LANGUAGE, NATION, AND EMPIRE:
THE SEARCH FOR COMMON LANGUAGES DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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INTRODUCTION

In the January 1943 issue of Nihongo, a Japanese-language education magazine, the following arresting sentence appears: "The true nature of the Greater East Asian War is that it is a thought war. The vanguard of the thought war is language, and its rearguard is also language. The goal of carrying out the Greater East Asian War must be to advance and spread the Japanese language throughout all regions of Greater East Asia." Such a sentence seems bold if not hyperbolic. But as the quotation reminds us, the Fifteen Year War was not simply about territory, resources, or power in the most basic sense; it was a war about ideas of how the world should be. Indeed, a quotation in Philippine Review, a magazine published in the occupied Philippines, makes it clear that this was the conviction of the war’s participants: “The present World War is not only unprecedented in the magnitude of its scale but quite matchless in the immensity of its implications which is ascribable to the fact that it embodies a stupendous conflict between rival views of the world.”

Over the course of the war, Japanese was taught to the peoples of the various countries Japan occupied while newspapers reported on the efforts to spread Japanese to audiences at home, and magazines such as Nihongo continuously spoke of the pressing need to make Japanese the common language for all of Asia. Language

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1 Nishino Minoru 西尾実, "Nippongo sōryoku sentaisei no juritsu" 日本語総力戦体制の樹立 [The establishment of a total war system for the Japanese language], Nippongo 日本語 3, no. 1 (January 1943): 20, quoted in Seki Masaaki 関正昭, Nihongo kyōikushi kenkyū josetsu 日本語教育史研究序説 (Tokyo: Surī E Nettōsaku, 1997), 73. The original reads: “大東亜戦争の実態は思想戦である。思想戦の尖兵は言語であり、また、その後陣も言語である。大東亜戦争完遂の眼目は、大東亜全域に日本語を進出させ普及させることでなくてはならぬ。” The translation is my own. For the translation of shisōsen as “thought war”, see Barak Kushner, The Thought War (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006), 15: “For Japan, the entire process of convincing China that Japan’s mission was to liberate Asia hinged on the idea of the ‘thought war,’ or shisōsen. The Japanese consistently used the term ‘thought war’ to describe the fight for ideological supremacy in Asia and later against the West.”

2 Kazunobu Kanokogi, Nippon Times Weekly 14, no. 4, quoted in Philippine Review, December 1943, 51.
education, like many other aspects of life, was absorbed into the larger propaganda efforts of Japan’s war. In fact, the diffusion of language itself became one form of propaganda. Language is not only a touchstone for understanding the vision of the world held by the Japanese at the time of the war. We can see from the urgency exhibited by writers like the one above that language was also the means to make that vision a reality.

And what was that vision? First of all, it was a vision of a united Asia where regardless of the diversity of languages and cultures, all could communicate in a common language. But it was not enough for them to communicate in one of the languages already dominant on the continent -- in particular, the propaganda called for the expulsion of “white languages” such as English and French. The lingua franca had to be Japanese so that Japan could assume its place as the leader and pillar of Asia. The spread of Japanese implied that “Japanese values” would spread along with Japan’s hegemony and that Japan would be a model for the rest of Asia. No longer would Japan be beholden to Western paradigms; by spreading the Japanese language, Japan would play an active role in shaping the world.

Yet while it may not surprise the reader that Japan chose the Japanese language as the lingua franca for the “New Order” it was trying to construct in Asia, what may be surprising is that amidst the loud calls for the promotion of Japanese there were a few voices that called for the promotion of other Asian languages as well. While Japan was in fact building a new kind of empire and brutally exploiting the populations whom it controlled, in the realm of propaganda ideologues sought to distinguish Japan’s campaign from Western colonialism. One way of doing this was to portray Japan as a
protector of Asian cultures and a promoter of Asian nationhood. Unlike the Western colonial powers which had presumably thwarted the awakening of Asian nations, Japan would build and strengthen these nations. Just as Asia would have a single language to unite it, each nation within Asia would have its own standardized, national language for the purpose of internal unity. While Japanese propaganda portrayed Japan and the Japanese language as the embodiment of Asia’s authenticity, promoting individual national languages was meant to help other Asians recover their own authentic, “national” selves. This allowed the Japanese to see their country not as imperialistic but as a benevolent nation-builder. It in turn conferred on Japan the power to actively remake the world as it saw fit. ³

But the rest of Asia was not a blank slate. The peoples of Asia had their own visions of the world, their own ideas of the future, and their own historical trajectories. In other words, the Japanese were not operating in a vacuum. Because the Japanese language campaigns had both a level of theory and a level of practice, and because the Japanese aimed to build nations by promoting local languages, it is important to take a close look at one particular area to see how non-Japanese Asians responded to Japanese propaganda. Were any eager to learn Japanese and “awaken” to their identity as Asians, or did they resist such overtures? How did they respond to injunctions to speak their “national” language? How did their understandings of language and identity coincide with or diverge from that of the Japanese? This paper will take a close look at the occupied Philippines.

The Philippines presents an interesting case study because it is a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic country which possesses a history of multiple colonialisms and has struggled to develop a national identity. At the end of a very long period of colonization by Spain, Philippine revolutionaries rebelled and sought independence only to have their aspirations cut short by the invasion of the United States. Another period of colonization followed accompanied by assimilation into Anglo-American culture and away from Spanish culture. When the Japanese invaded, they sought to remake the Philippines once again but along “Asian” lines. While many resisted this, nevertheless, it was a time when many Filipinos were, like the Japanese, trying to define their identity.

This paper is divided into three parts. In order to give more context for Japan’s language campaigns, Chapter 1 will provide an overview of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (Dai Tōa Kyōeiken 大東亜共栄圏; hereafter it will be referred to as the GEACPS), whose construction was Japan’s stated mission in the war. It was a political-economic bloc infused with Pan-Asian ideals of Asia’s liberation from the West and unity under Japan’s hegemony. Though this was an Asian empire, it was not conceived in the same form as Western colonial empires or even as Japan’s prewar empire. It was meant to be a transnational union of nation-states, each nation distinct while sharing in a common identity. This part will give a brief account of the evolution of this idea as well as of the ideological assumptions that formed its basis. Defining this entity is no easy task. Although the Japanese population was mobilized for the construction of the GEACPS, there was a diversity of its interpretations among the Japanese population and a lack of unity in the way Japan actually administered it. Moreover, the concept itself was full of contradictions: it was anti-imperial yet reinforced
the hegemony of one nation; it was supposed to be anti-racist but was based on the supposed superiority of the Japanese. This chapter will try to trace some of the main contours of this ideology so that one may have a better understanding of the motives behind Japan’s wartime language promotion campaigns.

Chapter 2 will examine articles from Japanese-language education magazines which dealt with the subject of Japanese as a lingua franca for Asia and locate some common themes. This chapter will explore the way language related to Japanese ambitions and the crusade to construct the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It will be shown how the contributors to these magazines revealed some of their assumptions about language such as the belief that the spread of language was synonymous with a country’s power; that language was a reflection of the self; and that language, and in particular the Japanese language, could serve as a medium for conveying culture to others. We will also see some of the anxieties of the authors such as the worry over the saturation of Japan by English and the anxiety over the lack of standardization in Japanese. This chapter will further analyze the attitudes of these authors toward other Asian languages and the role that these languages should play in the construction of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. This chapter will present a “macroscopic” view of language campaigns in the GEACPS in the sense that for the most part, these authors were writing with the larger picture in mind, projecting plans for the GEACPS as a whole. Sources used in this chapter were written in Japanese with a Japanese audience in mind.

Chapter 3 will sharpen the focus to look at the Philippines specifically to see how language promotion campaigns played out there. Much of the chapter will look at
periodicals published in the Philippines such as *Philippine Review*. This was a Japanese-run publication, and so we shall see how Japanese writers tried to appeal to a specifically Filipino audience. This chapter will also try to look at the Filipino side of things. It will show that the Japanese were overwhelmingly unpopular; that in many cases Filipinos resisted attempts to impose a new language on them; and that Filipinos at times turned language itself into a way of resisting, or at least coping with, the Japanese occupation. The chapter will also look at the many contributions made by Filipinos to Japanese-sponsored periodicals and the lively discussions which took place about Tagalog as a national language for the Philippines. The chapter will show that parts of Japanese propaganda struck a chord with some Filipinos in spite of the overwhelming unpopularity of the occupation itself, and that the occupation opened up a space for Filipinos to discuss national language, nationhood, and national identity. When Chapters 2 and 3 are combined, what we will be able to see is how linguistic imperialism intersected with linguistic nationalism.
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND: THE GREATER EAST ASIA CO-PROSPERITY SPHERE

Before discussing the issue of language, it is necessary to place it in the context of the new geopolitical entity that Japan was trying to build: the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. This was meant to be a new kind of geopolitical body, and its construction was Japan’s stated goal for the war. Therefore, in order to properly contextualize language policy during the war, this chapter will describe the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere and the ideas that lay at its foundation.

Yamamuro Shin’ichi writes that Manchukuo, the puppet-state Japan established in 1932, was a bewildering chimera combining a set of seemingly contradictory elements into one body. This metaphor, “chimera,” could just as aptly be applied to the whole Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere itself. John Dower has called the ideology behind GEACPS a “hydra-headed ideology.” While the term “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” was probably coined by foreign minister Matsuoka Yōsuke, the concept owed much to the output of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro’s brain trust, the Shōwa Research Association (Shōwa Kenkyūkai 昭和研究会). The GEACPS was realized in actuality as the product of competing ministries, branches of the military, occupational governments, civilians recruited into propaganda groups attached to the military, and by the masses of the Japanese people who themselves played a role in

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4 The following historical overview is based on Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War; Akira Iriye, Japan and the Wider World, (New York: Longman, 1997) and The Origins of the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific (New York: Longman, 1987); and Michael A. Barnhart, Japan and the World since 1868 (New York: Edward Arnold, 1995).
5 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 116.
7 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 166-172.
defining the GEACPS and propagating its ideals.\(^8\) Because of divisiveness and a lack of coordination within the military, the organization of each country varied within the GEACPS.\(^9\) As far as the ideological underpinnings of the GEACPS are concerned, the Co-Prosperity Sphere meant many things to many people.\(^10\)

Both Akira Iriye and Eri Hotta have outlined how Japan’s policy transitioned from one of internationalism to one dominated by Pan-Asian thinking. Prior to 1931, Japan had subscribed to what Iriye calls the “Washington System,” a framework of international relations in Asia based on the agreements made at the Washington Conference. It was a system based on multilateral relations and consultation, as well as avoiding the use of force without prior consultation with other nations. It was buttressed by the League of Nations and in Japan itself it was supported by “liberal internationalists”\(^11\) who were in the main civilian bureaucrats -- as opposed to the military establishment. All of this changed with the Mukden or Manchurian Incident in 1931. Members of the Kwantung Army -- the part of Japan’s Imperial Army responsible for defending Japanese-owned interests in Manchuria -- staged the bombing of a section of the South Manchuria Railway, blamed the bombing on Chinese bandits, and then proceeded to attack Chinese forces and occupy the whole of Manchuria. One of the main leaders of the conspiracy, Colonel Ishiwara Kanji, subscribed to an apocalyptic Pan-Asianist ideology. He believed that there was going to be a final great conflict

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\(^8\) For the role of the Japanese masses in producing propaganda and supporting the war, see Kushner, *The Thought War*.


\(^10\) As Eri Hotta puts it: “Since Pan-Asianism, at the very basis, provided a morally unobjectionable ideological glue for people of all political persuasions, it is not difficult to see why it would achieve the elevated status of Japan’s war aim just as the center of decision making became more and more fragmented.” Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 81.

\(^11\) “Liberal internationalist” is Eri Hotta’s term. See Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*. 
between East and West and that Japan needed to lead the East in cooperation with China and Manchuria while developing its own industrial strength.

The incident marked the beginning of Japan’s isolation from the rest of the world as well as its renunciation of the Washington System in favor of unilateral policy dictated by Pan-Asianist thinking. After the incident, the League of Nations conducted an investigation in an effort to resolve the dispute between China and Japan. Before the investigation was concluded, Manchuria was declared to be an independent country, Manchukuo, and a puppet government subordinate to Japan was established. The League produced the report of the Commission of Inquiry, known as the Lytton Report, which, although sympathetic to Japan’s interests, refused to recognize the new state. This led Japan to withdraw from the League altogether. However, Hotta argues that Japan's abandonment of internationalism was not abrupt and that even after Japan's withdrawal from the League, there continued to be “internationalists” within the government who tried to use the tropes of international cooperation to justify Japan’s actions to the world as they were forced to respond to the military’s unilateral actions abroad. Pan-Asianism came to dominate Japan’s foreign policy and was adopted by civilian officials as well as the military and would serve as a means to both justify foreign policy and to smooth over differences and disagreements over short-term strategy among the factions of the military and government.

After 1931, Japan became more embroiled in a conflict which grew to massive proportions and was ultimately justified as a grand crusade to establish a “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.” Between 1931 and 1937 there was a hiatus in the fighting between Japan and China. But in 1937, hostilities again flared up between Japanese
and Chinese forces outside of Beijing in what is known as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. The conflict spread beyond Northeastern China to many other areas and the Second Sino-Japanese War began. While Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro had hoped that the war would end swiftly and decisively with a Japanese victory, the war became a quagmire, the West increased its criticism of Japan, and Japan was stuck in something of a deadlock. Konoe became desperate for a way to break out of the deadlock and called on his brain trust, an outfit consisting of top social scientists and philosophers, to find some way out of the impasse. This led him to make a proclamation in which he announced a “New Order” in Asia and invited China to cooperate with Japan and follow Japan’s leadership.

The scope of Japan’s territorial ambitions expanded further with Prime Minister Konoe’s 1940 proclamation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere which was to extend beyond Northeast Asia to include Southeast Asia and other areas. With Japan’s move into French Indochina followed by the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan began a brutal war to make the GEACPS a reality.

**Evolving Schemes for Asian Collectivity**

Prior to Konoe’s announcement, there were several schemes for Asian unity which eventually evolved into the idea of the Co-prosperity Sphere. One of the earliest was the idea of an East Asian Federation (Tōa Renmei 東亜連盟) put forward by Colonel Ishiwara Kanji, the instigator of the Mukden Incident, and Miyazaki Masayoshi, a one-time employee of the South Manchuria Railway Company whom Ishiwara appointed as head of the Japan-Manchuria Finance and Economic Research
Both Ishiwara and Miyazaki believed in an eventual cataclysmic conflict between East and West (either the United States or the Soviet Union) and argued that Japan needed to secure its position on the Asian continent and prepare itself for the final war. As part of this preparation, they advocated creating a federation between the independent nations of Japan, China, and Manchukuo which would work together economically and politically and strive to eject Western imperialism. On the one hand, they emphasized Japan’s superior leadership in this federation, but on the other hand, it should be noted that their conception was characterized by egalitarianism. In his explication of the Federation, Masayoshi insisted that Japan take up a position of leadership but also that the Japanese “should refrain from replacing Western-style exploitation by Japanese-style suppression in organizing the Federation” (a remark which is ominous in light of what transpired thereafter). Masayoshi also stipulated that membership in the Federation should be voluntary, with the nation-states able to join and leave at will. It should also be noted that these ideologues wished to avoid further conflict with China and even opposed making war on the West before Japan had sufficiently prepared itself.

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12 Lebra, Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere, x. For details on Miyazaki’s background, see Mark Peattie, Ishiura Kanji and Japan’s Confrontation with the West (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 208-209.

