

# Imagined Territoriality: Visual Portrayals of 'Asia' in the Age of Nationalism in East Asia

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## RESÜMEE

Dieser Artikel untersucht die Darstellung ‚Asiens‘ als kulturell-politische Einheit in visuellen Imaginationen von Territorialität und politischen Karikaturen, die überwiegend in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren in Japan und China entstanden. Auf den ersten Blick stehen diese Portraits vor allem für eine asianistische Agenda, die asiatische Kommonalität in Abgrenzung zum ‚Westen‘ betont. Visionen eines geeinten Asiens enthielten oft jedoch auch sehr explizite Ansprüche auf Zentralität oder Führerschaft einer bestimmten Nation. Im Kontext des japanischen Imperialismus nimmt zwar meist Japan diese Rolle ein, allerdings zeigen Darstellungen ‚Asiens‘ aus Kollaborationsgebieten, dass auch anderen Nationen diese Rolle zugeschrieben werden konnte, solange dies innerhalb der asianistischen Metanarrative erfolgte. Damit ergänzten visuelle Imaginationen anderweitig verbreitete nationalistische Konzeptionen des Asianismus, wie sie vor allem seit den 1930er Jahren verstärkt propagiert wurden. Gegen dieses imperialistisch-hegemoniale Erbe des Asianismus nutzen Intellektuelle und transnationale Initiativen in Ostasien heute u.a. visuelle Darstellungen alternativer Territorialität, um zur Überwindung des gespaltenen Geschichtsbewusstseins und nationaler Chauvinismen beizutragen.

## Introduction

In the modern period, the organisation of peoples and societies according to territorial criteria has predominantly taken place within the paradigmatic framework of the ‘national’. As scholars of nationalism have taught us, nations were forged with the help of imagined national identities and commonalities.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the formation and persistence

1 The term imagination, which is of particular relevance here, of course refers to Benedict Anderson's argument of the nation as an “imagined community”. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London 1983, 1-7.

of the nation state may have relied, to a large degree, on the *imagination* of the nation as a limited and sovereign community. The nation state as such, however, is also a very tangible reality that can be experienced in various ways by its citizens, for example, through the usage of nationally issued money or of a state-denominated national language.<sup>2</sup> The most direct way to experience the *territorial* dimensions of the nation state is probably the crossing of national borders. There, the domestic experience of the existence of the nation state is reinforced territorially through the inner-outer demarcations that mark the transit, if granted, from one territorial entity – the modern nation state – to another.

Given the historical limitations to mass mobility before the spread of long-distance public transport in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>3</sup> for many people in East Asia and other parts of the world any direct territorial experience of units larger than villages, cities, counties, or prefectures may have been the exception rather than the rule. Therefore, more than any other dimension of the nation state, its territoriality<sup>4</sup> has relied on imagination. That is, the territorial dimension is imagined in the literal sense of the term: it relies on *images* that portray certain units as entities. Still today, the most direct and common way to visualize territory is through maps, be it traditionally as printed maps in atlases or virtually via Google Maps.<sup>5</sup> In fact, maps are a major instrument of territorial definition<sup>6</sup> and, as Mark Monmonier has demonstrated, also of distortion and political propaganda:

*A good propagandist knows how to shape opinion by manipulating maps. Political persuasion often concerns territorial claims, nationalities, national pride, borders, strategic positions, conquests, attacks, troop movements, defences, spheres of influence, regional inequality, and other geographic phenomena conveniently portrayed cartographically. The propagandist moulds the map's message by emphasizing supporting features, suppressing contradictory information, and choosing provocative, dramatic symbols. People trust maps, and intriguing maps attract the eye as well as connote authority.<sup>7</sup>*

2 See Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London 1995, 13-18 and 41-42.

3 While the global origins of leisure travel are commonly seen in the founding of the Thomas Cook travel agency in England in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, it was not before massive expansion and improvement of the railway infrastructure and the availability of leisure time through social legislation that domestic tourism became widespread. In Japan, for example, although a Japan Tourist Bureau was already established in 1912, the origins of domestic mass tourism are usually located in the economic boom that started in the late 1950s. See Teshima Yasuyuki, "Masu tsūrizumu no rekishi teki henshen to kongo no yukue" [The historical changes of mass tourism and its future directions], *Nihon Kokusai Kankōgakkai Ronbunshū* [Essay Collection of the Japanese Association of International Tourism], Vol. 15, 2008, 11-17: 13.

4 This paper understands territoriality primarily as a concept that refers to the significance of territory as "sections of space occupied by individuals, social groups or institutions, most typically by the modern state" (John Agnew as quoted in Anssi Paasi, "Territory", Agnew/Mitchell/Toal (eds.), *A Companion to Political Geography*, Oxford 2003: 109). It also refers to the implications that result from the links between a certain territory and social practices there, that is as "a powerful geographic strategy to control people and things by controlling area" (R. D. Sack, *Human Territoriality*, Cambridge 1986: 5). Territoriality, therefore, may be summarized as a "primary geographical expression of social power" (R. D. Sack, *Human Territoriality*, Cambridge 1986: 5).

5 See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 170-178.

6 See Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, Honolulu 1994.

7 Mark S. Monmonier, *How to lie with maps*, Chicago 1996: 87.

As Monmonier implies, maps reach an audience that would be less receptive to political messages expressed conventionally as texts in opinion editorials, essays, or books. In addition, through simplification and visualization, maps disseminate messages more explicitly, directly, and suggestively. As will be elaborated on in more detail below, maps of 'Asia' have historically relied on a number of the above-mentioned mechanisms to suggest Asia's significance or insignificance, its unity or disunity, its natural opposition to other regions or possible inclusion in or of other regions. In addition, by including or excluding certain lands and seas and by naming parts or entities in a certain way, maps confront the problem of territoriality most directly and therefore can hardly avoid taking a political stance in debates about territorial issues.

