



AAS-in-Asia 2020

**Asia at the Crossroads:
Solidarity through Scholarship**

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Rethinking Women in Asia Under the Aggression of the Japanese Empire, 1931-1945

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Title: 1224 | Rethinking Women in Asia Under the Aggression of the Japanese Empire, 1931-1945

Area: Border Crossing and Inter-Area

Stream: History

Presentation Type: Panel Presentation

Panelists:

Tatsuya Kageki, Keio University, Japan (organizer, presenter)

Pei-chen Wu, Graduate Institute of Taiwanese Literature, National Chengchi University, Taiwan (discussant, chair)

Jijia Yang, Nagoya University, Japan (presenter)

Wenwen Wang, Kyushu University, Japan (presenter)

Zhang Ya, Nagoya University, Japan (presenter)

Shih-Fen Wang, University of Tokyo, Japan (presenter)

Abstract:

Even though considerable research has documented the history of women's oppression under Japanese nationalism and fascism, from the Mukden Incident in 1931 to the end of the Asia-Pacific War in 1945, the analysis has generally been from a Japanese standpoint. Focusing on areas outside the main islands of Japan, such as Manchuria, China proper, Taiwan, and the South Sea Islands, this panel explores how Asian women were controlled and regulated under the pressure of the Japanese Empire, how they resisted it, and how they interacted internationally.

Japanese women's positive cooperation to the "home front," set out as a chapter title in Vera Mackie's *Feminism in Modern Japan*, is well known as the dark side of modern Japanese feminism. Some women feminists and socialists managed to escape from Japan, however, and sought to start a new movement. Colonial countries were the refuge for these women against the "home front" and imperial gender regulations. The international interaction between women from Japan and other Asian countries presented a possibility of liberation from nationalism. At

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between women from Japan and other Asian countries presented a possibility of liberation from nationalism. At the same time, the Japanese government promoted certain social norms for women in colonial countries. Asian women in the colonial countries were educated to be the ideal “woman” suitable for Japanese governmental policy. Under such cultural aggression, Asian women struggled between their original identity and Japanese imperial ideology.

Our multifaceted studies of Asian women in 1931-1945 will consider new aspects about the history of women in Modern Asia.

Panel Abstracts:

The Ideal and the Real Manchuria: Japanese Anarchist Women in Hsinking (Changchun) at the End of the 1930s
 This report discusses how the Japanese anarchist women Mochizuki Yuriko and Yagi Akiko saw and described the ideal and the real Manchuria. Mochizuki and Yagi were part of Fujin Sensen, the first anarchist women’s magazine in Japan started in 1930. After the magazine folded in 1931, both went their separate ways—Mochizuki along with another well-known anarchist Ishikawa Sanshiro edited the anarchist magazine Dinamikku, while Yagi organized the farmer’s anarchism movement in Nagano. Under governmental pressure, the initiatives of both women failed. In the summer of 1938, Mochizuki and Yagi met again in Hsinking (Changchun), the capital of Manchukuo. As a journalist with the Manchuria Newspaper, Mochizuki reported on the development of villages in Manchuria with the hope of realizing the anarchist utopia she had imagined in Japan. Furthermore, after 1940, she also established two schools to further women’s education, all the while working zealously for Manchuria. However, her activity was ultimately a dimension of aggression. Yagi, on the other hand, knew that the development of Manchuria’s villages was being done through Korean and Manchurian slave labor. To liberate farmers in Manchuria from the pressures of imperial Japanese policy and Japanese racism, she worked with socialist activists from Japan. The ideal Manchuria Mochizuki dreamed of shows that even anarchists had valid justifications for aggression by Japan, whereas, the protest against Japanese imperialism was still kept alive in Manchuria by Yagi who knew the real Manchuria.

The Representation of Women in Fumiko Hayashi’s Travel Writing on China: Focused on the Trip in 1930 and 1936
 This presentation discusses the representation of other women by Fumiko Hayashi’s travel writing on China before the Sino-Japanese war. I’ll analyze her essays focusing on the issue of women (as ethnic others) representation in them, and clarify Fumiko Hayashi’s desire and stimulation, in order to prove the relevance of pre-war travel in China to her narration and actions in wartime. In 1930, Fumiko Hayashi made a trip to China by the royalties. It was the first overseas trip for her, and she observes more from the perspective of life than ideological things. The representation of modern women lives in the international metropolises like Harbin and Shanghai implies her desire to be liberated as a woman. In 1936, Fumiko Hayashi went to China again and visited Beijing and other northern China. This time she was lucky enough to meet many Chinese female intellectuals, who aroused her strong patriotism. At this time, it can be seen from her remarks that she potentially actively agrees with the logic of Japanese aggression against China. Therefore, the trip to China in 1930 and 1936 were new opportunities for Fumiko Hayashi to seek women’s self-liberation and self-development. Especially the latter, the tense situation she saw in Beijing in 1936 and her exchanges with Chinese female intellectuals accelerated her recognition of Japanese imperial aggression. It’s clear that she had already taken the initiative to support the war potentially in 1936, which is in fact inseparably related to her statement and action in the war literature later.