13 Prasenjit Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 61-62; Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 89-91; Lebra, Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere, 3.


Another conception of Asian unity under Japanese leadership which had currency prior to the announcement of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was the so-called “Asiatic Monroe Doctrine.” Essentially, it was an idea modeled on the United States’ Monroe Doctrine that Japan should have the preeminent responsibility for maintaining peace and order in Asia and that other powers should not interfere in Asian affairs. Although the idea of an “Asiatic Monroe Doctrine” goes back to the late nineteenth century, it became well known after the “Amō Statement,” a statement in 1934 by the head of the Information Division of the Foreign Ministry, Amō Eiji, declaring Japan’s preeminent role in Asian affairs. Just as the original Monroe Doctrine of the United States had evolved from a defensive policy to fend off European imperialism in the Western hemisphere to one justifying the United States’ dominance of other American countries, the new Japanese Monroe Doctrine became a justification for Japan’s hegemonic position in Asia.\(^{16}\) The scholar Kamikawa Hikomatsu gave a detailed description of the Japanese Monroe Doctrine in a paper written in 1939 which showcases many of the tropes of the GEACPS. For instance, in spite of the seemingly imperialistic nature of Japan’s action, he claimed that the new “Monroe Doctrine” was anti-colonial, that Japan was not imperialistic (unlike European powers), and that it had no plans to acquire territory in Asia. He also showed Pan-Asian influence in his argument when he advocated economic interdependence based on a pre-existing solidarity among Asians: “In the economic sphere the Japanese ‘Monroe Doctrine’ envisages what may be termed East Asia continentalism, which is none other than a movement, based upon the geographical, racial, cultural and economic solidarity of the

countries of East Asia, with the object of bringing about the closest possible intercourse among them.17

The next phase in Japan’s pursuit of regional hegemony was the “New Order in East Asia,” and associated concepts such the “East Asia Cooperative Body” (Tōa Kyōdōtai 大東亜共同体) and “Greater East Asia Co-Existence Sphere” (Dai Tōa Kyōzonken 大東亜共存圏). As the war with China dragged on, Prime Minister Konoe declared his refusal to negotiate with Chiang Kai-shek, and Japan found itself in a quagmire with no apparent escape route. In order to solve this problem, Konoe declared a “New Order in Greater East Asia” on November 3, 1938. As Iriye notes, this marked Japan’s formal withdrawal from the Washington system and the point at which Japan “finally crossed the bridge of no return.”18 The New Order called for greater collaboration among the nations of China, Japan, and Manchukuo and joint opposition to communism. Though Konoe still rejected any dealing with Chiang, the New Order claimed to respect China’s sovereignty. It was ultimately a scheme intended to deal with the impasse in China and handle Chinese nationalism by offering some concessions to China while seeking to draw it into a supposedly benevolent arrangement under Japan’s leadership that would transcend the divisiveness of nationalism.19 It should be noted

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18 Akira Iriye, Origins of the Second World War, 67-68.
that at this point the New Order included only East Asia leaving out the Southeast Asian countries that would eventually come within the scope of the GEACPS.\textsuperscript{20}

At the time, many intellectuals and research organizations were vying for influence over Konoe, but by far the most influential was the Shōwa Research Association. Much of the inspiration for the New Order came from this brain trust, and in fact, one of the Association’s members, the philosopher Miki Kiyoshi, is believed to have been “the key figure in the philosophical formulation” of the New Order Declaration.\textsuperscript{21} The Association was an eclectic mix of scholars from many different disciplines and represented both sides of the political spectrum, engaging with both Marxist and fascist ideas. However, the influence of various German political and social-scientific ideas was overwhelming, many of the Association’s scholars having studied in Germany.\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, the idea of a world divided into regional autarkic blocs, the concept which came to dominate Konoe’s foreign policy, derived from German geopolitical ideas and military science.\textsuperscript{23}

According to Ozaki Hotsumi, another intellectual at the Shōwa Research Association, the term “New Order” was an umbrella concept which subsumed ideas like the “East Asian Federation” and the “East Asia Cooperative Body.” There were several schemes for Asian regionalism, and Ozaki, Miki, and the political science professor Shinmei Masamichi had their own ideas for the “Cooperative Body” while another scholar of political science, Yabe Teiji, put forward the idea of the “Greater East Asia

\textsuperscript{20} Lebra, \textit{Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere}, xii, 68.
\textsuperscript{21} Hotta, \textit{Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War}, 164-166.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 142-143; 170-172.
\textsuperscript{23} Iriye, \textit{Japan and the Wider World}, 81-83.
Co-Existence Sphere." What many of these schemes had in common was that they called for the creation of a new kind of political organization which would transcend or overcome the divisiveness of nationalism, especially China’s antagonism toward Japan. Miki’s scheme did not seek to snuff out Chinese nationalism entirely but to make use of it. He hoped that the final unification of China would pave the way for Asia’s unification followed by the unification of the whole world. Nevertheless, he still claimed Japan’s priority of leadership because he believed that important changes were brought about by individual nations. Rōyama Masamichi, in his explication of the New Order, claimed it was a new kind of regional organization, distinct from traditional treaty arrangements between states or international bodies like the League of Nations. He argued that this New Order would overcome the conflict between Chinese nationalism and Japanese imperialism and “reconcile the conflicting forces of modern times, viz, nationalism which tends to contract, and industrialism which seeks to expand...” Thus the New Order and related schemes were a precursor to the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in the sense that these schemes called for a larger union under Japan while (rightly or wrongly) claiming to respect the sovereignty of other nations.

More than one year prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War, Konoe’s foreign minister, Matsuoka Yōsuke, proclaimed the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. While the New Order had included only Japan, China, and Manchukuo, Matsuoka declared that the GEACPS included not only these but parts of Southeast Asia as well. Japan was driven by a need for resources to fuel the war in

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24 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 149-150. Lebra, Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere, 9, 14, 31.
25 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 167.
China as well as by its increasingly ideological foreign policy to expand the scope of its ambitions.²⁷

When Japan made the decision to attack Pearl Harbor, the government declared on December 13, 1941 that building the GEACPS was the government’s official aim.²⁸ However, while the GEACPS was far more expansive than the original New Order, the ultimate boundaries it was to take were never agreed upon, with some articulations of it including India and Australia.²⁹

**Pan-Asianism**

As has been alluded to, Pan-Asianism played a large role in Japan’s evolving imperial ideology. But what exactly was Pan-Asianism?

To date, the most thorough account of the origins of Pan-Asianism and the role it played in Japan’s wartime ideology is Eri Hotta’s *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War 1931-1945*. Hotta describes the origins of Pan-Asianism and how it eventually became the basis for Japan’s aggressive expansion after the Mukden Incident. Pan-Asianism is a variety of what is known as a “pan-nationalism.” As the name suggests, pan-nationalisms represent an attempt to create a union which transcends the limitations of the individual nation-state. These types of unions are pursued by weaker groups in the face of some stronger group; such movements often emerge when the borders of nation-states are still inchoate.³⁰ Two things characterized these movements: “First is the grand scale of the unions they aspired to, and second, their desire to combine

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²⁸ Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 185-186.
²⁹ Lebra, *Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere*, x.
³⁰ Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 20.
separate and already existing arrangements by appealing to a yet greater cohesive factor.”31 Though Pan-Asianism itself was actually a diverse set of beliefs and political positions propounded by an equally diverse set of thinkers, it was bound together by two propositions: there is an entity called Asia, and this Asia needed to be liberated from the West, or “there was something fundamentally wrong with Asia, which had to be put right.”32 Asia is a concept which originated in and was imposed by the West; however, it would come to be accepted by Asians and become a palpable concept for them.33

Hotta identifies three main types of Pan-Asianism: First, what she terms “Teaist” Pan-Asianism; secondly, “Sinic” Pan-Asianism; and thirdly, “Meishuron” 協主論 Pan-Asianism, the type most associated with the war (“Meishu” means “Leader of an alliance”).34 Teaist Pan-Asianism is that which is most associated with the Japanese writer and art aficionado, Okakura Tenshin, as well as the Indian poet and thinker, Rabindranath Tagore. This was a less political and more philosophical and aesthetic type of Pan-Asianism. Moreover, the boundaries for what was considered “Asia” in this type were as encompassing as they were vague, stretching to include India and even the Middle East.35 Sinic Pan-Asianism had a more narrowly focused definition of Asia which was limited to the countries within the Chinese cultural sphere. Thinkers within this camp advocated an alliance among these countries and stressed commonalities of

31 Ibid., 20-21.
32 Ibid., 23.
33 Ibid., 23.
34 Ibid., 7-8.
culture and race embodied in the phrase “same letters, same race” (dōbun dōshu 同文同種).\(^{36}\)

The third strand of Pan-Asianism, and the one that would ultimately form the basis of Japan’s wartime Pan-Asianism, stressed that Japan had a special calling to lead the rest of Asia and was entitled to intervene in Asian affairs.\(^{37}\) While Japanese propaganda during the war did have anti-Western elements, Pan-Asianism was not necessarily anti-modern. In fact, part of Japan’s claim to leadership was that it harmonized Eastern ideals and Western modernity.\(^{38}\) Along with this sense of superiority came a mandate to play the role of nation-builder in Asia. Hotta summarizes well when she writes: “Japan was to be the ideal-typus, so to speak, for all other Asian nations to aspire to. For this reason, the Japanese way should prevail in Asia, by force if necessary.”\(^{39}\)

Part of the appeal of Pan-Asianism was that it offered Japan the chance to remake a world which had been dominated by the West. Prasenjit Duara argues that the world was dominated by a set of supposedly universal ideals deriving from Europe -- he terms this “Civilization” with a capital “C.” However, this eventually came under question in both Europe and Asia and made way for the emergence of multiple “civilizations” -- alternative paradigms with the same claim to authority.\(^{40}\)

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 38.
\(^{37}\) Ibid., 44-45, 48.
\(^{38}\) Ibid., 49, 146, 219. John Dower and Prasenjit Duara also point out that Japan’s supposed ability to synthesize East and West lay behind its claims to superiority. See Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 98 and Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 282.
\(^{39}\) Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 194. She also writes: “The pervasive conviction that Japan served as the preordained leader of Pan-Asian union and that it could remake the societies in the likeness of Japan lay at the very basis of many of its policies.” Ibid., 201.
\(^{40}\) Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 91-94.
Even geography had been defined in Western terms. The philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō complained that Westerners often spoke of Europe’s “discovery” of the Pacific Ocean41 (General Homma Masaharu, the commanding officer in the Philippines, also made this complaint which suggests the idea was commonplace and a part of propaganda directed at non-Japanese Asians as well).42 During the war, the government would stop using the term kyokutō 極東 (Far East) because it was a Euro-centric term.43 Pan-Asianism offered Japan the chance to shape the world on its own terms. As Hotta puts it:

Pan-Asianism after December 8, 1941, in the minds of many public intellectuals that encompassed a wide spectrum of creative minds, seemed to open up a new opportunity for Japan to fulfill its ambition for a world role at long lost. However, small, or indeed misguided, it was an opportunity all the same to complete the incomplete nation, to become Asia’s liberator, and to preside over the future course of world history.44

Akira Iriye also notes that the GEACPS promised to give Japan this kind of agency:

“Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Japanese had always tried to fit themselves into a Western-led diplomatic framework, geopolitically and conceptually. Now, they could at last assert something they postulated, the idea of a new world system consisting of regional orders, with Japan to be as autonomous in its region as the others would be in theirs.”45

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41 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 196.
42 Teodoro Agoncillo, The Fateful Years: Volume 1 (Quezon City: The University of the Philippine Press, 1965), 336.
44 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 195.
45 Iriye, Japan and the Wider World, 81. Although he notes the irony that even the idea of regional blocs derived from the West.
Japanese Ideas of Race

Given that the brutal actions of many Japanese in the field as well as statements by some Japanese figures evinced a belief in Japanese superiority and contempt for other Asians, it is understandable why some might think that Japanese expansion was driven by racist ideas.\(^{46}\) Eri Hotta notes: “It is essential to recognize that there was undoubtedly an underlying tendency in the Japanese forces, in various places at various times and not just in Nanjing, to regard the occupied populations as less than human, even though they were the very Asian brothers and sisters the Japanese were claiming to liberate.”\(^{47}\) She goes on to cite the example of Tanaka Ryūkichi, an officer in the Kwantung Army who in an interview with journalist Matsumoto Shigeharu said, “To be perfectly frank, the ways you [Matsumoto] and I look at the Chinese are fundamentally different. You seem to think of them as human, but I see them as pigs.”\(^{48}\) John Dower has also shown that racist attitudes can be found at the level of official policy statements. Dower closely examines a report put out by the Population and Race Section of the Research Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Welfare entitled *An Investigation of Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus*. The report was a plan for spreading Japanese colonists throughout Asia. It not only called for an increase in the number of Japanese settlers in each part of the GEACPS, it was highly concerned about retaining the racial purity of the Japanese and argued against mixed marriage between Japanese and other peoples. The report envisioned a hierarchical division of

\(^{46}\) As John Dower puts it, the atrocities of the Japanese “…frequently were so grotesque, and flaunted in such a macabre manner, that it is not surprising they were interpreted as being an expression of deliberate policy and a calculated exhibition of some perverse ‘national character.'” Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 42.

\(^{47}\) Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 152.

\(^{48}\) Quoted in Ibid.
labor within Asia with the Japanese at the apex of the hierarchy. The writers were also unreserved in their demeaning characterizations of other Asians: Chinese are described as venal and greedy while Southeast Asians are said to be lazy. As for Filipinos, they “may have been superior to other Asians, but they still could not be called genuinely civilized. For good or ill, they had been profoundly influenced by the Americans, and the catalog of their qualities was a mixed but generally unflattering one.” The report even advocated an unabashedly “divide-and-rule” policy with regard to Asia.

Yet unlike their Nazi allies who openly embraced an ideology of racial exclusivism and hierarchy, Japanese propagandists tried to present Japan’s war as anti-racist. According to Japanese propaganda, it was their Anglo-American enemies and not the Japanese who were the real racists. For example, in an English-language magazine published in the Philippines, a Japanese author named “S. Matsukawa” encourages Filipinos to view American films as a kind of racial propaganda. He argues that while American movies try to depict the United States as a non-racist country and show African-Americans living in harmony with whites, African-Americans suffer terrible treatment. Moreover, many Japanese were led to believe that the war was for the purpose of liberating Asians. A noted scholar of China and sinophile, Takeuchi Yoshimi, had originally opposed the war in China but became an ardent supporter of Japan’s mission after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He voiced his sentiments in a journal article:

50 Ibid., 288-289.
51 Ibid., 289.
52 S. Matsukawa, “What I Have Seen in the American Movie,” Philippine Review, January 1944, 49-52. Ironically, there is an advertisement for a German company on the facing page which features a swastika.
53 Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 193-194.
“We shall study China, cooperate with the just liberators of China, and enlighten the Japanese nation about the true China.”