A second genre of visual portrayals that features even more suggestive simplifications of political messages is political cartoons. By virtue of their genre, political cartoons exaggerate simplistically and satirically, and thereby create amusing or insulting messages that propose clear-cut divisions between self and other, friend and enemy, good and bad. As Peter Burke has argued,

*between the invention of the newspaper and the invention of television, for instance, caricature and cartoons made a fundamental contribution to political debate, demystifying power and encouraging the involvement of ordinary people with affairs of state. They performed these tasks by presenting controversial issues in a simple, concrete and memorable way and the main actors on the political stage as unheroic fallible mortals<sup>8</sup>.*

In fact, the invention of the newspaper as a popular medium may have even increased the role played by caricature and cartoons, as they soon became a regular feature in printed dailies and other periodicals.<sup>9</sup> As Burke mentions, the factors of popularity and simplicity, together with its high commemorative degree, have made visual abstraction a central part of mainstream political discourse. Its links to territoriality, however, may be less obvious. Where maps make territorial dimensions explicit, cartoons normally only implicitly refer to them, although sometimes visual portrayals of territory are included. In other words, cartoons mostly point to the figurative side of territory and territoriality; demarcations are not indicated mainly through lines that denote borders but through stereotypical portrayals of civilizations, races, or assumed outward or inner characteristic traits of the 'Self' and the 'Other'. Cartoons rely on such "auto-stereotypes" and "xenostereotypes"<sup>10</sup> more than other media, especially texts, which can include more nuances, explain heterogeneities, and discuss contradictions. As Burke has noted,

*[t]he stereotype may not be completely false, but it often exaggerates certain features of reality and omits others. The stereotype may be more or less crude, more or less violent. However, it necessarily lacks nuances since the same model is applied to cultural situa-*

8 Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing. The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*. Ithaca 2001, 79.

9 On the role of newspapers in the spread of nationalism see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 25-36.

10 Bo Stråth, "A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept", *European Journal of Social Theory* 2002, 5-4, 387-401: 395.

*tions which differ considerably from one another. It has been observed, for example that European pictures of American Indians were often composite ones, combining traits from Indians of different regions to create a simple general image.*<sup>11</sup>

As we shall see below, this same pattern that seems to have informed processes of Othering around the globe also underlay many portrayals of the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ in the Asianist context in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup> Most prominently, it can be observed in the iconic portrayal of the European ‘Self’ awaiting the invasion by barbaric hordes from the ‘East’ in the famous Knackfuss painting (1895) that quickly became a symbol of Yellow Peril discourse.<sup>13</sup> As will be discussed below, the Knackfuss painting – originally no political cartoon or caricature but a painting commissioned by Kaiser Wilhelm II – inspired imitations that revealed a similar pattern to that described by Burke. Unsurprisingly, the Asianist visual discourse also followed the general trend regarding the positive portrayal of the ‘Self’ and the negative portrayal of the ‘Other’. In any case, Burke’s observations, which mainly rely on intra-European encounters and those of Europeans with peoples of the ‘New World’, may rather easily be transferred to the East Asian context. Here too, “most stereotypes of others [...] were and are either hostile, contemptuous or, at the very least, condescending. A psychologist would probably look for fear underlying the hatred and also for the unconscious projection of undesirable aspects of the self on the other.”<sup>14</sup> The Yellow Peril discourse from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards which helped to trigger Asianist discourse and visions of ‘One Asia’ in the following decades may serve as a rather fitting example of denigration on the basis of fear.<sup>15</sup>

In recent years, a number of historians have started to criticize “the merely ‘illustrative’ use of visual materials in historical scholarship”<sup>16</sup> and the fact that “when most historians think about images, they tend to see only illustrations for the arguments they have already derived from the documents in the archives”<sup>17</sup>. Critics have problematized “the ‘logocentrism’ of the discipline of history” and have called attention to “the relationship between text and image”, the usefulness of visual sources in “exploring aspects of history that more conventionally-based textual histories ignore or discount”.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, vi-

11 Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 125.

12 The theoretical framework of this Othering, albeit with a focus on texts, is Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1979.

13 On Yellow Peril discourse see Heinz Gollwitzer, *Die gelbe Gefahr: Geschichte eines Schlagworts [Yellow Peril: History of a Key Concept]*, Göttingen 1962.

14 Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing*. Ithaca 2001, 126.

15 On the history and different conceptions of Asianism see *Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History*, Volume 1 (1850–1920) and Volume 2 (1920–Present), ed. by Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011.

16 Johannes von Moltke, “von Moltke commentary”, in: *Forum: German history after the visual turn* (25 September 2006), [http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual\\_index.htm](http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual_index.htm) (last accessed 8 July 2013).

17 David Crew, “The Power of Images?”, in: *Forum: German history after the visual turn* (18 September 2006), [http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual\\_index.htm](http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual_index.htm) (last accessed 8 July 2013).

18 See contributions to *Forum: German history after the visual turn* by Elizabeth Otto (26 September 2006), Paul Betts (22 September 2006), and Lee Palmer Wandel (20 September 2006), [http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual\\_index.htm](http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual_index.htm) (last accessed 8 July 2013).

sual portrayals of 'Asia' and of its Others must be located in their respective political and textual contexts. In other words, Asianist visual discourse is part of a larger discourse on peoples, nations, and regions which had existed ever since the first (real or imagined) encounters had produced narratives of Asia *versus* Europe or the 'West' *versus* the 'East'.<sup>19</sup> This article aims to contribute to the supplementation of logocentric scholarship on Asianism by analyzing how maps and political cartoons used territorial elements to display different conceptions of a unified Asia. It focuses on Japan and China during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Asianism had become a key concept in political discourse in East Asia. Specifically, this essay addresses the dominance of nationalist messages within the Asianist framework and the particular role played by territory as a central point of reference.

### 'One Asia' Contextualized

'Asia' as a concept first entered the consciousness of the people living in the so-defined region<sup>20</sup> during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and became widespread during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup> Initially, the concept only possessed a geographical and descriptive dimension. In the context of increasing economic and political penetration of East Asia by Western powers, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, 'Asia' discourse was mainly directed against the 'West' as the imperialist colonizer of the 'East'.<sup>22</sup> In China and Japan, this discourse was complicated by the fact that the 'West' served as the model for modernisation advocated by reform-minded individuals in China, while in Japan it had even provided the rationale for far-reaching state-led modernising initiatives. In the light of (sincerely or strategically) positive views of the 'West', it was therefore difficult to establish an affirmative anti-Western 'Asia' discourse.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the anti-colonial dimension of 'Asia' discourse was limited by the fact that Japan itself was both Asian and an imperialist power. For pro-Western Chinese reformers, this led to a twisted love-hate relationship with Japan which was viewed both as a model of modernisation for China but also as

19 Over the last decade a large number of works have appeared on the topic of Asianism which would facilitate the discursive contextualization of visual Asianist materials that have, by contrast, received little attention in scholarship thus far. For a collection of historical Asianist documents see Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History. For a critique of the exclusion of visuals in these volumes see Dick Stegewerns, "Review of Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History, Volume 1 (1850–1920) and Volume 2 (1920–Present)", *Monumenta Nipponica*, Volume 67, Number 2, 2012, 343–348: 347–348.

