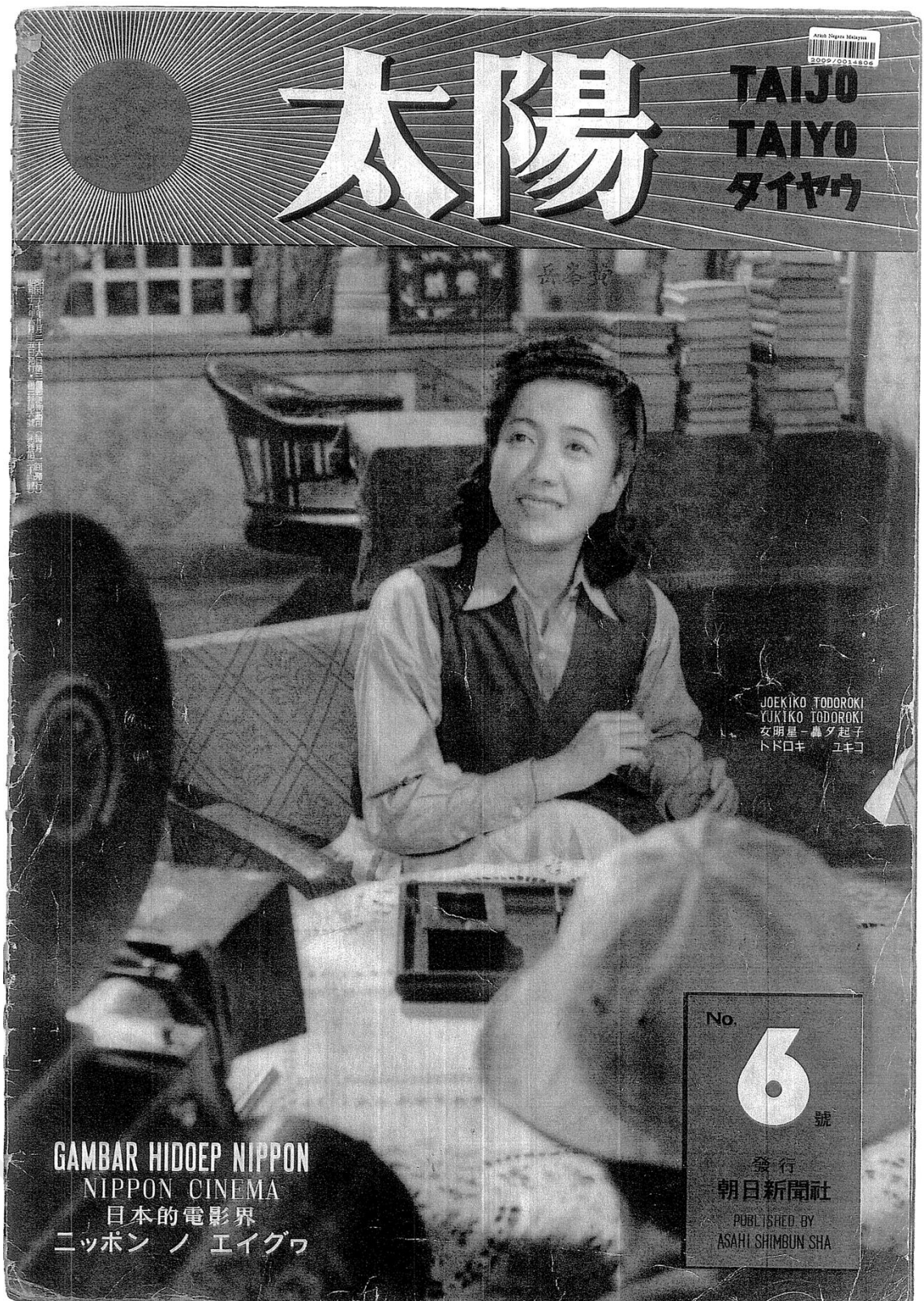


Fig. 6.4: Taiyo Magazine Front Cover, Volume 3 Issue 6. 1944. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

Accompanying the images of the modern girls on each of the magazine covers are the following captions.

- Volume 3 Issue 3: Women of Nippon – Tennis playing maiden.
- Volume 3 Issue 4: Nippon Music – Playing the Piano.
- Volume 3 Issue 5: Dancing in Nippon – The Pretty Dancer.
- Volume 3 Issue 6: Nippon Cinema – Yukiko Todoroki.