Japanese attitudes about race, especially as related to other Asians, are complex and not reducible to one single ideology. As we saw above, John Dower examines An Investigation of Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus and its emphasis on preserving the purity of the Japanese. He also argues that the Japanese were intensely concerned with the “purity” and “uniqueness” of the Japanese people and that “This intense self-preoccupation ultimately led to the propagation of an elaborate mythohistory which emphasized the divine origins of the Japanese imperial line and the exceptional racial and cultural homogeneity of the Japanese people.” Yet Oguma Eiji presents a very different interpretation. Oguma’s treatise, A Genealogy of ‘Japanese’ Self-images argues that until the end of the Pacific War in 1945, the idea of the Japanese as a “mixed race” had become dominant in Japan with various scholars arguing that the Japanese were descended from many different groups that had occupied the archipelago. Furthermore, the word “homogeneous” hardly appears in Japanese writing at the time except in the works of authors arguing that the Japanese are not homogeneous. In fact, many authors argued that what set apart the Japanese as a group was their mixed character and capacity to absorb other races; some intellectuals even argued that the mixed nature of the Japanese made them superior to bigoted Westerners. Oguma further argues that the notion of homogeneity dominated in times when Japan was less confident and not expanding its borders such as the time prior to the first Sino-Japanese War and after defeat in 1945. Notions of heterogeneity

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54 Quoted in Ibid., 194.
55 Dower, War Without Mercy, 204-205. However, Dower, seems to be aware that there were notions of the Japanese as a “mixed race” circulating at the time. See Ibid., 217, 223, 268-269.
were often tied to expansionist ambitions, with intellectuals asserting Japan’s capacity to go abroad and absorb others.\textsuperscript{56} For example, Tokutomi Sohō published books arguing that the Japanese people were a mixed race and so were eminently adapted to march into diverse climates and assimilate other peoples, and his books were recommended by the Ministry of Education.\textsuperscript{57} Moreover, Oguma acknowledges \textit{An Investigation of Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus} but argues that this report represented a section of Japanese society which supported the eugenics movement; it was not representative of the dominant views of the time. A prominent eugenicist, Furuya Yoshio claimed that some of those who criticized the idea of racial purity believed that too much emphasis on race would stand in the way of establishing the GEACPS. Because they advocated assimilation policies, members of the Government-General of Korea were also highly critical of advocates of pure blood policies. Japanese colonialism in general was often portrayed as something non-racist and different to that of the West.\textsuperscript{58} Oguma does acknowledge a tension which existed between ideas of racial purity and heterogeneity, noting that many Japanese were uncomfortable with the notion of mixing with other groups when this went beyond theory and became more of a reality.\textsuperscript{59}

Racial attitudes could vary and were also situational. As we saw above, Korea’s Government-General was at odds with the eugenicists in the Ministry of Health and Welfare because it had long pursued an assimilationist racial policy. After the annexation of Korea, much of the writing in Japanese newspapers and magazines

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 285-286.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 218-236. 332.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 289-291.
emphasized the racial commonality of the Japanese and Koreans, and this idea became the official view of the Korean Government-General which emphasized inter-marriage and later also conscription, among other steps taken by the colonial government. While the Government-General pursued an aggressive assimilation policy, this was justified by the idea that Koreans and Japanese were in fact the same race. That said, the Government-General’s outlook on Koreans came into conflict with that of the government of Manchukuo which promoted harmony among “five nationalities,” viewing Koreans as a distinct national group from the Japanese. Thus, one could argue that while racial attitudes differed because of the heterogeneity of the administration of the Japanese empire, it could also be said that such attitudes were deployed strategically to suit different situations.

Both Dower and Oguma agree on the centrality of the “family-state” idea and the notion of incorporating other peoples within the Japanese “family” in Japanese propaganda. This may sound benevolent but not necessarily egalitarian. As both authors point out, Japanese notions of family were hierarchical so that even siblings were not in a relationship of equality. Dower argues that while notions of family were used domestically to justify class stratification within Japanese society, in the context of empire it was used to rationalize a hierarchy of nations with Japan as the “elder brother” to Asian “younger brothers.” Therefore, Japanese pronouncements which spoke of “universal brotherhood” and giving each nation its “proper place” implied a Japanese-dominated order. Oguma complements Dower’s argument as he points out that even

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60 Ibid., 81-86, 126, 206, 209, 225, 285n1.
61 Dower, War Without Mercy, 277-284; Eiji, Genealogy, 334-341.
notions of the heterogeneity of the Japanese implied Japanese superiority.\textsuperscript{62} Hotta provides an aptly-phrased summary of the tension between different concepts of race:

In the end, however, such an oscillation between the claims of uniqueness and inclusiveness of Japan’s roots signified the two sides of the same coin. So long as Japan could legitimize its superiority, either by claiming the successful synthesis of multiple Asian roots, or by claiming the inborn uniqueness of the Japanese race within Asia, Japan could in the end justify its preponderant position in what it regarded as its rightful sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{63}

The Language of Sovereignty, Liberal Ideals, Etc.

In the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese government announced that it sought “order for co-prosperity, mutual respect for sovereign independence among Asian nations, while calling for the elimination of racial discrimination.”\textsuperscript{64} In November of 1943, the Greater East Asia Conference (\textit{Dai Tōa Kaigi} 大東亜会議) was held in Tokyo during which Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki met with representatives from the various nations of the GEACPS, including President Jose Laurel of the Philippines. A joint declaration was issued at the conference spelling out five principles that were to govern the GEACPS:

1. The countries of Greater East Asia through mutual cooperation will ensure the stability of their region and construct an order of common prosperity and well-being based upon justice.
2. The countries of Greater East Asia will ensure the fraternity of nations in their region, by respecting one another’s sovereignty and independence and practising [sic] mutual assistance and amity.
3. The countries of Greater East Asia by respecting one another’s traditions and developing the creative faculties of each race, will enhance the culture and civilization of Greater East Asia.
4. The countries of Greater East Asia will endeavour [sic] to accelerate their economic development through close cooperation upon a basis of reciprocity and to promote thereby the general prosperity of the region.
5. The countries of Greater East Asia will cultivate friendly relations with all the countries of the world, and work for the abolition of racial discrimination.

\textsuperscript{62} Eiji, \textit{Genealogy}, 333.
\textsuperscript{63} Hotta, \textit{Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War}, 104.
\textsuperscript{64} Quoted in Hotta, \textit{Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War}, 185-186.
promotion of cultural intercourse and the opening of resources throughout the world, and contribute thereby to the progress of mankind.\textsuperscript{65}

Both announcements make ample use of the language of liberalism, national sovereignty, and national self-determination. It has already been observed that Japan aspired to a trans-national union of states, but of course, a transnational union requires sovereign nation-states. While Japan was essentially building an empire (and it was an empire every bit as violent and exploitative as the old colonial empires frequently denounced in GEACPS propaganda), Japan often invoked the language of national sovereignty and self-determination to justify its endeavor. The formal structure of the GEACPS was not simply a metropole and its colonies as in the old empires but a union of sovereign nation-states under a single hegemon. Therefore, units of the GEACPS were ostensibly independent nations (though they were puppet-states).

Not all parts of the GEACPS acquired the formal status of independent nation-state; Japan had planned to maintain direct control over several parts of the new territory. The Philippines and Burma were not offered their independence until 1943. Moreover, Japan still continued to administer Korea, Taiwan, and other parts of the prewar empire as colonies.\textsuperscript{66} However, other writers have pointed out that it is significant that Japan chose to create independent nation-states. Eri Hotta argues:

If Japan had used Pan-Asianism in a war that was simply meant to preserve its entirely selfish interest, it would not have bothered to imagine and invent other Asian nations in the involved and comprehensive fashion that it did during the Fifteen Years’ War. In other words, Pan-Asianism was an ideology of ‘counter’ rather than ‘anti’ forces, precisely because it provided a concrete exegesis for Japan’s mission in conceiving the rest of Asia in its own self-image, as shown in the implementation of extensive wartime ‘re-education’ programs with all types of

social, economic, and cultural ramifications that were meant to, in their misguided ways, save Asia.

Speaking of Manchukuo, Prasenjit Duara notes: “Finally, the puppet designation suggests a scarcely veiled colonialism and cannot capture the novel institutional arrangements that produced results very different from the old colonial states.” As implied by Hotta’s quote, this allowed Japan to serve in the role of nation-builder.

The precedent for this was Manchukuo. After WWI, the legitimacy of imperialism came under fire and the idea of self-determination of nations gained the ascendancy. According to Duara, along with these trends came the rise of “the idea of the nation-state as a universal political form and of nationalism as a natural condition of humanity.” Duara adds that under these conditions, empires were forced to reckon with nationalism so that “imperialism too came to be penetrated by nationalist rhetoric, forms, and practices,” while empires were forced to create client states in place of formal colonies. Because Japan made its claims on Manchuria in this changed international atmosphere and was faced with Chinese nationalism, it was necessary to present Manchukuo as an independent country. However, even after Japan formally withdrew from the League of Nations, it still continued to treat Manchukuo as a formally sovereign nation. Duara argues that Manchukuo was a precursor to later forms of imperialism: “In many ways, Manchukuo prefigured the phenomenon of a junior partner

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67 Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity, 59-60; Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 74.
68 Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity, 10.
69 Ibid., 9, 19.
70 Ibid, 247; Eiji, Genealogy, 327.
71 Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity, 61; Hotta, Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War, 112. The translation in parentheses is mine.
or a client state dominated by hegemonic states such as the United States and the Soviet Union in the postwar period.”72

The difference between the old and new parts of the empire is reflected in cultural and language policy as well. Japan’s *kōminka* or imperialization campaigns, especially in Korea, are notorious. During these campaigns, Japanese authorities attempted essentially to “Japanize” other peoples. This was most intense in Korea and Taiwan, where the indigenous populations were forced or at least strongly pressured to change their surnames to Japanese ones and to speak in Japanese while the local languages were actively suppressed.73 While many authors have emphasized the assimilation campaigns carried out in the Japanese empire such as the forced use of Japanese, as Matsunaga Noriko has argued, the nature of Japanese-language education and the degree of assimilation practiced were highly divergent depending on time and place. In the newer parts of the GEACPS such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Burma, national identities and languages were promoted alongside Japanese language and culture.74 Similarly, *kōminka* policies were avoided in Manchukuo because it was nominally an independent state. Duara summarizes the difference between Manchukuo and older colonies: “The idea of a pan-Asianist [sic] alliance

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72 Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 78. For the Soviet analogy, see also Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 137.
74 Matsunaga Noriko 松永典子, “Kokugo kyōiku kara tōa no nihongo kyōiku e no michi: shokuminchi/senryōchi no nihongo kyōiku” 「国語」教育から「東亜の日本語」教育への道：植民地・占領地の日本語教育, *Studies in Japanese Language and Teaching* (March 1997): 83-85, http://hdl.handle.net/2324/14870 (accessed June 26, 2012). Eri Hotta notes that in Malaya and Singapore, assimilation campaigns were particularly aggressive because the occupying authorities deemed the local people to be devoid of nationhood or a culture of their own. However, she does not mention the different situation in other areas such as the Philippines. See Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 204.
produced a different kind of tension in Manchukuo than that which dominated the
Japanese relationship with Korea or Taiwan. Manchukuo was undermined by the
contradiction between an alliance based on independence -- hence the quest for
sovereignty -- and the imperialist power structure, whereas in Korea and Taiwan the
tension developed chiefly between assimilation and exclusion."75 One could argue that
a similar dynamic was at work in the above-mentioned parts of Southeast Asia,
meaning that Manchukuo marks a transition in the history of empire. Just as Manchukuo
was conferred a different status to the old colonies because of changed international
circumstances, cultural policy took on a different shape in newer areas.76

As we can see, because the GEACPS was supposed to be a multi-national
entity, plurality was promoted to some extent. Manchukuo served as a convenient
precedent because it was meant to be a harmonious Pan-Asian society of multiple
nationalities: the Japanese, the Chinese, the Manchus, the Mongolians, and the
Koreans. One could argue that the GEACPS was a Manchukuo writ large: an
organization of multiple nation-states cohering into a single whole.77 Yet even with

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75 Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 246. Eri Hotta notes that while assimilation policies were not
pursued in Manchukuo, there were constant reminders of Japan’s superior status. See Hotta, *Pan-
Asianism and Japan’s War*, 128-131.
76 Barak Kushner notes the difference in cultural policies between the old colonies and the more newly
occupied areas:

> Although lifting the yoke of western imperialism, Japan found itself in an entirely new situation. It
was now a colonial occupier promoting local and indigenous languages. Japan’s older holdings,
Korea and Taiwan, had faced harsh colonial strategies, which largely strove to eradicate the use
of Korean and Chinese. In the new parts of the empire, however, lauding local culture was seen
as a way of shedding dependence on western education and values, defined as ‘vile western
imperialism.’ In these places Japan strove to ‘liberate’ the populations, not to make Japanese out
of Burmese or Chinese.

Kushner also notes that having to teach Japanese to a diverse population forced the Japanese to grapple
with what constituted “authentic” Japanese. Some of these issues will be addressed in subsequent
chapters. See Kushner, *The Thought War*, 8-9, 8n17.
77 Duara notes that Manchukuo was similar to China and the USSR in that all tried to create multi-national
official gestures toward non-Japanese nationalism, Japan reaffirmed its *meishu* status by taking on the role of nation builder. Japan could claim the position of leader by arrogating itself the right to interfere directly in the affairs of other nations, shaping them in ways that suited Japan’s interests, while flattering itself as a model for the rest of Asia.\(^78\)

**Mass Participation in the GEACPS**

The Fifteen Years’ War was a “total war” because it touched every sector of Japanese society. Similarly, the ideology of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere affected all aspects of the lives of Japanese. Barak Kushner argues in *The Thought War* that Japanese propaganda was not something which emanated from a central government organ as in Nazi Germany; rather, it was produced by a number of different actors, including those in sectors that would be considered part of civil society. Therefore, while different branches of the government and the military had organizations responsible for producing propaganda, many Japanese citizens willingly and actively participated in disseminating the ideals of empire. Kushner even asserts, “Japan had mobilized its population to an extent unattainable in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, or Franco’s Spain.”\(^79\)

The total mobilization of the population is also evident in the effort to spread the Japanese language. As Kushner argues, newspapers willingly cooperated with the government and military in order to propagate the desired messages of the former.\(^80\)

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\(^78\) At the beginning of 1942, Tōjō stated, “the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere originates in the great spirit of nation-building, with every nation and every race of Greater East Asia in its respective place and with moral principles of the Empire resting at the core.” Quoted in Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 203.

\(^79\) Kushner, *The Thought War*, 6, 14-16, 28, 35-38, 118.

\(^80\) Ibid., 61-62, 65.
During this time there were numerous articles in Japanese newspapers about the efforts to propagate the Japanese language throughout the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. For example, an article appearing in the *Yomiuri* newspaper, “The children of the south also [learn] a, i, u, e, o” portrays the efforts of soldiers to teach Japanese to children in Southeast Asia, showing a wholesome part of the war.81 Articles such as these served to present Japan’s imperial campaign as a benevolent project with Japan serving the role of a generous mentor to the people of Asia. Another article from the same paper describes a young linguist, Hōjō Shizuko, who together with her mentor Professor Shinbō Kaku and a Professor of Malay resident in Japan, Professor Umar Yadi created a record of 2,000 Japanese words with Malay translations for distribution in Indonesia.82 Articles like this one are evidence that private citizens participated in the ideological projects of the GEACPS.83

As we will see in the next chapter, the widespread influence of the GEACPS ideology was also evident in magazines dedicated to the subject of Japanese-language education with the concerns of writers subordinated to the imperatives of building the GEACPS. Much of the content of these magazines became dedicated to discussing Japanese as a lingua franca, a common language for all of Asia. Japanese was no longer just a language confined to one nation, and spreading the Japanese language became a part of Japan’s larger international mission.