20 This study's spatial focus regarding Asia is on East Asia or Northeast Asia, and therein mainly Japan and China.

21 For the following overview see for Japan Yamamuro Shin'ichi, *Shisō kadai toshite no Ajia* [Asia as thought], Tokyo 2001, and for China Zhou Jiarong, "Jindai Zhongguoren de Yazhou guan" [Modern Chinese views of Asia], in: You Yudian (ed), *Zhongguo yu Yazhou* [China and Asia], Hongkong 1990: 221–239 and Rebecca E. Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century", *American Historical Review* 103–4, 1998, 1096–1118 as well as the Introduction in Saaler/Szpilman.

22 On this aspect see also Cemil Aydin, *The politics of anti-Westernism in Asia: visions of world order in pan-Islamic and pan-Asian thought*, New York 2007.

23 See Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the late Meiji period: China policy and the Japanese discourse on national identity, 1895–1904*, London 2009, 1–7.

the imperialist ‘Other’.<sup>24</sup> Chinese affirmations of ‘Asia’ therefore, suffered considerably from these constraints. For most Japanese, on the other hand, there was little need to embrace ‘Asia’ when an eclectic combination of Westernization and nationalism had worked rather well for the modernisation (*kindaika*) of Japan. Why should Japan redefine itself as a part of Asia or even identify itself with the “backward” and “uncivilized” company of Asia<sup>25</sup> when Japan had managed to react most successfully to encroachment by the Western powers since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century? Ethnic-cultural proximity on the one hand, and the usefulness of ‘Asia’ as a concept for Japan’s further imperial expansion on the other hand provided the incentive for a gradual embrace of Asianist conceptions in mainstream Japanese political discourse from the early 1910s onwards.<sup>26</sup> These conceptions became all the more plausible when Asia’s ‘Other’ – “Europe and America” (Jp. *Ô-Bei*, Ch. *Ou-Mei*) – displayed a different side of its assumedly superior civilization in the massively destructive First World War and in anti-Asian exclusionist policies.<sup>27</sup> ‘Asia’ as a regionalist discursive unit<sup>28</sup> and an imagined civilizational, ethnic, or imperial entity, had the potential to challenge the prerogative of the nation state as the main territorial entity. The nation state, however, remained the main territorial unit providing sovereignty in the international setting and granting civil rights domestically. In addition, Wilson’s declaration of the right to self-determination and the creation of the internationalist League of Nations emphasized the role of the nation state, as an aim to achieve or as political reality. The fact that non-Western or non-White nations, including Japan, had not been able to establish themselves on equal footing at Versailles and in its aftermath only reinforced the significance of national strength and the relevance of nationalism.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, the mainstream of Asianist discourse after World War One remained premised on the necessity and existence of the nation state. Of course, this Asianist rationale fit all too well into the expansionist policy adopted by the Japanese military and government from the early 1930s onwards.

24 See Zachmann, *China and Japan*, 59-60 and Douglas Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912: the Xinhong revolution and Japan*, Cambridge 1993, 5-6.

25 This position was most famously expressed in Fukuzawa Yukichi’s “Datsu A Ron” [On Leaving Asia], 1885. An English translation of this classical essay is available in Japan: a documentary history: The Late Tokugawa Period to the Present, David John Lu (ed.), New York 1996, 351-353.

26 See Torsten Weber, „Unter dem Banner des Asianismus“: Transnationale Dimensionen des japanischen Asianismus-Diskurses der Taishô-Zeit (1912-26), *Comparativ*, Vol. 18, No. 6 (2008), 34-52.

27 See Michael Adas, “Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian. Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology”, *Journal of World History* 15, no. 1. (March 2004), 31–63 and Cemil Aydin, *Anti-Westernism*, Chapter 5.

28 For a discussion of Asianism in the context of historical regionalism see Prasenjit Duara, “Asia Redux: Conceptualizing a Region for Our Times”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 69-4 (November 2010), 963-983.

29 For the impact of World War and Versailles on the spread of nationalism in East Asia see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, Oxford 2007 and Rana Mitter, *A bitter revolution: China’s struggle with the modern world*, Oxford & New York 2004.

## Asia and the Nation in Maps

Two main topics dominate visual portrayals of Asia in maps. The first of these was Asia's self-formation in opposition to non-Asia or the 'West'. Because of its direct adjacency, this 'West' in maps was mostly Europe, whereas in political cartoons America could easily join or substitute Europe as Asia's 'Other'. The second topic was Asia's self-formation *within*, that is, the inclusion of certain parts within the concept by inferring sameness, usually racial or cultural commonality or geographical proximity. This second issue, of course, is informed by and depends on which parts are portrayed as non-Asia or as non-core Asia. Unsurprisingly, Asia discourse in Japan and China – at least in its affirmative – centred on Japan and China as core parts of Asia. In this respect, despite some exceptions, much of Japanese and Chinese 'Asia' discourse in fact is more accurately described as 'East Asia' or 'China & Japan plus surroundings' discourse. Probably as a consequence of this focus on a defined core region, membership in the category 'Asia' was rather flexible at the edges. In a collection of some of the earliest Japanese maps of the world (1875), different lines of demarcation suggest a loose understanding of the territorial boundaries of "Asia". One map from this collection defined the Western boundaries of Asia as the Ural River and Mountains but excluded the Muslim Western part of Asia, which it subsumed under the term "Europe".<sup>30</sup> A different map from the same collection, however, includes in its representation of "Asia" the Arabian Peninsula and Turkey.<sup>31</sup> At any rate, the inner-outer opposition of Asia and Europe, however flexible, implies internal homogeneity and unity of the two regions – be it as an assumed fact or a political goal. Moving 130 years ahead into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, few would claim that "Asia is one".<sup>32</sup> Transnational scholarly and activist projects throughout Asia, however, use the idea of Asian commonality as a vehicle to overcome nationalist chauvinism and rifts in historical consciousness that obstruct reconciliation and peaceful coexistence in the region.<sup>33</sup> Visual portrayals of an Asia without national borders therefore bear the political message stressing regional cooperation and commonality over national differences. In the more recent efforts at reconciling divergent narratives of the modern history of China, Japan, and Korea, a private tri-national joint historical research committee has aimed at producing a more balanced and common historical consciousness among East Asians.<sup>34</sup> To-