Women under the Empire in Colonized Manchuria: Training National and Vocational Women in 1930s and 1940s
 The Japanese-controlled Manchuria regime set up a specialized curriculum and published special textbooks for girls, with the purpose of training girls to become “good wives and wise mothers”. This research mainly focuses on the school curriculums made by the Manchukuo government. The curriculums of Manchukuo female secondary schools were analyzed during three different periods, which also linked up the Manchukuo female education with Japan’s larger imperialist goals, including its intentions concerning the role that Chinese women would play in the empire. Manchukuo education officials continued to emphasize females’ natural duty as “Good Wives, Wise

Empire. Manchurian education officials continued to emphasize females' natural duty as "good wives, good mothers" in the early period, while increasing the emphasis on Japanese language, vocational, and patriotic content. Despite the rhetoric which emphasized women either becoming teachers or mothers, the curriculum and content of the education also moved towards training women to be able to work more in other vocations. This research opens a new way to understand the females who lived in Japanese-controlled Manchuria, and thereby understand how this education impacted on the thinking of the women of Northeast China about their roles in the home and in society.

The Image of Japanese Women Moving Towards Southeast Asia in 1940s: The Solidarity Between Them and Women on the Home Front

This presentation focuses on the representation of Japanese women going to the Southeast Asia in the 1940s. The model course presented by the state to women during the war was limited to two options: protecting their home on the home front or moving towards the outside of main islands of Japan. In the newspapers at that time, Many articles on the newspapers fomented the women emigration to Southeast Asia and reported the successful stories of emigration of typist or clerk women. First, the analysis of Japanese immigration policy during wartime will reveal the governmental encouragement for women's migration to Southeast Asia by marriage and job. Second, image of women who moved to Southeast Asia portrayed by the cultural media, female and male writers at the time are comprehensively studied. Moreover, how Japan created the image of joviality for these women during wartime and whether a gender connection between them and "chaste" women on the home front were built or not, are clarified.

Women in Colonial Taiwan in the 1930s: Their Identity Formation under the Influence of Japanese Imperialism and Its Culture

This paper aims to understand how women in colonial Taiwan were influenced by Japanese imperialism and its culture by analyzing the magazine, Taiwan Fujinkai. This was a Japanese magazine published in colonial Taiwan in the 1930s. Compared to magazines published in colonial Taiwan, most magazines had no longer than three publication issues. However, Taiwan Fujinkai published for almost five years and had 57 issues. Therefore, Taiwan Fujinkai had a historical phenomenon meaning because of the following reasons. First, it had a longer publication. Secondly, it was operated by a personal capital but not sponsored by Japanese government. Thirdly, it was established by a Japanese journalist, KAKINUMA Fumiaki, who has a high concern towards to female and children. By analyzing articles in the Taiwan Fujinkai, we can observe how the Taiwanese women identify themselves. In addition, how the Japanese imperialism influenced Taiwanese culture, society, way of thinking, and living. It is interesting that the word usage of Taiwanese women on Taiwan Fujinkai was not only used by Taiwanese women born in Taiwan, but also by women born from Japanese and Taiwanese families. In conclusion that women in colonial Taiwan had to be educated as modern and independent women in order to devote themselves to the Japanese imperials. However, there is an ambiguous line between Taiwanese born in Taiwan and Japanese born in Taiwan. We cannot overlook this historical phenomenon so that we can have a better understanding on colonial Taiwan in the 1930s.

This panel is on Monday - Session 02 - Room 3

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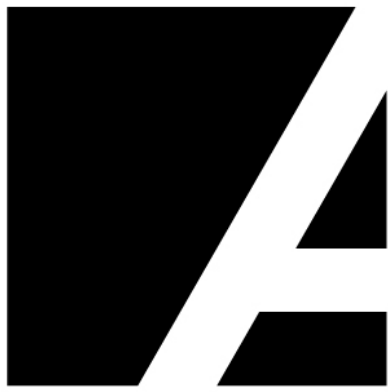
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