As mentioned, each magazine cover features a modern girl, or *moga*, shortened for *modan garu*. Ikeda in her essay cited Miriam Silverberg, who explained *moga* to have emerged during the period of Taisho democracy in the 1920s, and were identified through their Western appearance.⁷⁶ Observable in the magazine covers, these women wore their hair curled and wavy, and dressed in Western gowns or blouses. Their sleeves are also laxer as compared to that of the working maidens analysed in Chapter 4, in the sense that they do not fully cover their arms, with the exception of the Japanese actress, Yukiko Todoroki. In contrast to the working maidens in uniform, the dresses and blouses of the modern girls allows for the neck area to be exposed rather than buttoned up and covered. This mode of dressing, in combination with the portrayal of the girls engaging in Western high culture such as playing tennis, the piano, as well as performing in the Western formats of dance and acting, functions as markers of modernity. As noted in Ayako Kano's essay, one of the things that took place as part of

⁷⁶ Ikeda, 'Modern Girls and Militarism Japanese-Style Machine-Ist Paintings', 103.

Japan's process of modernisation was the introduction of actresses through Western influence, which also overlapped with the growth of Japanese modern theatre.⁷⁷

These images of the modern girls appear to contradict the values that the Japanese took pride in. Although the images of the working maiden in factories and train stations also contributes to the representation of being modern in the industrial aspect, the images of the formal, proper and chaste working maidens also served to represent the ideals of Japanese womanhood. As discussed in Chapter 4, these values of femininity – of being pure and maidenly – is symbolic of the sovereign empire, free from Western influences and contaminations. Hence, this contradiction in imagery of the modern girls and working maidens exhibits the struggle of identity that the Japanese find themselves in. On the one hand, they had to portray themselves as the most civilised nation, capable of bringing forth progress to the rest of Asia through the GEACPS. On the other hand, Japan has to maintain its rhetoric of them being the epitome of Asiatic culture, moral through the representation of their pure and spiritual virtues.⁷⁸

Therefore, a certain conciliation is needed between these two opposing sides, and the magazine spread below (Fig. 6.5) manifests this. The magazine spread, which features Japanese actresses in the Western style on the left page, is countered with actresses in the Japanese style on the right. With its visual elements composed in a symmetrical layout, it alludes to the balance that is needed within the Japanese modern

⁷⁷ Ayako Kano, 'Two Actresses in Three Acts: Gender, Theater and Nationalism in Modern Japan', in *Performing 'Nation': Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940*, ed. Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh, and Joshua S. Mostow (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 242.

⁷⁸ One should also note that despite this contradiction, *moga* does not challenge the patriarchal structure that existed the society of that period. They were still able to fulfil the 'good wife, wise mother' ideology. They are believed to be modern in appearance but traditional in values. See Ikeda, 'Modern Girls and Militarism Japanese-Style Machine-Ist Paintings', 103.

consciousness, to be modernised whilst remaining loyal to their traditional Japanese roots, as to not lose their sense of Self. It shows that they are adaptable and in control of their identity.



Fig. 6.5: Motion Picture Actresses of Japan, Taiyo Magazine Volume 1 Issue 2, pp. 20 – 21. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.

6.2 The Healthy Body

Another signifier of modernity in the Japanese consciousness is advancement in the field of medical science. A survey into the pages of the propaganda magazine *Taiyo* show multiple advertisements for Japanese medical and health enhancing products. Such products include supplements, such as hormones and vitamin B in the form of injections or tablets, as well as “most up-to-date” beauty products that promises to “solve problems of Beauty, Youth and Grace”. Most of the ads are accompanied by advertising copy which emphasises the importance of maintaining perfect health.

The selling point of these ads not only focuses on their advancement in the medical science field through the emphasis of the quality of their products, but also the notion that they are better than the West or best in the world. With advertising copies such as “Nippon Defeats America and Britain Even in the Production of Medicine” and “Nippon Is a World Leader in Chemical Science”, this publicity of medical products serves as propaganda for not only the larger narrative of being a modern nation, but also for defeating the West in their own game of modernity.

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Preserve perfect health

and overcome weakening effects of
tropical climates.

Your body demands a vigorous
carbohydrate metabolism for
which **VITAMIN B₁**
is most essential factor.



Pure Crystalline Vitamin B₁ Preparation

METABOLIN
"STRONG"

» Takeda «
TABLETS & INJECTION

Manufactured & Distributed by

TAKEDA YAKUJIN KOGYO K.K.