30 See "Japanese study map of the world" (Ansha Sekai Chizu), 1875, from the collection of Kobe University, Sumita library, 5C-168, 2-8, 1875, MID: 00163996; [http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/directory/sumita/5C-168/basic/5C-168\\_02.html](http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/directory/sumita/5C-168/basic/5C-168_02.html) (last accessed 8 July 2013). The map does not indicate national borders or any other sub-regional specifications.

31 See "Japanese study map of the world" (Ansha Sekai Chizu), 1875, from the collection of Kobe University, Sumita library, 5C-168, 3-8, 1875, MID: 00163996; [http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/directory/sumita/5C-168/basic/5C-168\\_03.html](http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/directory/sumita/5C-168/basic/5C-168_03.html) (last accessed 8 July 2013). This map indicates national borders.

32 For an Asianist-inclined rebuttal of the idea of Asian unity see Amitav Acharya, "Asia Is Not One", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 69-04 (November 2010), 100-1013.

33 On these networks and activities see East Asia beyond the history wars: confronting the ghosts of violence, ed. by Tessa Morris-Suzuki, London / New York 2013.

34 See Claudia Schneider, "The Japanese History Textbook Controversy in East Asian Perspective", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 617 (May 2008), 107-122.

gether with this agenda, the map on the cover of the book works as a mission statement. The four letters of “Asia” in Roman script are made up of letters from the three countries’ names plus the term “history”. The territory displayed by the map is white, representing the empty pages of Asia’s history to be written jointly and without nationalist divisions. While the letters of the country names consist only of empty frames, ‘Asia’ is printed in red letters, thereby suggesting that the territory which forms the spatial background of the historical narrative is best understood and referred to as ‘Asia’, not Japan, China, and Korea. As the overcoming of national borders is the main objective of this project, and the irrelevance of the borders is the main political message of the map, Asia’s Western ‘Other’ is absent. Here, it is not required as the *national* histories take the role of the ‘Other’ vis-à-vis transnational historiography.

Although regarding content and intention the tri-national history textbook can hardly be compared to collaborationist war-time propaganda, a similar strategy of portraying Asian territory can be observed. Wang Jingwei’s collaborationist Nanjing regime (1941–44/45)<sup>35</sup> published a number of journals aimed at persuading Chinese to take a conciliatory stance towards Japan and to support the project of erecting a unified ‘Greater Asia’. On the cover of the *Greater Asianism and East Asian League* (Da Yazhou zhuyi yu Dongya Lianmeng) monthly that was published in Nanjing from 1942 to 1944, a map of ‘Greater Asia’ appeared in white, without any borders and including parts of Western Asia. As an instrument of political discourse or propaganda directed at the Chinese, the map displayed some unique characteristics that differed from most Japanese portrayals of Asia at that time. First, Japan was hardly visibly at the periphery and appeared even smaller than normal since the scale was stretched. Second, the central position was taken by China. This visual rhetoric coincided with much of the textual discourse produced by the Wang regime.<sup>36</sup> Although in principle Wang was pro-Japanese, his embrace of Japanese policies and Japan in general did not lead to a complete submission to the Japanese. Also, of course, in order to set up a rival agenda to the Chinese Communists and opposing powers within his *Guomindang* (Nationalist Party), a Sino-centric conception of Greater Asia that marginalized Japan was easier to sell to a Chinese audience.

35 On Wang’s regime see Dongyoun Hwang, “Some Reflections on war-time collaboration in China: Wang Jingwei and his group in Hanoi” (Working Papers in Asian/Pacific Studies 98-02), ed. Anne Allison, Arif Dirlik, Tomiko Yoda, 1998.

36 See Torsten Weber, “Nanjing’s Greater Asianism, 1940”, Pan-Asianism, Vol. 2, 209-219.





Figure 1: Cover of a tri-national modern history textbook, 2006<sup>37</sup> (left)

Figure 2: Cover of the Chinese collaborationist journal 'Greater Asianism and East Asian League', 1942<sup>38</sup> (right)

In contrast, comparable Japanese maps of Asia differed notably in two respects. First, although Japan was portrayed as a part of Asia, it was clearly distinguished from other parts of the region through the indication of national borders. The *Nichi-Man Kōron* journal even distinguished Japan's Korean colony by name, although it was given the same colour as Japan. The *Dai Ajiashugi* journal, too, portrayed Asia with national borders. Although it could be argued that these Asianist journals deplored the fragmented and shattered state of Asia which they were seeking to overcome, from the context provided by the journals it appears more likely that their conception of 'One Asia' never included the abolition of national borders. 'Greater Asia' to them meant an alliance of Asian nations with pro-Japanese regimes that would otherwise, at least in name, remain "independent".

37 Ni-Chū-Kan san koku kyōtsū rekishi kyōzai iinkai [Committee for shared history teaching materials of the three countries of Japan, China, and Korea] (ed), *Mirai o hiraku Rekishi* [History that opens up the future], Tokyo 2006 (Japanese version), reproduced with kind permission of Koubunken Publishers Tokyo. All reasonable efforts have been made to identify and contact copyright holders but in some cases these could not be traced. If you hold or administer rights for materials published here, please contact the editors.

38 Inaugural issue of the monthly *Da Yazhou zhuyi yu Dongya Lianmeng* [Greater Asianism and East Asian League], published in Nanjing, October 1942.