81 “Minami no kodomotachi mo a,i,u,e,o” 南の子供たちもアイウエオ, *Yomiuri Shinbun* 読売新聞, August 6, 1942.
82 “Onban de nihongo fukyū” 音盤で日本語普及 [Spreading Japanese by record], *Yomiuri Shinbun* 読売新聞, August 29, 1942.
83 Seki Masaaki notes the role of the mass media, linguists, literature scholars and other intellectuals in following the military’s agenda and promoting Japanese as a lingua franca for the GEACPS. See Seki Masaaki, *Nihongo kyōikushi kenkyū josetsu* (Tokyo: Surī Ė Nettowāku, 1997), 39, 73.
Language policy then became a way to harmonize the contradictory features of the chimerical Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. As a lingua franca, Japanese was meant to knit together this new entity which transcended conventional national borders. Promotion of both Japanese and in some areas, indigenous national languages, allowed for Japanese propagandists to argue for the benevolence of Japan’s mission while also preserving Japan’s role as the meishu or leader of Asia. Spreading Japanese implied that Japan was the model to be emulated by other Asian nations and that Japan would make Asia Asian again by, as Eri Hotta puts it, remaking Asia in Japan’s own image. At the same time, promoting both Japanese and even promoting other national languages allowed Japan to take on the powerful role as a nation-builder.
CHAPTER 2

DISCUSSIONS IN JAPANESE-LANGUAGE EDUCATION MAGAZINES

Shortly after the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1942, an article appeared in the language magazine Kotoba entitled “The Co-Prosperity sphere and language policy.” In it the author Ōnishi Masao, while discussing the need to spread the Japanese language throughout Asia, writes of a great contradiction or “antinomy” (haihanritsu 背反律) between division and unity. In the realm of language this manifests itself in the imperative for people to revere their ancestral languages while looking for a common language to communicate with others.84 Resolving this contradiction would be the underlying principle of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere -- or at least the way it was represented. As Ōnishi puts it,

Our imperial nation while wishing for the unity of one great Co-Prosperity Sphere within East Asia will also permit each country to have its place and independently conduct its own affairs.

Matters of language and culture are also thus, and while permitting each country its ancestral language, we wish to implant a common language for East Asia as a second language.

That common language would of course be that of “the leader, Japan” (meishu Nihon 盟主日本).85

The geo-political organization called The Greater East-Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere had numerous contradictions. It was what Christopher Goto-Jones calls “an anti-imperial empire.”86 It was meant to justify Japan’s imperial expansion in Asia, and yet it was heralded as a crusade to liberate Asia from the tyranny of outsiders. It was

84 Ōnishi Masao 大西雅雄, “Kyōeiken to gengo seisaku” 共栄圏と言語政策 [The Co-Prosperity Sphere and language policy], Kotoba コトバ 4, no.1 (January 1942): 24.
85 Ibid., 24-25.
supposed to grant independence to nations such as Burma and the Philippines, yet it was also a community of inter-dependent nations with Japan as the hegemonic leader. The language policy reflected these contradictions as well. While the Japanese would seek to free Asians from the cultural and linguistic impositions of European outsiders, those same Asians would have them learn what was for them another foreign language, Japanese. Yet by learning Japanese, non-Japanese Asians would supposedly be restored to their true, “Asian” selves.

Language magazines just before and during the Pacific War were engulfed by the ideological tide of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere and were filled with numerous articles about propagating Japanese as a common language for all of Asia. By examining some of the articles and the way their authors discussed language, one can understand something about the nature of this contradictory geo-political organization Japan was fighting to construct, as well as how Japan was thinking of itself as a nation at this time -- its national aspirations and anxieties.

One very common assumption among the various writers was that a language’s destiny was closely intertwined with power. The more widespread a language and the more widely it was used, the more powerful were that language’s native speakers. While saying that Japanese will be the common language of the new order, Ōnishi also says that up until that point, English had been common language of Asia which “it goes without saying is because the power of England and America had seeped into all fields within these [Asian] countries.”87 In a 1943 article in Kokugo bunka, Saitō Kiyoe writes that it is not simply convenient to be able to use one’s language to communicate with speakers of other languages; a certain pride comes with having someone go to the

87 Ōnishi, “Kyōeiken to gengo seisaku,” 19.
trouble to speak one’s mother tongue. Saitō declares that undeniably that kind of pride lay behind the language policy of the English and Americans and that “The spread of English had the benefit of demonstrating the extent of the Anglo-American sphere of influence.” He drives home his point by relating how he heard someone from England brag that one could travel throughout Asia knowing nothing but English.

These discussions of language and power were related to the anti-colonial tone of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere rhetoric. The Western nations, especially Britain and America, were discussed as foreign invaders who did not belong in Asia and who held down the aspirations of Asian peoples. The spread of languages like English paralleled the spread of Western power, and as Saitō argues in the same article, enabled that power. “One is forced to acknowledge,” he writes, “that there is a great tendency for those who are close to English naturally to have affection for Britain and America and to revere their culture.” These kinds of assumptions are why several writers from this time talk about the need to drive out the “white languages” as an extension of Japan’s mission to drive out the Westerners from Asia, for ideologically, it was not enough to physically expel the Westerners from Asia, it was also necessary to eliminate all symbols of their power and influence. For instance, in another article Ōnishi says that “The coming of the whites to the Greater East Asian regions essentially means the infiltration of the white languages. Therefore, in order to make East Asia

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89 Ibid., 3.
90 Ibid., 4.
something which truly belongs to the East Asian people, we must first wash the invasive sphere of white languages.”91

While the official wartime ideology cast Japan as the liberator of other Asians from the clutches of colonial tyranny, one can detect in some of the writings in these Japanese educational magazines some of Japan’s own colonial anxieties. After asserting that the spread of the English language parallels the march of British and American power, Saitō says that even in “our country” there were train station signs in English even in rural regions, as well as train tickets printed in English until quite recently. “Because it is thus in our country,” he argues, the spread of English’s power throughout the rest of Asia “has surpassed the imagination.”92 He also criticizes the reverence of Japanese toward foreign figures such as Commodore Perry “whose voyage was for the aim of annexing our country if given the chance.”93 In a 1942 article in Kokugo undō, Yagi Hideo complaints of an “overemphasis” (henchō 偏重) on English which he sees in Japan to the point that English is almost like a second language for the Japanese. Criticizing the compulsory teaching of English in Japan, he says that “Forcing all the citizens of the country to learn only one particular language is what a colony or tributary state does.”94 Like Saitō, he also decries the widespread use of English in signs, notices inside trains, picture postcards, etc., arguing that through such practices, Japan shows undue reverence for the English language and sets a bad example for the

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91 Ōnishi Masao 大西雅雄, “Nanpō ni taisuru gengo seisaku” 南方に対する言語政策 [Language policy for the southern regions], Kokugo bunka 国語文化 (March 1943): 33.
92 Ibid., 3.
93 Ibid., 4.
rest of Asia. In these kind of writings, we see a Japan which felt threatened by the West and continued to have anxieties about its own power relative to the Anglo-American countries, as well as resentment to a perceived subordinate status. Language practices reenforced this subordination, and so writers and intellectuals lashed out against such practices in favor of practices which would shore up Japan’s power and prestige.

If the spread of English indicated Japan’s relative weakness vis-à-vis the Western powers, the spread of Japanese showed its opposite. Writers in educational magazines at this time saw in the propagation of the Japanese language the fortunes of the Japanese nation itself -- its prestige, power, and influence in the world. In a 1939 Kokugo undō article, Amano Hideo quotes the magazine’s editor Ishiguro Osamu as saying: “The Japanese language grows as Japan does.” Amano adds that “Accompanying Japan’s worldwide expansion, the Japanese language will for better or worse expand across the world.” This is not without some anxiety, however. He quotes another author as saying that if they do not standardize and organize the Japanese language, the Japanese language will meet a similar fate as the Manchurian and Mongolian languages. Though Mongolians and Manchurians conquered China, their native languages were overpowered by the Chinese language. In any case, Amano and the authors he quotes have clearly hitched Japan’s prestige to the Japanese language itself.

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95 Ibid., 3.
97 Ibid., 22.
In another article called “The Great War Victory and the Worldwide Advance of Japanese,” the politician Tsurumi Yusuke discusses his idea to form a Japanese equivalent to the Rhodes Scholarship. Seventeen years prior in 1925, he went to the United States on a lecture tour to speak out against the Japanese anti-Immigration laws. As he travelled on this lecture tour, he came to feel that he could not convey the “true heart” (hontō no kokoro 本当の心) and the “correct shape” (tadashii sugata ただし姿) of Japan in a language other than Japanese and “there was no other course but to induce the people of the whole world to want to come to Japan and study Japanese.”

Noting that recipients of the Rhodes scholarship felt a closeness to England, Tsurumi hoped to set up something similar for Japan thinking that “if it came about that these people (talented young people) studied in the Japanese language and then returned to their countries and communicated Japanese culture in Japanese, it would be a great opportunity for Japan to gain great status as a world leader...”

Tsurumi apparently consulted with the American business leader Thomas Morgan about this idea but was rebuffed by Morgan who told him that American young people would not want to study in Japan because they had nothing to gain by doing so. With a hint of triumphalism, Tsurumi reflects how different are the present circumstances in which he is writing because Japan has been victorious at Pearl Harbor and constructed the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. If a scholarship like the Rhodes Scholarship were created now, “The people of the world would gladly gather (in Japan).”

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98 Tsurumi Yusuke 鶴見祐輔, “Daisensō to Nippongo no sekai-teki shinshutsu” 大戦勝と日本語の世界的進出 [The great war and the world-wide advance of Japanese], Kokugo undō 国語運動 6, no. 8 (1942): 2.
99 Ibid., 3.
100 Ibid., 3.
article, we can clearly see that Tsurumi was measuring up Japan against the power of
the West, particularly the United States and Britain. The influence of the latter was
manifest in its capacity to draw people from around the world and learn its language,
English. Japan’s lack of power, on the other hand, was evident in Morgan’s statement
that American young people would gain no influence by learning Japanese. Language
was a barometer of power, and Japan would not come into its own as a world power
until its language had the status that English had enjoyed. It is also important to
remember that Tsurumi first proposed his scholarship idea in the context of the anti-
immigration law in the United States, a policy which was perceived by many Japanese
at the time as an insult and another indication that the West would never grant them
recognition as equals in world power status.

Japanese writers in these Japanese-language education magazines not only
wrote about language as a symbol of Japan’s international status; they also wrote of it in
terms of Japan’s meishu or leadership status within the Greater East Asian Co-
Prosperity Sphere. While the justification for Japan’s war was to liberate other Asian
countries from colonialism and create a new kind of geo-political entity, Japan would
have a special status within that entity as the leader nation. This ideology was based on
“Meishuron Pan-Asianism,” which was discussed in Chapter 1. It was then a matter of
course that the language of the leader nation would be the common language of the
GEACPS. Many of the writers do not even go to the trouble of arguing this but assert it
as though it were common sense. For instance, Ōnishi writes “That the leader (meishu)
Japan, who presides over and guides East Asia in defense, government, economics,
and culture would use the language of Japan as the tool of communication is obviously
sensible (tōzensugiru dōri dearu 当然すぎる道理である).”

Similarly, Matsumiya Kazuya in “The common language of the Pacific,” writes that “When (Japan) frees (the other Asian countries) from the binding iron chains of American and Britain and Asia becomes the Asians’, that the language of the Japanese race who is its leader -- in other words, Japanese -- will become the language with the widest circulation within the Sphere is inevitable.” Writers, then, saw the Japanese language in terms of the role Japan was to play within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

That so many writers would see the Japanese language as so representative of Japan’s status is no wonder when several of them declare their belief that language is deeply intertwined with the self, especially the ethnic or national self. Ōnishi Masao, who wrote about the antinomy in language also writes that there are two aspects to language: an “objective” (kyakkanteki 客観的) and a “subjective” (shukanteki 主観的) aspect. On the one hand, language is “simply a communication tool,” but on the other hand, “it is an important entity which is connected to culture and reaches the spirit.”

While explaining that he could not adequately portray Japan in a language other than Japanese during his lecture tour in the United States, Tsurumi describes Japanese as something “in which dwells our life (seimei 生命)” and later says that all languages contain the habits (kuse くせ) and beautiful peculiarities (utsukushii tokushoku 美しい特色) of a people. Matsumiya says that “the language which each ethnic group possesses is one of the most important of that group’s customs” and argues that many

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101 Ōnishi, “Kyōeiken to gengo seisaku,” 19.
103 Ōnishi, “Kyōeiken to gengo seisaku,” 20.
104 Tsurumi, “Daisensō to Nippongo no sekaiteki shinshutsu,” 2.
105 Ibid., 8.
attempts by conquering powers to impose their language on others have ended with a backlash from the conquered people.\textsuperscript{106} The same author in a different article writes that the West has colonized many of the Asian countries, threatened Japan, and warped the culture of Asia making the responsibility of Japan all the greater to reform Asia. He goes on: “...if one thinks that language is the concrete expression of the spirit of the ethnic nation \((\text{kokkaminzoku seishin 国家民族精神})\), then the Japanese language will be made the basis for cultivating the spirit of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.”\textsuperscript{107} This last sentence is interesting because it appropriates the language of nationalism and then projects it onto a much larger space. Each of these authors claims that languages belong to particular peoples and express their unique characteristics, but Matsumiya says the Japanese language will express the spirit of a transnational union of many different peoples. This highlights the strange space the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere occupied, ideologically, between nation and empire. It was not synonymous with the Japanese nation, but like a nation it was supposed to unite people with a common sense of affinity and identity against a perceived foreign enemy. The members of the GEACPS were supposed to share the commonality of being Asian, and the Japanese language could unite them because Japan and its culture were the quintessential embodiment of Asian-ness. This is typical Meishuron Pan-Asian thinking.

As the above suggests, these writers thought of language not only as the expression of a people’s spirit, but also as a way to convey that spirit to others.

Matsumiya himself gives a very aggressive, radical expression of this view in his 1939

\textsuperscript{106} Matsumiya Kazuya 松宮一也, “Gengo ni yoru seikakukaizō 言語による性格改造 [Personality reformation through language], \textit{Kotoba コトバ} 2, no. 1(1940): 104-105.
\textsuperscript{107} Matsumiya, “Taiheyō no kyōtsūgo,” 6.
He argues that it is necessary to force the Chinese to change their personality by making them learn the Japanese language:

First, I will try to think from the standpoint of why it is necessary to make the Chinese learn Japanese...In order for China to become a fine nation in the construction of the New Order, remolding the personality which the present-day Chinese have is most fundamental, and for that reason, I think it is necessary to infuse in them the personality which present-day Japanese possess.108

He argues that regardless of whatever glories China may have had in the past -- and of whatever Japan may owe to Chinese civilization -- the Chinese character is presently maladapted to deal with the present-day international environment, while Japan has shown itself adaptable since the opening of the country and progressed toward fully-developed nationhood. Since the Chinese personality is “retgressive” (*taikateki* 退化的), it is necessary, writes Matsumiya, to make the Chinese possess Japanese personalities through the study of the Japanese language, which is “the expression of (Japan’s) thought and culture (*shisō bunka* 思想文化) and comprehensively expresses the nation’s life force (*seimei ryoku* 生命力) and productive power (*seisan ryoku* 生産力).”109

Other writers also speak of the Japanese language as a medium for the Japanese culture. Ōnishi Masao in his 1943 article “The Language Policy Toward the Southern Regions,” argues that since it is difficult to make people learn something new and even more difficult to make them forget what they have already learned, rather than try to make adults in Southeast Asia forget Western languages and learn Japanese, it

109 Ibid., 105-106.
would be more effective to “teach the local children the Japanese language and the
Japanese spirit.”\textsuperscript{110} He also says that as the Japanese language advances, the peoples
of Southeast Asia encounter “the Japanese spirit” and that

when they have been able to realize how much more brilliantly shines the
Princely Way under (the principle) of ‘all the corners of the world under one roof’
(hakkō ichiū 八紘一宇), Japanese language education will have succeeded.