OSAKA, NIPPON

Cable Address: "TAKEYAKUKO OSAKA"

BRANCHES:

Tokyo, Sapporo, Sendai, Hongkong, Canton, Syonan, Saigon, Hanoi, Bangkok,
Djakarta, Singa Radja, Balik Papan, Bandjermasin, Macassar, Menado, Medan,
Padang, Palembang, Manila

AFFILIATED COMPANIES:

Mukuden, Hainking, Dairen, Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Peking, Kalgan,
Tsingtao, Taihoku, Keizyo

Fig. 6.6: Magazine Ad for Vitamin B Supplements, Taiyo Volume 2 Issue 12. 1943.
From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

Nippon Is A World Leader In Chemical Science
 Tireless, ceaseless research gives Nippon a leading position in the world's chemical science. Pure, reliable and high quality medicinal products are constantly flowing out of Nippon's laboratories. A trial will convince you of the excellence of "Made in Nippon" medicines.

轟動世界的日本化學 在設備完全的研究室，由多數的化學名流埋頭鑽研，再授再勵的究討，連續的完成多種壓倒世界製藥界的優秀醫藥品，奇效驚人，請速請服……

 Sulfapyridine "Tanabe" TRIANON 双磺基吡啶化學療法劑 得利克 Chemotherapy in Pneumococcal, Gonococcal and other infections. 本劑係最近有餘的新療法比列奎爾，對於肺炎菌病，淋菌性菌病，梅毒菌病及葡萄球菌病均有奇效	 Synthetic Follicular Hormone OESTIMON 新合成絨毛素，女性荷爾蒙 雙始劑 Genital diseases originated in diminished or deficient ovarian function. 本品係長效且良的女性荷爾蒙，一日一片，不須注射有二十餘年的經驗，婦女病其有效增加有驗
 Antipyretic and analgesic NOVAPON 解熱，鎮痛，解熱鎮痛藥 諾波平 Febrile infections, phthisis, septicaemia, headache, migraine, etc. 由來在熱感引起之藥，均具有解熱作用，本品係多年苦心研究精製而成，既無副作用，更無副作用	 Quinine plus Strychnine for malaria QUINAPON 具有解毒高熱性之特效藥 金雞納別 Malaria, acute pneumonia, influenza and general tonic, etc. 本藥對於瘧疾，急性肺炎，流行性感冒，傷寒等及某些熱病之治療，其效最顯著，而且神速無比
 Specific in amebic dysentery YATEMIN 紅血，紅痢，阿米巴紅痢特效劑 阿別特靈 Amebic dysentery (acute and chronic), wounds, serious colitis, etc. 效速而強，病重不知痛數，痛苦萬分，連服本品即能除菌內驅除阿米巴菌，使膿血止，是最新之特效藥	 Water soluble Bismuth compound THIOBIS 新水溶性新藥劑 去毒錳斯 For treatment of all cases of syphilis, angina and Frambesia. 梅毒的聖藥，若以此藥一匙每日服三次，不論何種梅毒，均可見效，可見藥用本品，更顯其神速無比

TANABE
 21, DOSHOMACHI 3-CHOME, HIGASHI-KU, OSAKA, NIPPON.

MANUFACTURERS, EXPORTERS & IMPORTERS
GOHEI TANABE & CO., LTD.
 Branches: Tokyo, Mukden, Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai.

CABLE ADDRESS: "GOHETANABE OSAKA"

太 陽 藥業株式會社 發行所 東京市東區本町三丁目 電話 2-1111 郵政 特種郵便 特准 定價三十錢
 支店 大阪 池田 奈良 和歌山 京都 神戶 名古屋 東京 橫濱 東京 函館 東京 青森 東京 仙台 東京 盛岡 東京 秋田 東京 山形 東京 福島 東京 茨城 東京 栃木 東京 群馬 東京 埼玉 東京 千葉 東京 茨城 東京 栃木 東京 群馬 東京 埼玉 東京 千葉 東京 茨城 東京 栃木 東京 群馬 東京 埼玉 東京 千葉

Acc No. 38 - 2010

Fig. 6.7: Magazine Advert promoting Japanese medical products, Taiyo Volume 1 Issue 2. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.