Second, as opposed to the collaborationist Chinese journal, in these Japanese journals the islands of Japan were portrayed as central even at the cost of including “empty” areas of the Pacific Ocean to Japan’s East.<sup>39</sup> While this focus on Japan may be convincing on the case of the Japanese-Manchurian journal, there is no geographical justification for positioning Japan as centrally as the *Dai Ajiashugi* journal does. The map here works as an obvious political instrument, implying that Japan – despite its small size and peripheral location – together with its colonial possessions in the South (Taiwan), to the West (Korea) and to the North (Sakhalin) was still the centre of a “Greater Asia”, even if Asia stretched as far west as the Caspian Sea.



Figure 3: Cover of the *Nichi-Man Kōron* [Raise Japan and Manchuria] monthly, 1939<sup>40</sup> (left)



Figure 4: *Dai Ajiashugi* [Greater Asianism] journal, published by the Greater Asia Association from 1933 to 1945<sup>41</sup> (right)

39 It is difficult to see whether the area east of Japan was indeed completely “empty” or “blank” or whether the group of islands there were too small to be identified in print.

40 *Nichi-Man Kōron* 12-2, March 1939. The journal was published in the Japanese language in Mukden, an ancient capital of Manchuria (today’s Shenyang). Reproduced with kind permission from the collection of Waseda University Library.

41 *Dai Ajiashugi*, October 1933. Reproduced with kind permission from the collection of Waseda University Library.

As these maps reveal, even in a regionalist context the map may work as “the perfect symbol of the state”<sup>42</sup>, in particular when regionalist conceptions were imperialist-oriented, as many Japanese conceptions of Greater Asia from the 1930s onwards doubtlessly were. These historical legacies serve as the background to attempts at redefining affirmative conceptions of ‘Asia’ today, for example in the case of the 2005 history textbook introduced above. The territorial dimension is of particular importance, at least if Japan or Japanese are involved, because contemporary regionalist visions appear to be compelled to demonstrate their difference from anything that resembles the historical expansion of Japan’s empire. This has led to a self-imposed de-centralisation of Japan. In a positive iteration of the well-known “cartographic David-and-Goliath contest” that has frequently been used as visual evidence of an assumedly threatening encirclement of a small nation by its bigger neighbours,<sup>43</sup> these portrayals trivialize the actual role of Japan as a political and economic powerhouse in the region.

The most elaborate and creative contemporary Japanese example is Wada Haruki’s map of Northeast Asia.<sup>44</sup> Wada, an expert on Russian and Korean history and fervent propagator of “new regionalism” in East Asia, has not only decentralized Japan but also turned the conventional perspective of maps upside down. This new perspective allows Wada to visualize Northeast Asia as a network of islands and peninsulas including Hawaii, Alaska, Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. In addition, his Northeast Asia consists of Russia, China, and Mongolia, of which all, with the exception of Mongolia, have extensive sea borders and islands as part of their state territories.

Consequently, Wada calls his regionalist view “Maritime Asia”. This vision of Asia as a network of islands has little relevance to Wada’s conception of regionalism with regard to cultural aspects. Rather, the territorial dimension is more symbolic and preemptive of criticism, yet it is central to his claim: in true regionalism, national borders ought to be transcended and the role of the nation state must be put into perspective. By changing the perspective on territory, the significance of place and the inherent hierarchy of nations based on their size and location is challenged. As a consequence, the conventional focus on territory in the representation of the nation state is questioned. In Wada’s proposal Asia becomes a “union of Northeast Asian islands” and the place of nation states is taken by islands, mostly on the sub-national level such as Hawaii, Okinawa, and Cheju. In addition, Wada argues that the historical, political, economical and cultural diversity and heterogeneity in that area is overcome by the presence of Korean diasporas throughout the region.

42 Mark S. Monmonier, *How to lie with maps*, 88.

43 See Mark S. Monmonier, *How to lie with maps*, 94-107. Examples include Germany of 1914 (in between France and Russia) and Israel “encircled” by neighbouring Arab nations.

44 For an English summary of Wada’s “new regionalism” see his “Maritime Asia and the Future of a Northeast Asia Community”, *Japan Focus* (27 October 2008), [http://www.japanfocus.org/\\_Wada\\_Haruki-Maritime\\_Asia\\_and\\_the\\_Future\\_of\\_a\\_Northeast\\_Asia\\_Community](http://www.japanfocus.org/_Wada_Haruki-Maritime_Asia_and_the_Future_of_a_Northeast_Asia_Community) (last accessed 8 July 2013).

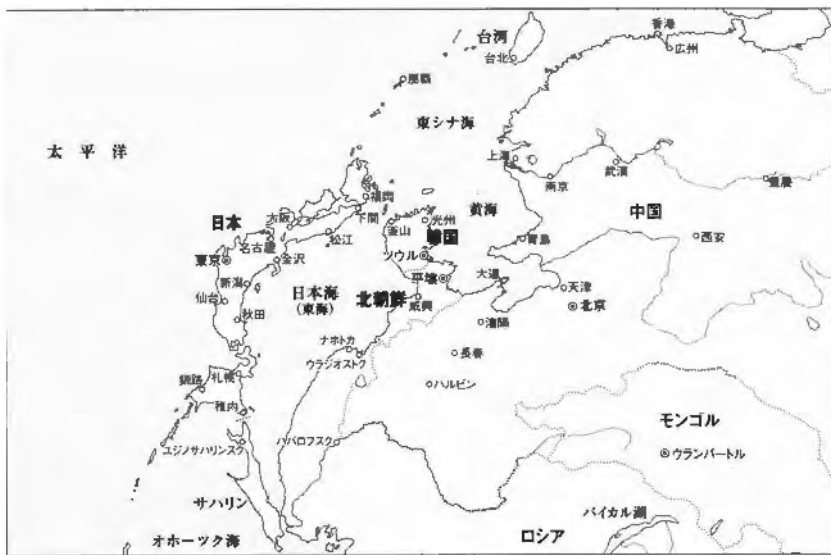


Figure 5 Wada Haruki’s “Complete map of Northeast Asia”, including Hawaii, Alaska, and parts of Russia, 2003 (above).<sup>45</sup>

Figure 6 Wada Haruki’s “Complete map of the Sea of Japan Rim”, with Korea at the centre, 2003 (below)<sup>46</sup>; reproduced with kind permission of Heibonsha Publishers, Tokyo.