We must firmly resolve that the true nature of Japanese propaganda is
nothing but this.\textsuperscript{111}

With regards to the Philippines, the philosopher Miki Kiyoshi also argued that it was
necessary to spread Japanese there in order to spread Japanese culture.\textsuperscript{112}

Yet while these writings display an extreme confidence in the value of the
Japanese language and culture and the benevolence of spreading it to others, many of
the writers were not confident about the readiness of the Japanese language to go
abroad. More than one writer argued the need to standardize and clean up the
language, decrying the disarray and lack of consistency. We have already seen how
Amano Hideo feared that a Japanese that was not standardized would, like Mongolian
and Manchurian, be overtaken by some more powerful language. Citing other authors,
he also notes that since Japan is spreading beyond Japan’s borders, Japanese are
becoming more aware of the need to standardize the language.\textsuperscript{113} In a 1943 Kotoba
article, the Japanese-language scholar Hoshina Kōichi says that the Japanese that will
become the common language of Asia must be “the most pure and elegant” form of the

\textsuperscript{110} Ōnishi, “Nanpō ni taisuru gengo seisaku,” 35.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 36-37.
\textsuperscript{112} Miki Kiyoshi 三木清, “Hitō no gengo mondai to Nihongo” 比島の言語問題と日本語 [The Philippines’
language problem and Japanese], Nihongo 日本語 3, no. 5 (May 1943): 8.
\textsuperscript{113} Amano, “Kokugo mondai geppyō,” 23.
Citing French as an example of a language which gained in currency and prestige because compared to the other languages of Europe it was the most “pure and elegant,” Kōichi says that Japanese must have clear standards in such things as word usage and pronunciation so that it is easier for foreigners to learn. However, present-day Japanese is far from this ideal because people mix standard Japanese (hyōjungo 標準語) and dialects, and there are no clear rules for pronunciation, word usage, kana usage, kanji, etc. and so therefore foreigners are unsure of what to imitate.\(^{115}\)

Tsurumi, in his article about creating a Rhodes scholarship for Japan, also says that in order to make Japanese into an international language it is necessary to correct its deficiencies, especially the confusion (konran 混乱) that besets the language. Among the things that he cites as examples of confusion are the inconsistent pronunciation of kanji, the incorrect use of loan words from Western languages, and the mixing of foreign and native grammar to form confusing sentences. Although he is not alarmist about this kind of confusion, seeing it as an indicator that the language is still changing and developing, he says that “To make Japanese in its current state of confusion into a world language would be dangerous.”\(^{116}\) Like Hoshina, he also criticizes the dialectal variation in Japanese. He says that no two people can pronounce the five Japanese vowels, “a,i,u,e,o” in the same way, and that he could not understand people in Kagoshima or even in the Tōhoku region where he was going to stand for election.\(^{117}\)

The confusion of the situation leads him to ask “If a language in which fellow speakers

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\(^{114}\) Hoshina Kōichi 保科孝一, “Daitōa kyōeiken no kensetsu to kokugo seisaku” 大東亜共栄圏の建設と国語政策 [The Construction of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and national language (Japanese) policy], *Kotoba コトバ* 4, no. 2 (1943): 7.

\(^{115}\) Ibid., 7-8.

\(^{116}\) Tsurumi, “Daisensō to Nippongo no sekaiteki shinshutsu,” 6-7.

\(^{117}\) Ibid., 7.
do not understand each other were taught to foreigners, what would happen?“118 He concludes that the only way to improve the situation is for Japanese to “toss out their hometown pride.”119

In “The language problem of the Philippines and Japanese,” Miki Kiyoshi talks about the problem of variation in Japanese. At the end of the article, he writes that the teaching of Japanese to Filipinos is not the role only of specialized teachers but the responsibility of all Japanese present in the Philippines. In this way, he writes, “The problem of Japanese overseas (gaichi 外地) can be understood as the problem of Japanese in the homeland (naichi 内地)” because the way native Japanese speak affects the kind of Japanese that other Asians such as Filipinos imitate. Thus, “in practice, by looking at what kind of Japanese the local people of one place use, it is possible to figure out the home region of the Japanese soldiers stationed there.”120 He then argues that Japanese in the home islands need to be more reflective about the Japanese they use, especially their spoken language which is comparatively neglected compared to written language. This is important because “in order to spread excellent (rippana 立派な) Japanese overseas, it is necessary for the Japanese which the general population uses at home to become excellent.”121 One sees in Miki’s recommendations the totalizing tendencies of the war in general. Just as the whole population was called to service in other aspects of the war effort, Miki called on them to also do their part in the project of propagating Japanese abroad. One also sees in Miki’s, as well as Tsurumi’s, writing the suggestion that although Japan was expanding its power abroad,

118 Ibid., 7.
119 Ibid., 7.
120 Miki, “Hitō no gengo mondai to Nihongo”, 11.
121 Ibid., 11.
the project of creating a homogeneous nation at home was not yet complete, for there was dialectal variation and not all Japanese were speaking an elegant, standardized Japanese. As much as many of these writers emphasized the link between language and identity, the type of identity they favored was a national, not a regional one. Though Tsurumi argued that language embodied the special characteristics of a people, he was not above chastising people for clinging to their “hometown pride.” This preoccupation with national over the regional also affected attitudes towards the non-Japanese languages in Asia.

If it is not clear already, there is a contradictory quality in the rhetoric about Japanese as a common language and the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. While the writers in the educational magazines portrayed Japan as a liberator of Asia, there writing is also suffused with a kind of arrogance. There is an assumption of Japan’s superiority to the other Asian countries, while the project to make others speak a foreign language is difficult to distinguish from the colonial projects of the Europeans and Americans. As seen, Saitō Kiyoe acknowledged the link between power and getting others to learn one’s language. In other cases there is tension in the writings between the anti-colonialist rhetoric and the assumption of Japanese superiority. For example, Sakuma Kanae says that “one cannot say that the various peoples of East Asia are advanced culturally”\textsuperscript{122}, in “The Public-Use Language of Greater East Asia,” Yagi Hideo does not want Japan to set a bad example for other Asian countries by revering the

\textsuperscript{122} Sakuma Kanae 佐久間鼎, “Daitōa kyōtsugo toshite no Nippongo” [Japanese as the common language for Greater East Asia], \textit{Kokugo bunka} 国語文化 (April 1942): 3.
West, but this is because such behavior will make it impossible to establish “cultural control (bunkateki shihai 文化的支配) centered on the Japanese language.”

However, these writers and other ideologues tried rhetorically to distinguish Japan from Western colonial powers and present the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as different from the exploitative empires of the past. One way was through the very emphasis on culture. Tsurumi, for example, distinguishes the old order as one ruled by “force” (buryoku 武力) from the new order of the GEACPS, ruled through “culture” (bunka 文化). Consequently, language is important to the new order because it “generates the content of culture.” Ōnishi Masao urges in another article that efforts to spread Japanese accompany humanitarian and relief efforts. An emphasis on culture, rather than on violence, would (at least it was hoped) distinguish Japan from its Western counterparts.

The other way Japanese propagandists sought to differentiate Japan from the West was through the treatment of other Asian languages (and nations). In the 1943 Kokugo bunka article, “The Language Policy Towards the Southern Regions,” Ōnishi Masao begins by declaring that the Japanese language will not replace the local languages of Southeast Asia, although “it is not that there aren’t people who have drawn that hasty conclusion.” To refute this assumption Ōnishi quotes Prime Minister Tōjō’s declaration that “We will allow each country to have its own place.” As he does in “The Co-Prosperity Sphere and Language Policy,” Ōnishi asserts that language is

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125 Ibid., 3.
128 Ibid., 31. The original Japanese is "各国おのおのその處を得しめる."
intertwined with the spirit, so suppressing the native languages of the various peoples of Asia would only incur their wrath. Therefore, the policy of Japan is to respect the languages of the other peoples within the GEACPS.129

However, Ônishi quickly adds the caveat that “Respecting the local languages by no means equals accepting them in their current state (ari no mama 在りのまま) and leaving them as they are.” Rather, he says that it is incumbent on the Japanese to establish education systems based on the local languages and to remedy the “state of division of their ancestral languages.”130 Ônishi cites both India and Indonesia as cases where a country’s ancestral language has been hopelessly rent into hundreds of divisions. In particular, he blames the circumstances of India on the policy of the British to “divide and rule” (bunkatsu tōchi 分割統治). These divisions, he says, are the reason that both countries have failed to progress in education.131 Ônishi adds that the GEACPS can only be as strong as its individual components, so it is the responsibility of Japan to awaken patriotism within each member nation. Language is a key part to stoking the fire of patriotism: “It goes without saying that love for one’s ancestral country (sokoku ai 祖国愛) is directly tied to love for one’s ancestral language (sokokugo ai 祖国語愛). As an example of a nation that brims with patriotism and reverence for its own language, Ônishi cites Thailand, the only independent nation of Southeast Asia.132 He makes similar arguments in “The Co-Prosperity Sphere and Language Policy,” saying that countries which revere their ancestral language can be strong members of

129 Ibid., 31.
130 Ibid., 31.
131 Ibid., 32-33.
132 Ibid., 33.
the GEACPS.\textsuperscript{133} It will be remembered that this is the article in which he describes a
great antinomy which exists between unity and separation. The language policy of the
GEACPS was supposed to resolve this by allowing each country to have its own
ancestral language while fostering mutual interdependence and unity through a
common language (which is of course Japanese).\textsuperscript{134}

Based on his arguments, it seems that Ōnishi conceives of language in national
terms: one nation, one language. There does not seem to be room for regional
languages or multiple ethnic groups with their own languages dwelling within the same
nation. He sees the situation in India as so abnormal that he blames it on outside
colonial meddling. It is interesting that his views toward other Asian nations are similar
to the views of the other writers toward Japan itself. While these writers promoted
language as representing “a people” they wanted the language, and the culture, of
Japan to be uniform. They had no room for regional variation; such variation reflected
poorly on the nation itself. It appears that Japanese writers like Ōnishi projected a
preoccupation with national unity onto the other Asian countries that would comprise the
GEACPS.

As stated in the previous chapter, the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere
was something of a chimera: a project of imperial, and often brutal, expansion which
purported to be anti-colonial and an empire which stoked nationalism within its
boundaries in order to strengthen its foundation. The language policy reflected the
philosophical conception of the geo-political entity: each member nation would have its
own language but all would be bound together by the language of the \emph{meishu}, Japan. At

\textsuperscript{133} Ōnishi, “Kyōeiken to gengo seisaku,” 25.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 25.
the same time, Japanese propagandists tried to distinguish this geo-political entity from other empires as one ruled by culture rather than by force, and language played an important part in symbolizing cultural rule. In this way, Japan could strive to dominate while concealing this intention -- at least from itself. The campaign to spread the Japanese language world-wide also reflected Japan’s national aspirations. Those who wrote about Japanese as a lingua franca equated the spread of a language with the spread of a country’s power and influence and hoped that as Japanese advanced, the Japanese nation would gain the kind of power that Britain and the United States had exerted while at the same time overcoming feelings of subordination, both cultural and linguistic, toward those countries. At the same time, as writers argued over the need to standardize Japanese and curb the influence of dialects, they suggested that as the Japanese strove to internationalize the language, they had yet to complete the project of nationalizing it. In short, the discussions of language reflected the new kind of empire Japan sought to create as well as the ambitions and anxieties of the nation at the time.
CHAPTER 3

JAPANESE AND TAGALOG AS “OFFICIAL LANGUAGES” IN THE OCCUPIED PHILIPPINES

The Philippines was one of the first targets of the Pacific War, for the Japanese began their invasion of the islands right on the heels of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Manila was declared an open city, essentially leaving it undefended, while American and Philippine forces retreated to Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island. General MacArthur then retreated to Australia, along with the Commonwealth president Manuel Quezon and his vice-president, Sergio Osmeña, who would establish a government-in-exile. The Japanese defeated the American and Philippine forces on Bataan on April 9, 1942 as well as the last holdouts on Corregidor under Lieutenant General Jonathan Wainwright the following month.\textsuperscript{135}

In January, the Philippine Executive Commission, the first Philippine government under Japanese auspices was established.\textsuperscript{136} Prior to his departure from the Philippines, Quezon made Jorge B. Vargas “Mayor of Greater Manila,” essentially leaving him in charge of the government in the Philippines, and it was Vargas whom the Japanese would designate as the chief executive of the new government.\textsuperscript{137} Within a few years, the Japanese granted the Philippines a nominal independence. Jose P. Laurel was elected president of the new government and an independent Republic of the Philippines was officially proclaimed on October 14, 1943.\textsuperscript{138}


\textsuperscript{136} Agoncillo, \textit{The Fateful Years: Volume 1}, 326-328.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 305; 326.

\textsuperscript{138} Francia, \textit{A History of the Philippines}, 182.
Before their hold on the archipelago was even completely consolidated, the occupying Japanese immediately set about remaking Philippine society. The Japanese Military Administration took measures to control the dissemination of information and propagate its desired ideology. Printing without a permit was not allowed; mimeographing machines had to be registered; those owning radios were required to have them modified, and Filipinos were permitted to listen only to Japanese stations and the Japanese-controlled KZRH. All newspapers, except for those controlled by the Roces family, were shut down. The Roces publications were the English-language, *Tribune*, which eventually became the de facto official newspaper of the Japanese occupation, the Spanish language *La Vanguardia*, and the Tagalog-language *Taliba*. The popular Tagalog-language weekly magazine, *Liwayway*, was also allowed to continue under the occupation. All of these publications were eventually placed under the management of the *Manila Shinbun-sha* (Manila Newspaper Company) which itself was managed by the *Osaka Mainichi* and the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi* newspaper companies. Other notable publications included the women’s magazine *Filipina*, the youth magazine *Pillars* which was sponsored by the New Philippines Cultural Institute, an organization for training Filipino youth in Japanese and “Asian” ideals, and *Philippine Review*, which the historian and contemporary observer of the Japanese occupation Teodoro Agoncillo describes as the “most intellectual” of all the occupation publications.140

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139 Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Volume 1*, 347.

The Japanese also consolidated their hold over the political life of the Philippines by dissolving all political parties on December 4, 1942, and combining them into a single organization, the Association for Service to the New Philippines -- known by its Tagalog name, Kapisanan sa Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas, or Kalibapi. Benigno S. Aquino, at first the Commissioner of the Interior in the Executive Commission, was chosen to head the organization. The organization was devoted to spreading “oriental virtues” and remaking the Philippines as a member of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. As Agoncillo states, “The Association was supposed to be non-partisan, but its duties were such as to edify and promote Japan’s war efforts.”

Unsurprisingly, the Japanese Military Administration also reorganized the Philippine education system in order to diffuse its ideology among the Filipinos. Agoncillo points out that the Japanese viewed education as an essential pillar in their occupation strategy: “The Japanese military authorities knew that while victory in arms was necessary to destroy the will of their enemy, it was equally vital for them to reorient the thinking of the Filipinos in such a way as to uproot all democratic ideas and thereby capture their minds in the interest of Japan’s war politics.” The youth, in particular, were a target of the propaganda campaign, and Agoncillo points out that the ideology of the GEACPS was propagated first in elementary schools in order to influence the “pliant” minds of young people. Agoncillo’s assessment of Japanese strategy is compelling when one compares it to some remarks made by Ōnishi Masao in an article appearing in the Japanese education magazine Kokugo Bunka. Writing on how to spread Japanese among Southeast Asian peoples, he says that “…rather than remove the

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142 Ibid., 426; 428.
white languages and the accompanying spirit of dependency from the indigenous adults, it would be much quicker to teach *Nippongo* and the Japanese spirit to the local children.”