Fig. 6.9 Magazine Advert for Japanese beauty products, Taiyo Volume 2 Issue 7. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

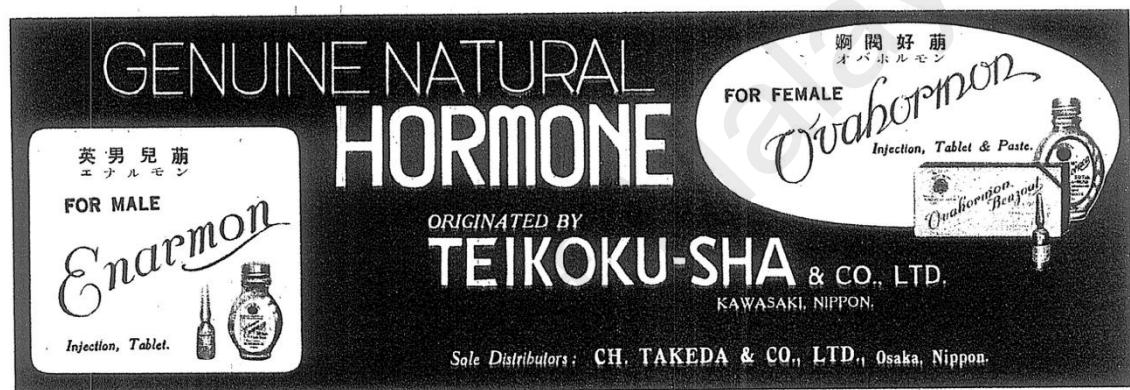


Fig. 6.10: Magazine Advert for Japanese hormone supplements, Taiyo Volume 2 Issue 7. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

This fixation on perfect health also reflects deep into the modern consciousness of the Japanese society as it surfaces one of the anxieties present in that of a modern society – the fear of the degeneration of civilisation. As noted earlier in this chapter how Japan – as part of their process of modernisation – sent local students abroad to study and eventually return to hold high positions in and out of government, we find many Meiji intellectuals who studied in the medical field in European countries return influenced by Western medical thought and theories. In Sumiko Otsubo’s article *The Female Body and Eugenic Thought in Meiji Japan*, Otsubo highlighted one of these intellectuals, named Osawa Kenji, who as an academician held multiple important

positions in the medical field during the Meiji era. Upon returning from his studies in Germany, Osawa held positions such as Professor of Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine in Tokyo University, and eventually became the Dean. This comes alongside a membership within the House of Peers by Imperial Decree, a position that sees him interact with people in government.⁷⁹ As an important figure within the Japanese medical circle at the time, he has contributed and written extensively on the different matters of health and medicine, most of which were focused on issues relating to the degeneration of civilisation and its prevention. Heavily influenced by studies and ideas from the West such as Germany's *Sozialhygiene*, Osawa believed that due to the advancement in modern medical science, it inadvertently enabled the survival of the weakest within the population rather than just the strongest, which is in conflict to the Darwinian theory of natural selection. Hence, when the weak and unfit procreates, the resultant offspring will inherit the unfit and weak genes. This continuous cycle, along with other factors such as diseases, moral decadence and deviant social behaviour will ultimately lead to the decline of the Japanese race.

Therefore, this anxiety pushed forth the scientific study of eugenics, where resources were mobilised to improve and maintain Japanese racial purity, ensuring the production of the best subjects for the empire. Multiple angles of approach were implemented in this holistic effort, including the encouragement of bodily improvement through areas of physical education, diet, and clothing. Even suggestions of “cross-breeding” between

⁷⁹ Sumiko Otsubo, ‘The Female Body and Eugenic Thought in Meiji Japan’, in *Building a Modern Japan*, ed. Morris Low (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2005), 63.

the white race and Japanese race were once discussed, in hope of producing the desired Japanese body.⁸⁰

An important aspect to note of these bodily improvement efforts is that Japanese women were seen to play a crucial role in the guarantee of racial purity. This is because women contribute to two of Osawa's three requirements needed for the production of a healthy child – a perfect sperm cell, a flawless egg cell and a mother's robust body.⁸¹ We observe this importance reflected in the government's effort to reform the education for Japanese girls, with the implementation of the ideology of "good wife, wise mother" into the curriculum of both secondary schools and higher education.⁸² Through education, this ensures that Japanese women understands their role as an imperial subject, fulfilling the Japanese ideals of womanhood, which includes being "mentally" and "morally" fit. Whereas on the physical side, focus was given to the improvement of the female body through good diet and physical exercises.

We are able to see all these markers of modernity manifested in the *Taiyo* propaganda magazine. In their bid to present themselves as a modern state, we see the magazine allocating spread layouts to heavily feature images portraying the perfect Japanese body, particularly of women. Seen in Volume 1 Issue 2, the spread of pages 16 and 17 is composed of photographs showing Japanese girls exercising in unison, engaging in aerobic exercises with the caption:

⁸⁰ Otsubo, 63.