45 From Wada Haruki, *Tōhoku Ajia kyōdō no ie* [Common House of Northeast Asia], Tokyo 2003, 6.

46 From Wada Haruki, *Tōhoku Ajia*, 7.

His map of the Sea of Japan rim, therefore, centres on Korea rather than Japan. More than any other map, Wada's decentralized and unorthodox look at the globe facilitates the inclusion, if not prioritization, of a human dimension of political cartography in the geopolitics of 'Asia' as displayed in maps.<sup>47</sup>

### Political Cartoons as Civilizational Portrayals of Asia

A second genre that has exerted immense influence on political discourse, especially with the rise of mass media, is visual portrayals such as political cartoons. While they command less credibility and objectivity than maps, their impact on political consciousness may be even greater.<sup>48</sup> Combining elements of information and entertainment, exaggeration and stereotypes, political cartoons have been a major and popular instrument of mainstream opinion formation, both in democratic and totalitarian systems.<sup>49</sup> Mostly, their messages are clear, simple, and easy to understand and to reproduce in political discourse, although some may only be consumed by a well-informed audience that is able to comprehend contexts and allusions. Cartoons do not typically include explicit references to geo- or cartographic aspects, but more frequently, as opposed to maps, refer to territory figuratively through portrayals of human beings as representatives of nations, religions, regions, etc. If territoriality can be understood as "a primary geographical expression of social power" and "an effective instrument to reify and depersonalize power"<sup>50</sup> then visual portrayals of 'Self' and 'Other' or friend and enemy are persuasive tools for reclaiming the human dimension in territorial relations. Political cartoons that include portrayals of people work particularly well in this process of re-personalization of territorial power as they literally give caricatures a human (or inhuman) face.

Because political cartoons are often more suggestive, inventive, and original than maps, they can easily become visualized arguments themselves or visualizations of existing political viewpoints. Through repeated reproduction and (sometimes satirical) reference, some have become icons of political discourse and collective memory. In the context of historical Asian auto- and xeno-stereotypisation, the famous Knackfuss painting – though not a political cartoon or caricature in the strict sense – is probably the only visual portrayal that has become a political icon itself.<sup>51</sup> Commissioned in 1895 by Kaiser Wilhelm II, whose name would later become inseparably linked with Yellow Peril discourse, the painting by German painter Hermann Knackfuss portrays Asia in the form of a sitting

47 Wada stresses this aspect not only by calling his vision for Northeast Asia "home" or "house" but also by referring to the presence of the Korean diaspora throughout the region as an element that binds the regions together in a human way. See Wada 2008.

48 See Roy Douglas, *The World War 1939–1945. The Cartoonists' vision*. London 1990, ix-xii.

49 See Priska Jones, *Europa in der Karikatur [Europe in caricature]*, Frankfurt/M. 2009.

50 Sack after Anssi Paasi, "Territory", 111.

51 By political icon, this essay proposes to understand a ubiquitous image which aims at the propagation of a particular political message in mainstream discourse. See Michael Diers, *Schlagbilder [Key Visuals]* Frankfurt/M. 1997.

Buddha and Asia's 'Other', Europe, as an assembly of national patrons or personifications of nations, such as France's Marianne and Great Britain's Britannia under the leadership of Germany's Saint Michael.<sup>52</sup> While Europe is portrayed as a collective of strong and upright, yet diverse, people united under the cross of Christianity, Asia is visualized as mysterious, obscure, potentially dangerous, and homogeneous.

The concrete political message of this painting ("Peoples of Europe! Protect your holiest goods!"), and of Yellow Peril discourse more generally, is captured well by the inclusion of a territorial dimension. Western civilization and Christianity is bound to a place, namely Europe, that needs to be defended against the Buddhist, that is heathen, East. In the political context of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century – the coming conflict between Russia and Japan – Wilhelm II apparently meant to encourage Russia to function as the bulwark of the Christian West against the infidel East. While the painting failed to inspire Russia to victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05 it did not fail to inspire political discourse. For example, the German satirical journal *Kladderadatsch* published a cartoon that satirized the hypocritical nature of the Knackfuss painting; Chinese are portrayed in fear of a European Christian missionary.<sup>53</sup> While Christian missionaries had been active in China and Japan for centuries and had caused tremendous social uproar there, neither Buddhism nor any other teaching or belief from those countries had had any notable influence on Western societies. Therefore, in this cartoon and in reality, too, the West needed to fear the East (East Asia) much less than vice versa as the political, economic, and ideological penetration of East Asia by European colonialism had proved. This reversed logic underlay self-affirmative Asia discourse in Japan and China from the early 1910s onwards when Western Yellow Peril discourse was countered by White Peril discourse<sup>54</sup>. As the white races, according to its rationale, continued to colonize and oppress Asia, the "yellow races" needed to fully realize their situation, form an alliance of yellow peoples under the banner of Greater Asianism, and resist this oppression or even take revenge on the Whites of Euro-America. Asia's territory needed to be liberated from Western aggressors in order to protect Asian peoples and their civilizations.<sup>55</sup> Protecting their own self-ascribed civilizational characteristics required, both in Western Yellow Peril and in Asian White Peril discourse, the defense of one's "own" territory by force against real or potential intruders.

52 Hermann Knackfuss, „Völker Europas, wahret Eure heiligsten Güter“ [Peoples of Europe! Protect your holiest goods!], 1895, [http://www.dhm.de/ausstellungen/tsingtau/katalog/fotos/aus2\\_1.htm](http://www.dhm.de/ausstellungen/tsingtau/katalog/fotos/aus2_1.htm) (last accessed 8 July 2013).

53 Gustav Brandt, "In Frankreich erschallt der Ruf: Völker Chinas wahret Eure heiligsten Güter, denn unsere Missionare kommen" [Peoples of China! Protect your holiest goods because our missionaries are on their way!], *Kladderadatsch*, 55-1 (January 1902), 15, <http://www.payer.de/religionskritik/karikaturen134.htm> (last accessed 7 November 2013).

54 See Sven Saaler, "The Construction of Regionalism in Modern Japan: Kōdera Kenkichi and his 'Treatise on Greater Asianism' (1916)", *Modern Asian Studies*, 41 (2007), 1261-1294.