Language policy became an important part of the Japanese propaganda campaign. On February 17, 1942, the Japanese military administration issued a military order to the Philippine Executive Commission, establishing the six principles of the new education system, one of which was “To strive for the diffusion of the Japanese language in the Philippines and to terminate the use of English in due course.”

Appended to this was a note that “In order to popularize the Philippine National Language, Tagalog, proper means should be taken as early as possible, after a study by the Institute of National Language in the Department of Education, Health and Public Welfare,” though Agoncillo notes that this was “obviously for propaganda purposes.”

Five months later, Military Ordinance No. 13 declared Japanese and Tagalog to be official languages of the Philippines -- although the provisional use of English was allowed. After the Philippines was given its phony independence, the constitution of the new republic stipulated in “Article IX -- General Provisions” that “The government shall take steps toward the development and propagation of Tagalog as the national language.”

In his commentary on the constitution, the Republic’s new president, Jose Laurel, declared this to be one of the most important parts of this

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143 Ônishi, 35.
144 Quoted in Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Volume 1*, 427.
146 Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Volume 1*, 427.
147 Ibid., 79.
Over the course of the occupation, the various periodicals mentioned above such as the *Tribune* and *Philippine Review* featured numerous articles discussing both Tagalog and Japanese, and there were events and observances such as “Nippongo Week” and “Filipino Language Week” devoted to the promotion of Japanese and Tagalog respectively.

All of the attention given to language in the occupied Philippines was part of a general ideological atmosphere that called for a complete cultural overhaul of the Philippines and Filipinos. Phrases like “New Philippines,” “New Order,” and “New Situation” appear frequently in the periodicals of the time. In fact, during the 1942 “Nippongo Week” there was a contest for the best slogan encouraging people to study Japanese; the second-place slogan appearing in *The Tribune* on August 23, 1942 was: “Master Nippongo and you master the new situation.” The Philippines was to be reconstructed along Asian or “Oriental” lines. In the March 1943 issue of *Philippine Review*, an article appears by Claro Recto, a Filipino politician who at the time of the Japanese occupation was the Commissioner of Education, Health and Public Welfare within the Japanese-sponsored Philippine Executive Commission, as well as the president of the Nippon-Philippine Cultural Association. In the article, he notes approvingly that in January 1942 the commander of the Japanese Imperial Forces during the invasion of the Philippines, Lieutenant-General Homma Masaharu, gave a

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151 *Philippine Review*, March 1943, inside cover.
speech encouraging Filipinos to rediscover themselves as Asians. Recto cites the general’s words:

In the reconstruction of the new Philippines...the first step must necessarily be the laying of the spiritual foundation which is the vital nucleus of culture, and around which politics, economy, industry, and education are based...Arouse yourselves!...The time has come to assert yourselves as an Oriental people and to gain for yourselves, in company with other kindred races having geographical affinity, your proper place in the universal order of things. The times strongly call for a great spiritual revolution.152

Recto adds that “Filipino intellectuals responded to the call of their nation’s need -- the recasting of their culture with a view to reinvigorating their Oriental characteristics.”153

In that same issue, Benigno S. Aquino speaks of Japan’s relationship to the Philippines as like that between the sun and an orbiting planet; in other words, Japan was to be a cultural guiding light for the Philippines. He recommends that schools, radio and television propaganda, art exhibits, rallies, etc. be used to spread Oriental culture throughout the Philippines and also expresses gratitude to Japan for guiding Filipinos back to their Oriental roots.154

Japan was to be the ideal model for what it meant to be Asian. In Pillars, the head of the New Cultural Institute, Lieutenant Mochizuki Shigenobu, writes that although India and China had once been great civilizations, they could not serve as guides for the Philippines’ cultural rejuvenation project because their former glory had faded. By contrast, Japan had taken from the best of all civilizations and so the “Japanese Spirit” represented “the essence and synthesis of the Oriental Spirit.” Paradoxically, he urges Filipinos to find “the eternal foundation of the Philippines in the

Philippines itself by studying and absorbing the civilization of Japan.” Because Japan was praised for incorporating elements of other civilizations, including from the West, Japanese and Filipino writers of the time did not categorically denounce Western civilization or seek to obliterate everything Western from Philippine culture. Rather, Japan was held up as a model of an Asian nation which modernized and borrowed from the West without compromising its core self. The Philippines was presented contrastingly as an Asian nation which somewhere along the line lost its way and was overwhelmed by Spanish and American culture. Thus Recto argues that while contact with the West was beneficial for the Philippines in some cases, in many instances it had a baleful influence, while Aquino says that the Filipinos were to the Japanese like “a long-deluded younger brother.” Another editorial, “Our Cultural Reorientation,” states that Japan’s cultural borrowings have been “completely digested” rather than “copied or imitated,” but in the case of the Philippines, “…it is natural for many Japanese, and even many Filipinos who feel some humiliation in the deficiency to view Philippine culture as it is today with misgiving.” The writer concludes that the new relationship with Japan would spur the Philippines to digest various cultural influences and develop a culture of its own. Similarly, Mochizuki for his part writes that “Japan once devoted herself to the study of the Chinese, Indian, and even western civilizations, but she never forgot to develop and create her own.” He urges the Filipinos to follow suit and not be “mere imitators of the Japanese civilization” but develop their own culture. Interestingly, he recommends that Philippine officials invite experts from Japan to assist them in this

endeavor. This bears a striking resemblance to the Japan of the Meiji era, which was inviting scholars and experts from the West to assist in its own modernization project.\textsuperscript{159} One senses that enthusiasts for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, such as Mochizuki, longed for Japan to be a center of influence in its own right, with countries like the Philippines looking to it as Japan itself had looked to the West and China in previous generations.

Keeping in tune with the trend of calling for the “re-Orientalization” of the Philippines, Japanese and Filipino propagandists called for Filipinos to identify with Asia, in particular, the new entity which was the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The GEACPS was often discussed as an economic unit as exemplified by one quotation from \textit{Philippine Review}: “The very designation, \textit{Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere}, indicates that economic matters make up the basic features of the new order. The main spherical objective is co-prosperity; therefore, the basic spherical task is economics.”\textsuperscript{160} But in spite of this hard-nosed view, the GEACPS was also a cultural project and was presented as such. This can be seen for example in the ads for the Nippai Publishing Company which are scattered in the periodicals of the time and state that “...the ‘Nippai’ plays an important role in creating a culture peculiar to Greater East Asia.”\textsuperscript{161} Language was also to play a role in producing this transnational culture. While the Japanese language was to be a lingua franca, one Japanese author argues that simple communication was not enough. He notes there were some efforts to make a basic Japanese that would be easier to learn and understand but argues that the goals of spreading Japanese went beyond mere communication: “But since the \textit{leitmotif}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{159} Shigenobu, “Foundation of the Republic of the Philippines,” 15.
\bibitem{160} “In this Issue...”, \textit{Philippine Review}. August 1943, 1.
\bibitem{161} See for example \textit{Pillars}, March 1944, inside cover.
\end{thebibliography}
of establishing a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere aims at, among other things, educating the people of each unit, so that they will be qualified in promoting a Greater East Asia culture, it is desirable that such a basic language should have wider scopes [sic]. For that reason, a modified Japanese language, simple and yet expressive, proper to Greater East Asia shall have to be developed."162

Since, as we have seen, language was conceived as not just a means of communication but also as a vehicle for culture, it is not surprising that Nippongo was to play a role in producing “Orientalized” Filipinos who identified with Greater East Asia. By studying and speaking Japanese, Filipinos were to imbibe Japanese and Oriental values (the two seem to have often been conflated). Thus one article by a Filipina teacher of Japanese is aptly entitled “Nippongo Opened a New World to Me,”163 while in an article entitled “Nippongo and the Japanese Spirit,” Kume Iwao describes how one can discern the characteristics of a people by examining their language: “...through the language of a nation we can discover her national traits.”164 Some of these qualities include sincerity, harmony, and subordination of the individual self to the nation. He further urges those who study Japanese to find within it “those admirable qualities of the Yamato people which are worth adopting and propagating.”165

It may seem that Japanese propagandists exclusively promoted their own language and culture, and certainly some Filipinos saw it that way. A Filipino diarist, Marcial P. Lichauco, complains in one entry about the pervasiveness of Japanese in the occupied Philippines:

165 Ibid., 30.
Although we are supposed to have enjoyed the blessings of an independent Republic during the past 120 days, a Republic whose independence, so we were assured by the Japanese, would be lasting and real, nevertheless, and I say this in capital letters, NEVERTHELESS:

...The Japanese language continues to be a compulsory subject in all our schools, public and private, where, I might add, American history cannot be taught, nor, for that matter, any other subject which in any way reflects favorably on the Anglo-American race.

...If you pick up your telephone instrument today and dial the telephone or the electric or gas company, a charming Filipina girl will answer you. But she is required to speak in Japanese and only if you are unable to understand her will she switch over to Filipino or English.

Such is Philippine independence today, -- Japanese brand.166

But while Japanese culture and language were promoted, propaganda also emphasized the importance of promoting the culture of the Philippines as well as Tagalog, which was designated the national language. The basic idea behind this dual promotion of Japanese and Philippine culture is well summarized by a quotation from “the Chief of Staff, Imperial Japanese Forces in the Philippines,” appearing in Pillars:

It is not our intention to plant the Cherry Blossom in the Philippines...because it is not in line with Divine Providence. On the other hand, the Sampaguita will not live long in the cold, rigorous climate of Japan, because it was not intended for Japan by God...The fundamental spirit is: the Cherry Blossom should flourish in Japan, the Sampaguita in the Philippines, the Camelia in China, the Orchid in Manchukuo. It is not the policy of Japan to Japanize or monopolize but to help the Philippines grow and develop the Sampaguita into a great national flower.167

The cherry blossom and samapaguita are, of course, national symbols of Japan and the Philippines respectively. The image is one of various national cultures, each flourishing in its ideal environment and peculiar circumstances. As we saw with Ōnishi Masao’s articles in the previous chapter, Japanese propaganda tried to distinguish Japan from Western colonialists by presenting Japan as a promoter of various national cultures and languages.

166 Lichauco, “Dear Mother Putnam,” February 18, 1944, 150.
But as we also saw, Ōnishi -- who was writing for a Japanese audience -- emphasized that Japan could not leave the languages of other Asian nations simply “as they are.” These nations of Asia were conceived as works in progress, and national cultures -- and languages -- required active planning and development. Thus, Philippine Review printed an excerpt of a piece from the magazine Sakura in which the writer discusses the need for each national group within the GEACPS to “build up new, distinctive cultures.” Yet, they were also to be “thoroughly Asiatic.” Similar to other writers who criticized Filipinos for being too imitative, he also castigates the Filipinos for their “disguised culture” which is “neither a distinctive Philippine culture nor by any means an East Asiatic culture.”\(^\text{168}\) This echoes the propaganda examined earlier promoting a common Asian or “Oriental” culture. One gets the image of a union of nations each supposedly with a strong national culture, distinct and yet each one a variation of a broader shared culture. Thus, Filipinos were encouraged to have a dual identity as Asians and as Filipinos. This is exemplified in the realm of language in a speech by Jorge B. Vargas, chairman of the Philippine Executive Committee prior to the establishment of the Second Republic. In the speech, given to graduates of the “Nippongo Normal Institute” which was established to train Filipino teachers of Japanese, he states that “together with teachers of the Filipino language, teachers of Nippon-go [sic] are laying the foundations for an independent Philippines within the Co-Prosperity Sphere upon those two cornerstones of cultural unity: one language for the Philippines, the Filipino language, and one language for the Greater East Asia, Nippongo.”\(^\text{169}\)


\(^{169}\) Tribune (Manila), “Director-General Pays Tribute to Filipino Nippongo Teachers,” August 25, 1943.
Despite the claims of propaganda that the new regime intended to uplift the Philippines and the apparent cooperation of highly-place Filipinos, the Japanese occupation was overwhelmingly unpopular in the Philippines. Agoncillo emphasizes that innumerable acts of Japanese brutality negated any claims to supposed benevolence. At the hands of the occupying soldiers, Filipinos were subjected to beheading, rape, and bayonetting, as well as lesser indignities such as theft, slapping, and beating.170

Unsurprisingly, Filipinos were by-and-large resistant to Japanese propaganda. Agoncillo states that Filipinos “considered any attempt to persuade them to fathom their Oriental moorings as blasphemy,” and argues that because of decades of American influence, they would not be persuaded easily to give up democracy.171 Lichauco in one of his entries describes the lackluster reaction of a movie theater audience to a Japanese propaganda film, “Glory of the Orient”: “...the entire film was witnessed by them in complete silence. Not a single handclap interrupted the picture. Perhaps there were a handful of pro-Japanese Filipinos in the theatre, but, if so, they evidently did not dare make their presence known. The Propaganda Bureau may be working hard but they are just wasting a lot of film.”172

The repercussions for being sympathetic to the Japanese could be deadly. Lichauco relates the case of one Luis Flores, a Filipino who was fluent in Japanese because he had spent a significant amount of time in Japan. He was employed at the Bank of the Philippine Islands as an interpreter and helped the bank in its dealings with the Japanese Military Administration. In his July 17, 1943 entry, Lichauco writes: “Not

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170 Agoncillo, The Fateful Years: Volume 1, 340-341.
171 Ibid., 337-338. Agoncillo takes an admittedly benevolent view of the American colonization of the Philippines.
satisfied with those activities, however, Flores was well known for his outspokenness in championing the cause of Japan. A few days ago several men entered his house and hacked him to pieces with a ‘bolo.’”