⁸¹ Otsubo, 67.

⁸² Otsubo, 65.

“Full of Vitality”

“Soft Lawns, smooth rhythm, and supple bodies.

Vigorous and healthy are the growing girls of Japan”



Fig. 6.11: Full of Vitality, Taiyo Magazine Volume 1 Issue 2, pp. 16 – 17. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.

The girls in the photographs were organised harmoniously, creating a visual repetition through homogenous poses and uniforms. This diminishes any sense of individuality, as a sensation equivalent to that of an industrial factory production line is created. These visuals therefore go against Tenshin’s ideas – which we have noted in Chapter 3 – that Asiatic culture encourages individuality and opposes that of the West, where the culture of materialism and industrialisation destroys individuality. This again exhibits the difficulty that the Japanese face in trying to represent both notions of modern and tradition within the Self. In the second spread of pages 18 and 19, we once

more observe the vigour in Japanese men and women manifested through photographs of them swimming with the caption:

“Swimming Japan”

“Surrounded by seas Japan is a swimming nation, world-famous for its swimming stars.”

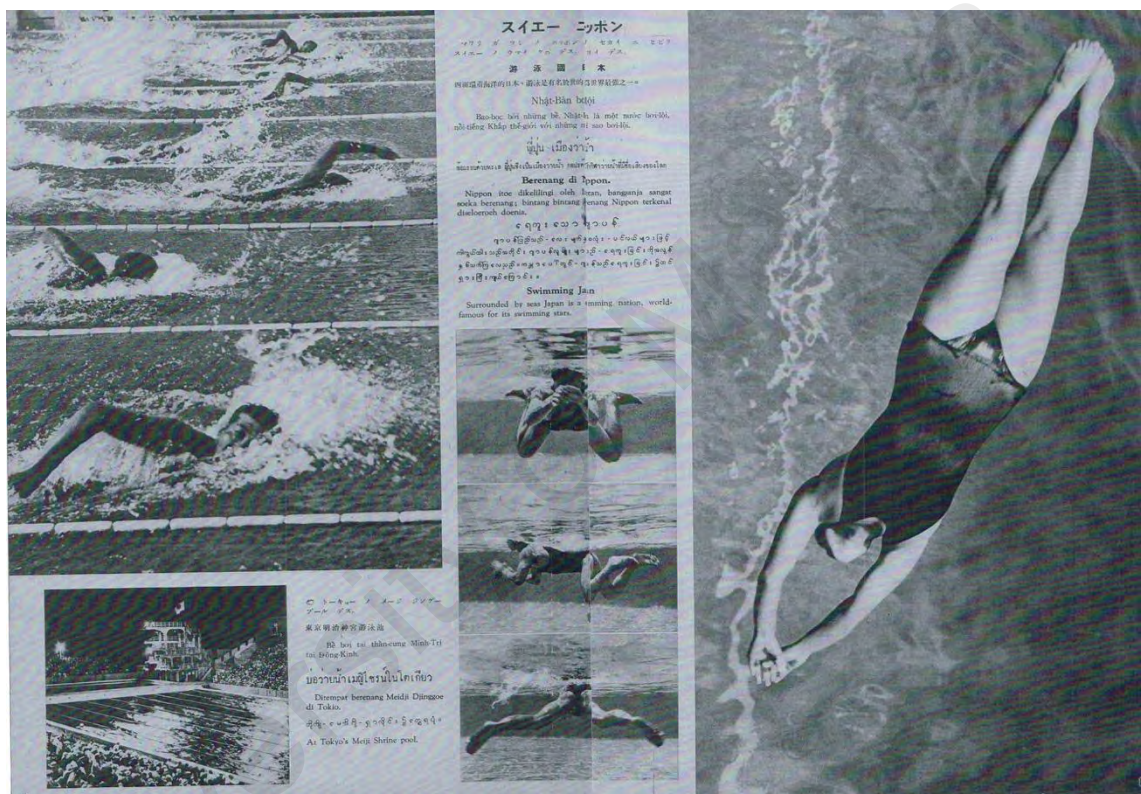


Fig. 6.12: Swimming Japan, Taiyo Magazine Volume 1 Issue 2, pp. 18 – 19. 1942. From: National Archives Singapore.

Other instances of portrayals of healthy Japanese bodies can be found in Issue 12 of Volume 2, where a page in the magazine depicts a group of Japanese women hiking, with the images accompanied by a health-centric description which reads:

“On their days of rest, the working girls of Nippon go mountain climbing to build up their health.”