55 On this aspect see Iikura Akira, *Ierō Periru no Shinwa: Teikoku Nihon to Kōka no Gyakusetsu* [The Myth of the Yellow Peril: Imperial Japan and the Paradox of the Yellow Danger], Tokyo 2004.

As the cases above illustrate, visual portrayals in political discourse may be particularly useful and effective in times of crisis and war.<sup>56</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that during the Pacific War (1941–45) political cartoons became ubiquitous tools of persuasion or propaganda on both sides of the Pacific. As John Dower has argued in his study of American portrayals of Japan and vice versa, “the pure Self and the demonic Other were such polar extremes that they made the work of many polemicists and artists fairly easy”<sup>57</sup>. Their work, however, became more complicated when the dividing lines between ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ could not be drawn as easily between East and West as in the cases studied by Dower. Asianist rhetoric, be it visual or textual, of course drew heavily on anti-Western stereotypes in order to define Asia’s “pure Self” against the “demonic” West. Yet, in addition, it also had to overcome dividing lines within Asia, namely between the Japanese and other Asians, who – according to official propaganda – had to follow Japanese guidance if they were to be liberated from Western colonialism. In order to create a context that would not too obviously ignore or beautify political reality, Chinese Asianist discourse, mainly propagated by Wang Jingwei’s collaborationist regime, relied on a combined strategy of implicitly pro-Japanese Sino-centrism<sup>58</sup> and anti-Westernism. Similar to the way Chinese collaborationist maps had portrayed China as the centre and Japan at the periphery of a Greater Asia, political cartoons, too, were characterized by a focus on Chinese leadership of Asia and, at least implicitly, attempts to marginalize Japan’s role. As can be seen in the original Knackfuss painting (1895), Buddha functioned as a symbol of Asia, in opposition to Western Christianity. Chinese claims to leadership, however, largely ignored Buddhism but instrumentalized Confucius and Confucianism as the unifying element and symbol of ‘One Asia’. Thereby, Wang was able to establish a Sinocentric conception of Asianism that clearly differed from the war-driven Japanese way of uniting Asia. In the place of Japan a peace-promoting Confucius was displayed as “the guiding teacher of the Asian peoples”.

In this cartoon, a teacher dressed in Chinese clothes and pointing to Confucius explains to an assembly of Asians dressed in different traditional clothes a phrase from the Confucian Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhongyong*), ending with “creating ever-lasting peace in all the world” (*wei wanshi kai taiping*). Below the Chinese teacher, a Japanese soldier is pointing at the picture of Confucius, like a good student who is imitating his teacher. Though he represents military force his position is clearly subordinate to that of the teacher. Portrayed in this way – and coinciding with Japanese war-time rhetoric according to which lasting peace could only be established by the liberation of all Asians from Western oppression – the cartoon draws a rather explicit line of demarcation between Chinese traditional teachings and Japanese reality. The Japanese, it is implied, had

56 For a discussion of the role of cartoons during the Second World War with a focus on Europe see Roy Douglas, *The World War 1939–1945*, ix–xii.

57 John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, New York 1986, 250.

58 For reappraisals of Wang’s critical collaboration with the Japanese see Andrew Cheung: “Slogans, Symbols, and Legitimacy: The Case of Wang Jingwei’s Nanjing Regime” (Indiana East Asian Working Paper Series on Language and Politics in Modern China, No. 6), 1995 and Hwang 1998.

adopted the Western civilizational traits of aggression and war; now they needed to be reminded of their civilization's Sinic roots. This reminder was nothing new to the Japanese: in 1924, shortly before his death, Sun Yat-sen, the founder of modern China and a frequent visitor to Japan, had delivered a speech on Greater Asianism in the Japanese city of Kobe. In it, he elaborated on the Confucian distinction between the virtuous rule of right (*wangdao*) and the despotic rule of might (*badao*) as the essence of Asian commonality. Sun had closed his speech by asking the Japanese whether they wanted to become “the watchdog of Western rule of might” or function as “the stronghold of Eastern rule of virtue”.<sup>59</sup>



Figure 7 Confucius as “the teacher of the Asian peoples”, 1942<sup>60</sup>

59 For Sun's speech and contemporary reactions see Chin Tokujin and Yasui Sankichi (eds.), *Son Bun kōen 'Dai Ajiashugi' shiryō shū* [Collection of materials of Sun Yat-sen's 'Greater Asianism' speech], Kyoto 1989; quotes from page 80.

60 “Yazhou minzu de daoshi” [Teacher of the Asian Peoples], *Dongya lianmeng huabao* [East Asian League Pictorial], Sept. 1942.



The memory of Sun and his conception of Greater Asianism, as opposed to Japanese Asianist conceptions, played a central role in Chinese collaborationist discourse.<sup>61</sup> This allowed Wang and his regime to stay terminologically within the framework set by the Japanese while differing conceptually. The main message, however, was anti-Western. In Sun's distinction between *wangdao* and *badao*, Europe (and America) is portrayed as a culture of scientific materialism, force, and war, whereas traditional Asian, meaning Chinese, culture is characterized by benevolence, justice, and morality. The threat expressed in this dichotomous view of East *versus* West also refers to territorial rights. Western rule of might has obtained Asian territory and thereby also threatens Eastern ideals and social order. As Sun had argued in his Kobe speech in 1924, only control over one's territory enables a status of complete independence. Asia therefore, Sun had explained, included only two independent countries, located at the very Western and Eastern extremes: Turkey and Japan. In order to re-establish the virtuous rule of right according to Confucian principles, the Asian peoples first needed to regain sovereignty over their lands.

This theme of territorial self-determination was more explicit in political cartoons that combined civilizational and geopolitical elements. There, too, the national or ethnic differences among Asians were visibly depicted but put into perspective by their joint actions. Typically, such images portrayed Asians joining hands, touching each other in joy, or facing in the same direction. Cooperation of Asians against the Westerners – usually symbolized by the British and Americans – is emphasized as the means to regain control over their native lands. The Japanese are actively involved in establishing “Greater East Asia” by, practically, kicking out the British and Americans, but Asians can only enjoy harmonious lives and celebrate a “cheerful and bright” future as the result of cooperation.<sup>62</sup> In a cartoon that portrays the “rise of a union of East Asian peoples”, the anti-Western aspect is alluded to by the joint march of Asians carrying weapons.<sup>63</sup> A rising sun in the background here functions as the future map of a borderless Asia in which Japan is portrayed disproportionately large, yet still trumped by China which is, of course, much larger and positioned at the centre. The group is led by Chinese and, as in the cases above, Japanese participation is prominent but subordinate.