Filipinos resisted in much less violent ways as well. Teachers required to carry out the “six basic principles of education” simply memorized them and left a copy of the principles on their desk in case any Japanese were observing instead of actively promoting the principles. It is also interesting that amidst propaganda that emphasized language -- especially the elegance of the Japanese language -- language could also become a site of resistance. Wordplay served as a means for Filipinos to criticize the Japanese occupation and doubtless also helped them preserve their sanity during a very violent, chaotic time. The Tagalog name for “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” was “Sama-samang Kasaganaan sa Lalong Malaking Silangang Asya,” but through a slight change in wording it became “Sama-samang Pagnanakawan sa Lalong Malaking Silangang Asya” or “Greater East Asia Robbery Sphere.” A Philippine-American article published in the immediate aftermath of the war relates how after a Filipino bowed to a sentry and greeted him with “ohaiyō,” his words “gave the inspiration to the compatriot who first said ‘Ohayup!’ as he bowed to a sentry. ‘Hayup’ is the vernacular equivalent of animal with its direct connotations.” The same article claims that when Japanese premier Tōjō Hideki visited the Philippines, some Filipinos who were required to greet the premier with shouts of “Banzai!” shouted “Bankay!” instead

174 Agoncillo, The Fateful Years: Volume 1, 428.
175 Ibid., 341.
176 The original article incorrectly transliterates this as “Ohayu.”
(bankay being the Tagalog word for “corpse”).\textsuperscript{177} For his part, Lichauco records how this kind of wordplay was directed at the great Japanese propaganda apparatus:

There is only one local radio station to which we can tune and it broadcasts nothing but the crudest form of propaganda, lessons in Japanese, Japanese music, speeches by pro-Japanese Filipinos and occasional dance music and operatic recordings \textsuperscript{[sic]}. The call letters of this station is PIAM -- and our local wits have lost no time in saying that these letters mean in Tagalog -- “Putang Ina Ang Maniwala” which, literally means in Tagalog “Whoever believes is a Son of a ..........” Which reminds me to tell you also that the letters making up the word DOMEI, or the Japanese news agency, which is our only source of information for world happenings today is supposed to mean, according to our town wits --

Department
Of
Most
Erroneous
Information\textsuperscript{178}

While so many Filipinos were un receptive to Japanese propaganda, as we have seen, Filipinos were also themselves producers of propaganda. The question of Philippine collaboration with the Japanese is not a simple one. While there did exist unambiguously pro-Japanese Filipinos, the case is different for the elites who actually held power. Several sources relate how before evacuating the Philippines, the Commonwealth president, Manuel Quezon, specifically asked several of his officials to stay behind and maintain order and protect the people while he was away. He continued to defend men such as Jorge Vargas and Jose Laurel even after they became members of the Japanese-sponsored government. In particular, Laurel, the eventual president of the puppet government, is reported to have initially expressed

dismay at the prospect of working with the Japanese.\textsuperscript{179} Agoncillo argues that the cooperation rendered by government officials was half-hearted and the numerous pro-Japanese statements issued by them were not in earnest. Alluding to \textit{Noli Me Tangere}, Jose Rizal’s classic satire of Spanish colonialism, Agoncillo writes that the officials followed the advice of Tasio, one of the novel’s characters: “To stoop as the bullet passes is not cowardly -- it is worse to defy it only to fall, never to rise again.”\textsuperscript{180} Claro Recto, a particularly adroit speaker, was supposed to have even issued statements with double-meanings on occasion. When Tagalog and Japanese were made official languages, he praised the move as making “effective the teaching and the diffusion of two necessary languages in the islands.” While a genuine enthusiast for Tagalog, the word “necessary” was meant to imply that Filipinos were forced by the circumstances to learn Japanese.\textsuperscript{181}

Nevertheless, just because there was resistance even among the politicians who cooperated with the Japanese, this does not mean that all elements of Japanese propaganda, including that dealing with language, were completely rejected. For example, the decision to make Tagalog a national language was greeted with praise from several quarters. Moreover, several intellectual Filipinos had been engaged in soul-searching from before the war about the erosion of Filipino spirituality by materialism and the unmooring of the Philippines from its Oriental roots. Several of these intellectuals “knew in their hearts that the Japanese had a strong point in flaying the Filipino’s role of ‘sedulous apes.’” While most Filipinos may have rejected the


\textsuperscript{180} Agoncillo, \textit{The Fateful Years: Volume 1}, 374-345; 866-867.

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., 348.
messenger, and the uses to which the message was put, they did not reject the message itself. As Agoncillo reminds us, “it is in this context that the essays on Oriental virtues and simplicity were written and published by some Filipinos during the Japanese occupation.”

Therefore, while we cannot take the speeches of Filipino politicians or the articles in magazines such as *Philippine Review* completely at face value, within the confines imposed by the Japanese occupation, Filipinos engaged in an earnest discussion of Filipino identity. Language was discussed as an element of nation-building as well as a source of cultural authenticity. This is especially clear in the pages of *Philippine Review*, which, while it featured pro-Japanese propaganda, also had numerous articles about a national language for the Philippines which taken together appear as a real debate rather than as simplistic propaganda. Even though many were in agreement about the need for a national language, the way in which language reflected the nation or constituted national or ethnic authenticity was far from self-evident.

Even among the advocates of Tagalog as the national language, there was disagreement about what constituted “authentic” Tagalog. From back-and-forth articles and letters in the *Review*, we can glean the fact that there was a faction dedicated to cleansing Tagalog of all foreign influence and substituting “pure” -- albeit artificially contrived -- Tagalog constructions for loan words from other languages such as Spanish and English. The issue of “pure” Tagalog first crops up in an article entitled “The Dilemma of the National Language” by Teodoro Agoncillo. He begins his article by

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182 Ibid., 444-449.
183 As the reader has no doubt noticed, Agoncillo’s *The Fateful Years* is one of the major secondary sources for this paper. However, he was also an employee of the Institute of National Language during the Japanese occupation. See *Philippine Review* July 1943 Inside Cover.
stating that when he attempted to read a Tagalog translation of a speech to the Kalibapi by Benigno S. Aquino, the organization’s then director-general, he could not understand it in spite of the fact that he was a native speaker! In the rest of the article, he laments the continuing lack of standardization in Tagalog in areas such as orthography and vocabulary and blames this on three schools of thought competing to be the authorities on the language. The first two schools were represented by Carlos Ronquillo and Lope K. Santos respectively and differed on matters of spelling and the degree to which foreign words should be incorporated into the language. The third school was an extremely nationalistic group represented by Jose N. Sevilla and Guillermo E. Tolentino who advocated a radically pure Tagalog. One of the goals of this faction was to eliminate words of foreign origin and replace them instead with words constructed out of native Tagalog elements, so for example, “tahisip” would replace the loanword “pilosopya.”

Agoncillo lambasts such practices, claiming that far from representing a return to a pure or natural Tagalog, forcefully creating new words was an artificial imposition on the language. He compares such unnatural language to several constructed languages that were then in vogue: “I fear that if all our writers follow Mr. Sevilla’s nationalistic credo, Tagalog will not be the upshot but a language that is unknown and unintelligible, a language that is worse than Esperanto, Idiom Neutral, Interlingua, Nov-Esperanto, Arulo, Occidental, Ido, Ro and Volapuk. Perhaps everybody is aware that language is not made, but on the contrary, allowed to grow in accordance with its nature and

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185 Ibid., 16.
character.” ¹⁸⁶ Citing several authorities, Agoncillo argues that language is an organic thing which naturally changes over time. He argues that language resists the impositions of self-proclaimed authorities, quoting a scholar of Sanskrit, William Dwight Whitney, to say that language “depends upon general consent, which can be won only for such modifications and extensions as are in accordance with its already established rules...Individual authority...is too weak to force itself upon public opinion” (ellipses in original).¹⁸⁷ For Agoncillo, far from representing the true spirit of the language, the policies of purists threatened the very existence of the language itself: “To allow the operation of a strictly nationalistic creed in language is to cripple it, and, in the words of Havelock Ellis, ‘It can only make for ossification, for ankylosis, for petrification, all the milestones on the road to death.’”¹⁸⁸

There are further references to such language purists in later articles of the Philippine Review. A biopic of Jose Laurel mentions his clash with what the article refers to as “Tagalistas who for some time had been advocating the acceptance of a language of their own devising, a language which, when printed, they themselves had found hard and now much harder to understand.”¹⁸⁹ Curiously, the article cites Laurel as arguing that in fact, “language is not an indispensable force in the creation of national unity, although it is ‘a binding force of utmost importance.’”¹⁹⁰ Moreover, he argued that “it is not language, but ‘the names of our national heroes’ that ‘embody the character and the ideals of our country.’ It is not language but their ‘achievements and valiant deeds’ that have ‘welded into union the component elements of the Filipino people,’ and will always

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 18.
¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 18.
¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 18.
¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 4.
‘keep aflame the sacred fire of Filipino nationality,’ a nationality ‘born of heroic sufferings under the misguided rule of Spain.”’\textsuperscript{191} However, this runs against the trend of the other articles in the magazine, as well as many other statements by Laurel himself, which emphasize the importance of creating a common national language.

The December issue of the \textit{Review} is replete with allusions to purists or \textit{Tagalistas}, presumably the school of thought represented by Sevilla and Tolentino. An article about the Tagalog translation of the constitution for the Second Republic notes that writers had been confused about what words to use as equivalents for various English terms such as “transportation” or “public utility.” However, Executive Order Number 126 of the Philippine Executive Commission established authoritatively Tagalog equivalents for various words. The writer actually praises the translation to the extent that it makes liberal use of foreign loanwords from English and Spanish which he calls “the shortcut to the completeness of Tagalog.”\textsuperscript{192} But he also notes a number of instances in which the writers of the translation ignored the executive order of their own government and used words which differed from its prescriptions. For example, instead of using “Kawanihan ng Serbisyo Sibil” for Civil Service, they opted for “Kawanihan ng Paglilingkod sa Pamahalaan” (note the Spanish-derived “Serbisyo Sibil in the Executive Commission’s prescription).\textsuperscript{193} This earns his ire, and he criticizes the “all-too-common tendency on the part of some Tagalog-language advocates to stand uncompromisingly on their puristic ideas regardless of the exigencies of current needs.”\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid., 4.  
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid., 50.  
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., 51.
Another article in that issue, “The National Language has no Dilemma,” is basically a rebuttal to Agoncillo’s article and downplays the controversy among various pundits of the language, as well as the influence of the purists. With regard to the purists specifically, the author argues that propagating the language ought to take priority over purifying it. In any case, he claims that the purists really do not represent nearly the threat that Agoncillo makes them out to be; rather, the general public as the final arbiters are intelligent enough to determine which words should remain in the language and which should not.195

While De Leon downplays the influence of the Tagalistas, in the same issue a letter to the editor from a certain Meneleo D. Pernardez downplays even their numbers. First arguing that those who dissent from the National Institute of Language should keep in mind that “the end in view is not the perfection of the Tagalog language but the perfection of a National Language which is truly our own, be it purely the Tagalog dialect or a combination of our leading native tongues amalgamated into one,” the writer goes on to say that there never really were that many Tagalistas, only Jose N. Sevilla, his nephew Aurelio Alvero (the same Alvero who submitted a slogan for Nippongo Week) and the sculptor Guillermo Tolentino, who “cannot even be called a sad few, but more aptly, only one, two or three little drops in a bucket.”196

Whether or not the Tagalistas were limited to those three men, and regardless of the actual threat they posed to the language, they were visible enough to draw the attention of several different writers. Notions of language purity were widespread enough to influence the translation of the constitution, as one can see in the article that

196 Meneleo D. Pernardez, letter to the editor, Philippine Review, December 1943, 55.
criticizes the translators’ use of artificial-sounding Tagalog phrases. In any case, the search for purity provoked a discussion about what really was authentic to Tagalog. While Agoncillo and De Leon were at odds with each other, both seemed to agree that the language is a living thing, and that what is authentic to it is what arises from its daily use by the common mass of people. What shines through in these various articles is the idea that this, and not the abstract notions of intellectuals, is what was authentic. Clearly though, whether one fell on the side of the purists or not, there was an ongoing search for the soul of the language.

While the purity of Tagalog itself was an issue, Filipino writers also discussed how language authentically reflected the Filipino national or ethnic self and what language Filipinos should identify as their own. Although we have seen that there was anxiety among Filipinos about their imitation of the West, prior to the war a notion was developing that English could be a “Filipino” language as much as any indigenous to the islands. Well before the Japanese invaded the Philippines, an article in *Philippine Magazine* presented to Filipinos another, very different object of transnational identification: that of the English literary world. In the article “Philippine Letters Prospective,” the American author Palmer A. Hilty argues for the potential of Filipinos to contribute to the world of English letters. Saying that “despite the absence of all advanced culture traditions previously,” he asserts that “Filipinos have demonstrated sufficient energy and ability to make praiseworthy advance in adopting the highest type of contemporary civilization, although the process is by no means fully performed.”

He goes on to say that Philippine culture is a confluence of Asian, Spanish, and “Anglo-

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Saxon" elements. Believing that this admixture of cultures must inevitably “bear fruit” he asks “But will this be in English? Why not?”

Hilty argues that the American-established public education system, the language of instruction of which was English, had laid the foundation for Philippine English-language literary production. Therefore, English is not a foreign language in the Philippines: “At times, albeit rarely, one hears English called a foreign language in the Philippines. Granting the partial truth of this asseveration, a candid and informed person can hardly look you straight in the eye and maintain that a language that has for thirty years and more been the medium of instruction in public schools all over the Islands from the first grade on is a foreign tongue.” Nor is English an impediment to Filipino writers expressing their unique, Philippine culture. On the contrary, he argues that English is a medium enabling Filipino writers to give expression to their culture and enrich English literature overall through their unique contributions. Claiming that “Folk ways and customs and lore have been one of the great fountainheads and inspiration of letters,” he implores the Filipinos to look to their folk culture as a source of inspiration before it is too late. He also urges Filipino writers to be truthful in their portrayals of the Philippines, he says that they can draw from their own languages in pursuit of this goal and even use them to make their mark on the English language itself: “If to do that you find some needed word lacking in English, lift that calmly from your native language over into English, for omnivorous absorption is of the genius of English. Your task is to

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198 Ibid., 242.
199 Ibid., 242-243.
add a mite and perhaps a measure of enrichment to English while interpreting the
Philippine soul.”

And yet we see signs in Hilty’s articles that not all were as enthusiastic as he was
about the Philippines entering the English-speaking world. Hilty writes “Occasionally
one meets the statement, to me very startling, that Philippine productions in English
tend to destroy Filipino nationalism.” Hilty counters this by claiming that the use of
English did not hinder the nationalism of the United States which has maintained its
independence from England (a somewhat contentious statement in that the original
American colonists were from England and did not have their own languages in addition
to English) and that Filipino literary production in English would not affect the use of
local languages. Just as the Japanese had tried to lure the Filipinos into identification
with Asia through the Japanese language, prior to the war Americans were trying to
draw the Filipinos into identifying with a larger English-speaking world. According to this
conception, it was possible to be both an English speaker and an authentic Filipino at
the same time.

Yet many intellectuals did not feel the identification with English so
unproblematically. As Japanese denounced the English language, some Filipino
intellectuals agreed that there was something indeed foreign and alienating about the
language. In the *Philippine Review* article, “Return of the Native,” Narciso G. Reyes tells
how he stumbled upon a friend pushing his faculties to the utmost in order to produce
one sonnet in Tagalog. On his friend’s desk were “books which I thought were novels
but upon closer examination discovered to be textbooks and books of reference. I

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200 Ibid., 252.
201 Ibid., 243.
202 Ibid., 243.
counted half a dozen Tagalog grammars, two English-Tagalog dictionaries and three or four Tagalog vocabularies.” The emotional state of Reyes’s friend was deeply serious:

Although the weather was cool, my friend was stripped to the waist. His posture was defiant and aggressive; there was a belligerent gleam in his eyes. He looked like a warrior girded up for battle.

“I’m wrestling with the language,” he said, explaining the obvious. And, apologetically, he told me why...

He was an exile, he said, who has just come home to his native land. For years he had thought, dreamed, written and talked in an alien tongue and now that he is back among his own people, he finds that he cannot, as yet, speak his native idiom with the old fluency, grace and beauty. He is not sure of his accents; words long unused and half-forgotten come back to him slowly and with difficulty, like wounded birds...

This was his way of saying that, although born to the language, he had been estranged from Tagalog by his English schooling, by his use of English not only in his studies but also in his writings, and by his preference for English even in his converse, English being the language of the society in which he lived, moved and had, or thought he had, his being. He had so completely neglected his own language that for ten years past he had not read a single piece of Tagalog literature...

He had been an exile, then, but he had come home, impelled perhaps as much by nostalgia as by necessity. And now he was “wrestling” with his native language like any foreigner, trying to wrest from its baffling grip the priceless pearl of poetry.203

We see in Reyes’s friend someone trying to get out of the world of English letters which had separated him from his native language and from himself. English had apparently taken over even his friend’s thought processes, for his essays in Tagalog “were mere exercises in the language, worthless except perhaps as specimens of the tortures suffered by a mind ‘thinking in English and writing in Tagalog.’”204

According to the bio that attends the article, Reyes was a renowned Filipino writer in English (as well as a member of the press relations staff of the Foreign Ministry of the Japanese-sponsored regime) who had also undergone the same tribulations as...