ヤマ デ ココロト カラダ ラ キタヘル

ニッポン ノ ハタラク チョセイ ハ ヤスミ
ノ ヒ ニハ、キリツ タダシク ヤマノボリ
ナドヲ シテ カラダ ラ ツヨクシテ キル。

日本の職業女性在休暇的時候，很有規律的做登山等
野外運動，鍛練身心的向上。

On their days of rest, the working girls of
Nippon go mountain climbing to build up
their health.

MELATIH SEMANGAT DAN BADAN
DIPEGOENOENGAN

Pada hari kelepasan, gadis² pekerdja di Nippon
pergi mendaki goenoeng oentoek membangoen-
kan kesehatannja.

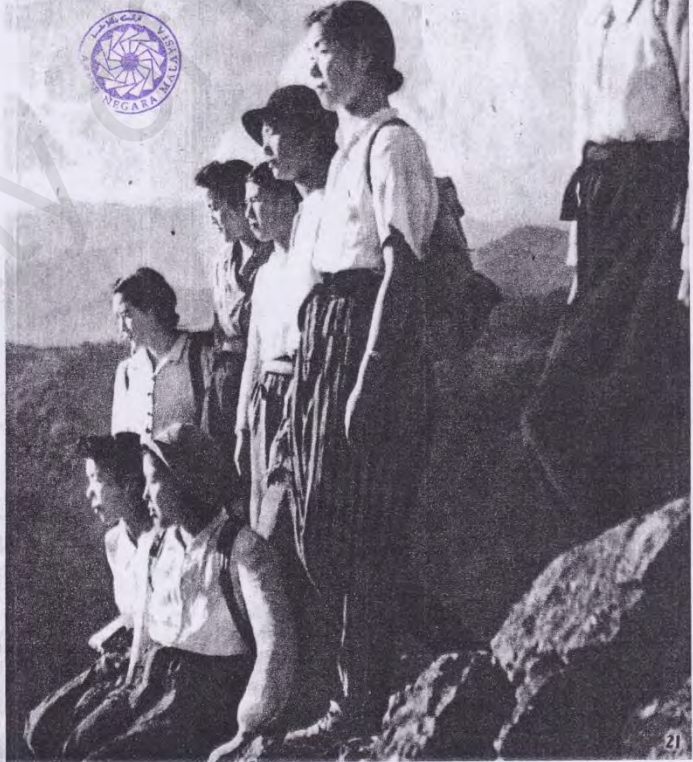


Fig. 6.13: Taiyo Magazine Volume 2 Issue 12, pp. 21. 1943. From: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

The description emphasises the term ‘working girls’ which denotes the fact that they are unmarried, and they understand the importance of building a healthy body for their ultimate purpose as an imperial subject, to be a good wife and wise mother.

As a Japanese occupied territory, this ideology of bodily improvement also is propagated towards Malaya, as we have posters that details morning radio exercises routines or radio calisthenics (*rajio taisō*) for the locals, with the headline “Jaga tuboh kita seperti Malai dikawal umatnya”, which translate loosely as “Care of the robust body as how Malaya cares for its land/peoples”.

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We can observe from the poster's headline, the Japanese ideological relationship between the physical body and land. This pursuit of the healthy body is in accordance to the ideology of *kokutai*, which translates as 'national body'. *Kokutai* sees the empire of Japan modelled as a family, with the emperor as the 'father' and his citizens as extensions of the imperial family-state.⁸³ Therefore, the healthy bodies of the citizens equate a strong empire, as healthy Japanese subjects guarantees the longevity of the empire through the reproduction and the raising of racially pure, culturally Japanese and physically strong offspring for the empire.

It is also worth noting that the photographs of the Japanese bodies in the magazine spreads were shot in dynamic and varied angles, with certain images shot from below and some from above. This can be seen as another manifestation of modernity in the propaganda materials. In Weisenfeld's article,⁸⁴ she examined how the design and composition of Japanese advertisements in the 1930s alludes to modernity through the use of modernist styles influenced by German design journals. A few of the modernist characteristics that she identified includes heavy focus on photography, manipulation of the image in terms of viewpoint, perspective, scale and close-ups, montages and typophotos (photo combined with typography). Many of these characteristics are noticeable in the propaganda magazine layouts presented in this research. We see the heavy reliance of photographs, as well as them being shot from different angles. We also observe montages of photographs, not forgetting the many-as-one montages to inculcate the sense of community among the territories under the GEACPS as seen in

⁸³ Nobuko Anan, *Contemporary Japanese Women's Theatre and Visual Arts: Performing Girls' Aesthetics*, Contemporary Performance InterActions (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 155.