204 Ibid., 19.
Both Reyes and his friend occupied a strange place in that they had a native’s facility with a language they had now come to see as foreign while at the same time, they struggled like foreigners with their native language. However, in the body of the article, Reyes’s friend declares that going back to the language is like returning to a place from childhood that one has almost forgotten; though one at first feels like a stranger, the old familiarity gradually returns until “there comes a moment when one feels at home at last, one with the people and secure in one’s possession of the heart and soul of the place...” This prompts Reyes to ask the question, “Do we, indeed, ever completely lose the finer essences of our native tongue, of the language which, as the Tagalogs say, we suckle from our mothers’ breasts? I think not.”

In the same issue, a companion article by another fiction writer in English, Juan Cabreros Laya, also outlines his efforts to switch to writing in Tagalog, equating the acquisition of the “national language” as a return to his true self. He starts his article with the declaration “Then, when the smoke of battle cleared, we were told to be ourselves, and alas, we did not know how. To me, as with others of my generation, it was as though in the thick of the fight, the one and only weapon I had learned to use for a living had been snatched away: as a writer I was articulate only in English.” Laya never states explicitly who told them to be themselves, but clearly this is a reference to the invading Japanese and their propaganda enjoining Filipinos to reclaim their heritage as Filipinos and as “Orientals.” As we saw in Hilty’s article, there were already stirrings of a nationalist movement which rejected the English language as foreign and sought to

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205 Ibid., 19.
206 Ibid., 20.
207 Ibid., 20.
reclaim what was truly “Filipino.” Therefore, Reyes’s sentiments have roots in the prewar era. But Laya reminds us that with the coming of the Japanese, these feelings were now given official sanction: Japanese propagandists denounced English as indeed being a foreign imposition and encouraged Filipinos to “be themselves” -- that is, a self which was indigenous, non-Western, and Asian. In addition to the Japanese language, Tagalog was declared the means by which Filipinos could reclaim their true selves. The tide had turned so much that writers in English, the kind of writers Hilty had hoped to encourage, were trying to put the language behind them. Almost as an answer to Hilty’s injunction, “Be truthful,” Laya says, “The most ordinary acts and attitudes seem different when expressed in Tagalog, and this continues to appear so until, at last getting attuned to the minor chord of the language, he is convinced that Tagalog writers are lucky to be using the only language eminently suitable for telling the truths about themselves and their people.”209

The interesting thing is that unlike Reyes, Laya was an Ilocano. While Reyes and his friends struggled to resurrect something which they had once had, in fact the native tongue which they never really lost, Laya’s efforts to be himself were directed at acquiring a new language, for his native tongue was not Tagalog but Ilocano. The language was his because it was the “national language,” it was something which belonged to him as a Filipino, but it was nevertheless something which had to be acquired. Laya details his odyssey in learning Tagalog, starting with reading easy material and working his way up to more difficult pieces. At the time of his writing, he still feels he has a long way to go: “After these early explorations in Tagalog literature, I

209 Ibid., 24.
realize the gap which I have to bridge from my English past to this Tagalog present.”\textsuperscript{210} And yet he does not exactly occupy the same space as Reyes and his friend. He is not trying to remember something he had forgotten -- he did not grow up speaking Tagalog. He is trying to lay claim to something which belongs to him not because it is his native language, but because it is his national language. And this shows the precariousness of ideas of authenticity when it comes to language. While something which was shared by educated Filipinos -- the English language -- was being marked off as foreign, as an alien imposition foisted on Filipinos through the American-run public education system, at the same time a language which they did not all necessarily share, Tagalog, was being invested with the status of an authentically Filipino medium of communication and thought.

The reason for promoting a national language was not simply to spread a language which was truly Filipino; it was also to unite the peoples of a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic country. Just as Japanese was meant to knit together the vast numbers of language and ethnic groups throughout Asia, on a national scale, Tagalog was supposed to bring together the peoples of the Philippines. The statistics on the number of languages in the Philippines varies, but during the war, the Japanese philosopher Miki Kiyoshi claimed that there were 87 “dialects” which were mutually unintelligible and that the Filipinos did not possess a common language.\textsuperscript{211} We have already seen that authors such Ōnishi Masao were dismayed by the linguistic diversity in countries like the Philippines and wanted to see each nation of the GEACPS united behind a standardized language.

\textsuperscript{210} Ibid., 21.
\textsuperscript{211} Miki, 4.
But with the selection of one language as the “national language,” what would
ultimately be the status of “dialects” in the Philippines? Could Filipinos who were not
native-speakers of Tagalog find authenticity in their own languages? There are not very
many articles in the Review which discuss the status of the non-Tagalog languages, but
Manuel C. Briones takes a surprisingly positive stance on them. In an October article
called “The Chief Dialects as a Vehicle of Popular Culture,” he argues that Filipinos
should place more value on the dialects. He first argues that “contrary to the general
belief, our basic or fundamental dialects are not so numerous as to make of the
Philippines a sort of Babel. Among the Christian population there are not above eight,
and I believe that among the non-Christians there cannot be more in number.”212
Briones does not contrast the dialects with a national language (he only mentions the
national language at the end); rather, referring to the dialects collectively as “the
vernacular,” he positions them against “foreign” language like Spanish and English.
Lamenting the backwardness of Philippine popular culture, Briones asserts that no
foreign language can take the place of the people’s vernacular language and quotes
Jose Rizal’s other well-known nationalistic novel, El Filibusterismo: “Language is the
thought of the people.”213 On the other hand, he says that foreign-language education,
especially the concerted effort under American colonialism to spread English throughout
the country, has not contributed to the development of popular culture. Instead, a gap
has opened up between an intellectual minority fluent in English and the rest of the
population who still function mainly in their native languages. The intellectuals who
could write for the masses and uplift them do not write in the native languages; books

1943, 22.
213 Ibid., 22.
continue to be published in English and Spanish, and yet hardly any great novels had been written even in those languages (Briones cites only Rizal’s two novels). The only way to get through to the masses is through the vernacular: “That is why I sincerely believe, that if we really want to educate the masses of the Philippines; to raise their intellectual level; to make of culture not a monopoly of a privileged few who have had the good fortune of going to school, college, or university, but the common heritage of the people; if we want to build a bridge of understanding between the popular masses and the intellectual minority that guides thought: to refine and lift up the former onto a higher level, the only way to do it is to build upon the vernacular.”

He compares his proposals to the efforts of a Danish bishop to develop Danish-language literature in the place of Latin and German-language literature, and so it is clear that he does not see the Philippine case as unique but rather as following in the footsteps of other nation-building projects. Summarizing his project with the phrase: “Dignify the dialects,” Briones mentions the national language only at the end: “Perhaps it will be asked, What of the plan to create a national language on the basis of the native dialects? Would not such a fostering of the dialects as is here suggested, hinder the realization of such a plan? I think not -- but that course, is another story.” Briones never wrote a follow-up article, and we never hear how his plan to “dignify the dialects” would not interfere with the promotion of a national language (or vice-versa).

In a much later issue, Lope K. Santos, director of the Institute of National Language, takes a far more hard-line stance with regards to the dialects vis-a-vis the

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214 Ibid., 22-23.
215 Ibid., 22.
216 Ibid., 23.
217 Ibid., 24.
218 Ibid., 24.
national language. In the second part of a piece entitled “Educational Problems in the New Regime,” Santos lists as one of the problems facing the regime the teaching of “the national language in the schools.” \(^{219}\) Santos claims that “in the long period of three and a half centuries of Spanish rule in the Philippines, the idea of a common national language was never thought or dreamed of by any one.” \(^{220}\) Even Rizal, though he had “not an ordinary love for, faith in, and high regard for, a native tongue” still could not conceive of a national language. This, Santos argues, was only natural because there was as yet no concept of a Philippine nation: “How could Rizal indeed have expressed the thought, when during that period the Filipino did not have any idea -- he was more generally known by the name \textit{indio, indigena}, -- even in the slightest degree of the term nation, more so of the concept of nationality, and even more so of independence or of a free country!” \(^{221}\) However, he insists that even in ancient times, Tagalog already had some inherent potential to be the national language: “From the earliest recorded times ecclesiastical and lay Spanish historians and other foreign writers who wrote about the Philippines, discovered the inherent richness of the Tagalog tongue, and the primacy of this language over all cognate languages in the Islands.” \(^{222}\) Thus, he insists on the superiority of Tagalog over other Philippine languages and on its suitability as the national language.

Moreover, Santos is less tolerant than Briones of pride in non-Tagalog languages or dialects. Santos mentions two aphorisms from the Philippine author and national hero Jose Rizal which appeared frequently in publications from the time, “He who does not

\(^{220}\) Ibid., 51.
\(^{221}\) Ibid., 51.
\(^{222}\) Ibid., 51.
love his tongue is worse than a beast and a foul fish,” and “Language is the thought of the people.” Yet Santos finds these problematic:

...if Rizal’s words were interpreted liberally, they would just arouse and enhance “regionalism” or each region to its tongue; for the Bisayans would be induced to take pride in their tongue to ultimately want its adoption as the common language for the whole country because they are in the majority; the Tagalogs would be for the Tagalog; the Ilokano for the Iloko; and the Pangasinans, Ibangans, Pampangans, Bikol and others would stick to their respective languages -- every region has the right to love its own tongue before loving that of others, for each tongue is the thought of every one, according to Rizal’s concept.223

Linguistic pride could only be taken so far. Like Ōnishi, Santos did not want the Philippines to be a confused mess of languages and dialects but rather a consolidated unit. While a national language would be useful for defining a Filipino national identity in opposition to America, English, and other markers of foreignness, if linguistic pride were taken to its logical conclusion, the result would be the unravelling of the very nation that Santos and others were trying to create.

The end of the war meant the collapse of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as well as the vision of a multi-national entity commanding a loyalty akin to nationalism. The GEACPS was an unusual entity; it was basically an empire -- and a very brutal and exploitative one. But to make it seem like a new kind of organization, something different from an empire, it was imagined almost like an empire of miniature nationalisms. Language was meant to be the glue that held it together, Japanese holding together the larger unit, and languages like Tagalog binding together the peoples of each nation. While much of the material examined in this paper has been propaganda, we can take the propagandists at their word when they assert that language is more than a tool of communication. It is a marker of identity and status, a

223 Ibid., 51.
way of asserting power, and a means for sorting the foreign from the indigenous. But this episode in history, ephemeral as it was, is also a lesson in both the constructed-ness and the contradictions of nationalism. Japanese and Filipino propagandists, while claiming to uphold cultural variety also sought to snuff out that variety through nationalist consolidation.

It seems fitting to conclude with the words of Mang Kiko, the pen name of an author named F.B. Icasiano who had a column in The Tribune. In his article “From my Nipa Hut: Father in my Eye,” he remembers how his hispanicized father had to adjust to the incoming of American culture after the American takeover of the Philippines and watch his son grow up speaking English and adopting American ways. He himself writes that he is in a similar position and believes he will watch his own children grow up adopting the Japanese language and customs. Mang Kiko imagines though that he will be able to meet his father in Heaven: “…in thirty years, I shall probably have joined my father and with him compared notes to see how well we fared in this curious and interesting planet where languages have been invented to make men unhappy.”

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CONCLUSION

Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken” has become something of a cliche, but in history the roads not taken can be just as interesting as the main path -- the dead-ends, the false starts, and the roads that go nowhere are as worthy of investigation. While in hindsight the eventual outcomes seem inevitable to us, it was not so for the people at the time. Visions of the future, even those that never came to pass, reveal the minds of those who hold them, so studying them is as important as tracing the series of events which has led to the present.

While it is now said that English is no longer the language of the English, Japanese is still very much the language of Japan. Japanese did not become the global language envisioned by so many before the end of the Fifteen Years’ War. But before the end of the war, the vision of a Japanese-speaking Asia was a compelling one for many Japanese people. The spread of Japanese held out the possibility that Japan could be a model which others looked up to and that it could have the influence and the power to reshape the world. That language education became implicated in the construction of the GEACPS is symptomatic of the war’s capacity to envelope all aspects of life; but language had an important role to play in propaganda. Regardless of the brutal reality of the actual prosecution of the war, language was a means for presenting the war as a benevolent endeavor and presenting Japan as a magnanimous leader with an important role to play in building Asia and its nations.

Yet while propagandists tried to confine language to a certain role, they did not have complete control over it in the real world. In occupied areas such as the Philippines, the Japanese language could be appropriated by the locals and used as a
means of ridiculing the occupiers. Moreover, while Japanese propagandists may have hoped that promoting Tagalog would make Filipinos “realize” their role in the GEACPS, Filipinos were capable of using language for their own purposes and discussing the role of language in their own nation-building project. Yet the Japanese occupation opened up space for a vision that was compelling to some Filipinos for the same reasons that the GEACPS was compelling to the Japanese. Just as the spread of Japanese promised a united Asia, the spread of Tagalog promised a united Philippines with a national language to confer a common, authentic identity.

No historical study can be totally comprehensive, and this one is no exception. There are a few areas which this study did not cover but which could serve as sites of future research. First, the Philippines was only one part of the Japanese empire at its height. The Japanese controlled many different parts of Asia -- not only was each area different, they were all controlled by different authorities with different policies. Further research would cover the diverging experience in various areas of both the occupiers and the local people. For example, as Eri Hotta points out, in Singapore and British Malaya, the occupational authorities carried out aggressive assimilation policies akin to those followed in the older colonies, Korea and Taiwan.225 It would also be useful to examine why different occupation authorities pursued different policies and what these differences say about them and the GEACPS in general.

As for the Philippines, this paper does not consider the aftermath of language policy that followed the end of the war. Perhaps a fruitful line of research would consider if the Japanese Occupation was simply an anomaly or if there was some lingering effect on language policy thereafter. Were subsequent nativist movements affected by the

225 Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 204-206.
memory of Japanese occupation? Was Tagalog as a national language forever tainted by its association with Japanese cultural wartime cultural policies? Did Japanese propaganda affect later views of English negatively or positively? These are some of the questions which could be pursued in future research.

It is hoped that if this study accomplishes anything, it reminds us that an English-speaking world is no more than an accident of history.
GLOSSARY

Ari no mama 在りのまま

Bunka 文化

Bunkateki shihai 文化的支配

Bunkatsu tōchi 分割統治

Buryoku 武力

Dai Tōa Kaigi 大東亜会議

Dai Tōa Kyōeiken 大東亜共栄圏

Dai Tōa Kyōzonken 大東亜共存圏

Dōbun dōshu 同文同種

Gaichi 外地

Hakkō ichiū 八紘一宇

Haihanritsu 背反律

Henchō 偏重

Hyōjungo 標準語

Kokkaminzoku seishin 国家民族精神

Kōminka 皇民化

Konran 混乱

Kuse くせ

Kyakkanteki 客観的

Kyokutō 極東
Naichi 内地

Neishu Nihon 盟主日本

Meishūron 盟主論

Rippana 立派な

Seimei 生命

Seimei ryoku 生命力

Seisan ryoku 生産力

Shisō bunka 思想文化

Shōwa Kenkyūkai 昭和研究会

Shukanteki 主観的

Sokokuai 祖国愛

Sokokugoai 祖国語愛

Taikateki 退化的

Tōa Kyōdōtai 大東亜共同体

Tōa Renmei 東亜連盟

Utsukushii tokushoku 美しい特色
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