⁸⁴ Weisenfeld, 'Publicity and Propaganda in 1930s Japan: Modernism as Method'.

Chapter 5. Typophotos are very apparent in the advertisements found in *Taiyo* Magazine as well as on the cover.

6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, in promoting Japan as the most modern nation, the Japanese had to find solutions to deal with the struggle of identity they encountered in becoming a modern state. Several markers of modernity were used to present themselves as modern. Contradictory imagery such as portraying Japanese girls in Western clothing engaging in Western culture had to be remedied with Japanese maidens in formal, clean and proper working uniforms as well as traditional outfits, which became symbols of virtues associated with their Asiatic consciousness, as to show that they have not lost the sense of Self.

Another manifestation of modernity is exhibited through visuals and advertisements emphasising their advancement in the field of medical science and health, which is seen as a marker of being modern. This highlights the modern anxiety of the degeneration of the civilisation, where we see them focus on ensuring the healthy bodies of Japanese subjects, particularly those of women. This anxiety of the modern nation is manifested through their visual propaganda materials, as a by-product of the portrayal of their propaganda rhetoric – being modern and racially superior.

Finally, we noted how the visuals such as the photographs, magazine spreads and advertisements examined in this chapter were formally composed through the approaches of the modernist style, further contributing to the representation of Japan as modern.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the ways by which Japanese visual propaganda relied on the subject matter as well as their representations to communicate the various propaganda narratives under the ideology of the GEACPS. By analysing the visual materials within multiple contexts, namely Gender, Post-Colonialism and Modernity, this thesis brought to focus how concepts within these contexts parallels the propaganda narratives, and were embedded within the subject matters and their visual representations.

The thesis began by unpacking the formation of the GEACPS in Chapter 3, looking into its ideological roots in Japanese Pan-Asiatic thought. Citing particularly from Eri Hotta's discussion in her book *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*, three main notions of Japanese Pan-Asianism were established, namely:

- i. that a singular Asiatic cultural essence exists,
- ii. that Asia possesses a certain weakness, one that is most apparent when pegged against the West,
- iii. that in order for Asia to be in par with the West, it is important to be modern themselves.

In addition, the chapter also surveyed other Pan-Asiatic discourses by Japanese intellectuals, primarily on the thoughts and writings of Okakura Tenshin. From these, three main propaganda narratives were established and used to aid the visual analyses of this thesis.

The first propaganda narrative being Japan as Asia, which is the notion that Japan sees themselves as the epitome of Asiatic culture and consciousness. They position themselves as the leader of the GEACPS region, with their superiority amongst other

Asian nations justified by the sovereignty of the empire. This led to the Nipponisation efforts, which were believed to help a weak Asia regain their Asiatic consciousness which were lost due to Western colonisation and influences.

The second propaganda narrative is Asia for Asia, where Japan believes in and tries to inculcate a sense of brotherhood among their occupied territories formulating the GEACPS. This is in the hope of having these regions work together with the Japanese to eliminate Western colonial powers.

The final propaganda narrative is the notion of Japan being the most modern nation. Here, Japan positions and portrays themselves as the most modern nation in Asia, rivalling the West. In dealing with the modern as occident, the Japanese attempts to transcend modernity by retaining and aestheticising their Asiatic consciousness and cultural values through the visuals.

With the propaganda narratives established, Chapter 4 explored the first of the three. Through the representations of the Self (Japan) and the Other (the Occupied and Allied), the Japanese visual propaganda materials seek to construct a social dichotomy between the two to accentuate the propaganda rhetoric of Japanese superiority. One of the ways this dichotomy is visualised is through the subject matter of the female body. Japanese propaganda magazines such as *Taiyo* features female bodies heavily on their front cover. Here, we are able to analyse how the Japanese women and the ideals of Japanese femininity were used to represent values of purity and chastity, alluding to the sovereignty of the Japanese empire which was free from Western influences and exploitations. As imperial subjects, unmarried Japanese women were shown to be executing their supportive duty in modern industrial settings, making sure the homeland continues to be in order and productive while the men left home for the battlefield. This parallels the ideal Japanese woman who belongs in supportive domestic spaces while the men leave the house to engage in the public. The iconology of the Rising Sun in relation

to concepts of purity and the ideal feminine was elaborated as well in this chapter. The unmarried maidens on the front covers of *Taiyo* magazine come to represent the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and the rock-cave myth. As Amaterasu emerges from her cave to revitalise agriculture in her realm with her bright purifying light, the Japanese women emerges from the domestic spaces to participate in public spaces, sustaining the industry that was vital for the Japanese state at times of war.

These representations of the Self were constructed against representations of the Other. Similarly, the female body were used as subject matter in the case of the local occupied peoples. However, they were positioned on the opposite side of the spectrum, shown as village folk benefitting from the leadership and occupation of Japan. Focus was given to portrayals of growth in agriculture, as well as peaceful stereotypical scenes of kampong life and its peoples be it in magazines, comics or postcards. In the case of the opposition, the Allied were shown to be despicable and struggling under the strength of the Japanese military prowess.

Chapter 5 followed with the interpretation of how a sense of brotherhood and community among the regions within GEACPS were attempted to be inculcated and visualised through Japanese visual propaganda. Here, under the rhetoric of Asia for Asia, the Japanese tried to establish communal relationships between themselves and the occupied Other to garner teamwork and support for the noble war against the Western powers. In this case, the visual propaganda portrayed the Japanese as one with the occupied, engaging with local peoples and their village life culture – the Other still represented within the stereotypical confines of the Japanese colonial mentality. A magazine feature, consisting of an illustrated fairy tale, was also found to be used as a way to promote the themes of exploitations, teamwork and revenge against a common enemy, serving as allegory to the war.

Other ways of visualising a sense of community among the nations within the GEACPS includes the portrayal of the many-as-one. This features people belonging to different nationalities – differentiated through identity markers such as national costumes and flags – coming together as one, composed in the way of a montage to face or advance in a united direction. It is also found that in accordance to the map-as-logo theory, the outlines of the GEACPS region was used as a symbol for the region, and can be found in a variety of materials such as stamps, lottery tickets, magazines and advertisements.

Finally, Chapter 6 examined the visual representations involved in positioning Japan as the most modern nation in Asia, in line with the third propaganda narrative of the GEACPS ideology. Here, we again observe the representations of the Self, but this time as means to visualise and emphasise Japan's modernity. Japan's transformation to become a modern state began in the Meiji Restoration, and along with modern infrastructures, it also resulted in anxieties relating to the loss of the sense of Self – their Japanese identity. This is due to their belief that to be modern is to be occident. Hence, the Japanese faces a difficult balance of portraying both modernity within the Self, and at the same time preserving their Japanese identity through the representation of their traditional and cultural consciousness. In this chapter, we returned to the subject matter of the Japanese women. However, it is the Japanese modern girl or *moga* – donning Western outfits and engaging in Western cultures – that graces the front covers of the same propaganda magazine that featured Japanese working maidens who embodied the Japanese ideals of femininity. This can be seen as the negotiation of having to on the one hand exhibit the mastery of the Other, and on the other, maintain the identity of the Self.

Modernity was also implied through multiple advertisements for health and medical products, as advancement in the field of medical science is seen as a signifier of

modernity. This preoccupation with health is an indication of a modern anxiety present within the Japanese modern consciousness – the fear of the degeneration of the civilisation. Therefore, to present an image of a healthy nation, we observe how the propaganda visual materials heavily feature healthy Japanese bodies – particularly of women – be it engaging in physical exercises or gracing advertisements for beauty products. These investments in the health of the Japanese subjects is in accordance to the ideology of the *kokutai*, as the healthy and robust body of a mother plays a significant role in the guarantee of prosperity and supremacy of the empire.

To conclude, this thesis demonstrates the reliance of Japanese visual propaganda upon the choice of subject matters as well as the way they are represented in order to communicate their main propaganda narratives. These ‘radiant’ visual representations – as propaganda being far-reaching and stemming from the land of the rising sun – allow for a layer of symbolism and aestheticism of the concepts that aligns with the propaganda narratives under the overarching ideology of the GEACPS – concepts such as those of sovereignty, purity, superiority, kinship, community, as well as modernity.

To further discussions, perhaps it would be apt to ask questions that the thesis did not manage to fully consider, due to the limitations of both resources and time. This thesis had a strong focus on the representation of the female body, but did not address much in terms of the use of the male body, other than it is primarily focused to represent strength of the imperial army. How else is the male body used? Also, as majority of the visual materials sourced for this research is limited to archives only from Malaysia and Singapore, would the strategies of visual representation be location or nation specific? With the limitations stated in Chapter 1, it would be worth exploring how additional materials and resources from other regions as well as languages adds to this conversation of visual representations and the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere ideology.

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