Probably in an attempt to make the message of these political cartoons more credible to their Chinese audience, the *East Asian League Pictorial* also introduced *manhua* (manga) from other parts of Asia. In a very familiar fashion, a three-picture-cartoon from Burma (recently occupied by Japan) visually explained the situation of the Burmese people during and after the presence of Western colonial forces. The first picture shows a fat British man smoking a cigar, possibly a caricature of Winston Churchill, sitting at the centre of the Asian side of the globe, next to an American (Uncle Sam). Three Asians, probably signifying different Burmese ethnicities (Burmese, Chinese, Indian), are looking at them

61 See Weber “Nanjing’s Greater Asianism, 1940”, Pan-Asianism.

62 A typical example is “Yukuai yu minglang” [Cheerful and bright], *Dongya lianmeng huabao* [East Asian League Pictorial], June 1942.

63 An example can be found in “Women xieli xiang xin Dongya jianshe qiantu maijin” [We cooperate to advance in big strides the erection of a new East Asia], *Dongya lianmeng huabao* [East Asian League Pictorial], April 1942.

resentfully, but they are obviously helpless. In the second picture, a Japanese soldier arrives and together with the three Burmese pushes the American and Briton from the globe. The third picture shows the three Burmese and the Japanese soldier united in jubilant poses, singing songs of joy together while the Japanese cheerfully plays the accordion.

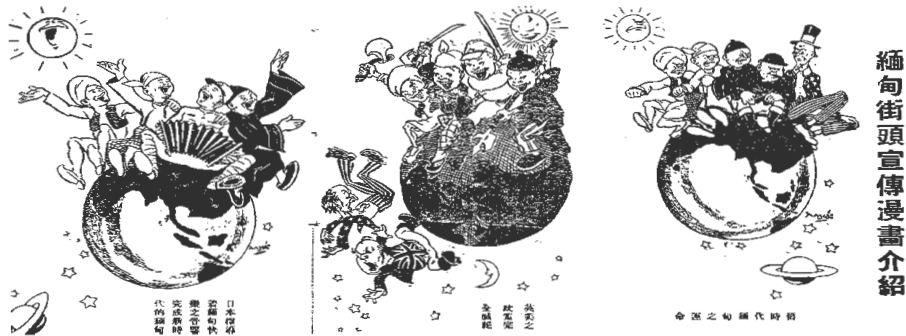


Figure 8 Introducing a political cartoon from the “street corners” of (Japanese occupied) Burma to Chinese readers, 1942.<sup>64</sup>

Although, compared to Chinese collaborationist cartoons, the role of Japan is more central and proactive, this cartoon, too, includes the two typical characteristics of anti-Westernism and Japanophile self-centrism. The political message of this cartoon, and of the previous one, is obvious: joining hands with the Japanese is the way to solve national problems without having to give up one’s own national self-esteem. ‘Asia’, it insinuates, can be a joint project of all Asians for the sake of one’s own nation as long as everyone is willing to cooperate with Japan. While many of the cartoons studied above relied on and reinforced nationality visually, they also portrayed the political community as a supra-national *regional* community, albeit with an imperialist inflection. Territory formation in this way was easy to depict visually and possibly entertaining to consume, but it proved impossible to implement. Imperialist visions of ‘One Asia’ ended as nightmares – both for the Asian ‘Self’ and the Asian ‘Other’.

## Conclusion

The controversy about the Muhammad cartoons first printed in a Danish newspaper in 2005 may serve as a more recent reminder of the lasting impact of visuals on political discourse and daily life. Indeed, the “century of images”<sup>65</sup> has not ended with the end of

64 “Miantian jietou xuanchuan manhua jieshao” [Introducing propaganda cartoons from the street corners of Burma], *Dongya lianmeng huabao* [East Asian League Pictorial], Sept. 1942.

65 Gerhard Paul, “Das Jahrhundert der Bilder. Die visuelle Geschichte und der Bildkanon des kulturellen Gedächtnisses” [The Century of Images. The visual history and canon of cultural memory], *Das Jahrhundert der Bilder* [The Century of Images], ed. Gerhard Paul, Göttingen 2009, 14-39.

the century. Historically, the “rhetoric of images”<sup>66</sup> as expressed in maps and political cartoons has played a key role in the way people have been persuaded to define themselves territorially, to fight for territorial revisions, or to accept given territorializations. Images visualize, and therefore make explicit, territorial dimensions that remain abstract in written political discourse and are rarely experienced in daily life. Many territorial disputes between Asian countries even in the present, such as the ongoing Sino-Japanese quarrel over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, would lose some of their impact if they could not be visualized, in maps or otherwise. Cartoons, through their simplistic exaggerations and satirical portrayals, often add a human side to political discourse; they are more suggestive, more insulting, and less balanced or nuanced. As such, they are particularly well suited to be carriers and catalysts of political controversy and dispute, and to serve as tools of political propaganda. With regard to territory, cartoons facilitate the inclusion of a human or social dimension that re-personalizes geographically expressed power relations. Like their textual counterparts, visual portrayals of ‘One Asia’ during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century remained focused on the nation. When opposition to a different region or common enemies *without* was stressed, the national dimension frequently stepped into the background, but rarely disappeared completely. Instead, visions of ‘One Asia’ often reproduced and reinforced the national competition for leadership and dominance. During a period of heightened nationalism, nations and nation states were not only taken as natural givens but also, in particular where nation state formation was still underway, as the legitimate purpose of historical development and human effort. In this context, regionalist conceptions of “macro-nationalisms”<sup>67</sup> fraternized easily with imperialism. Today, as the political and economic organisation of life has become more trans-nationalized and discourse on Asian regional integration is accompanied by practical steps towards integration,<sup>68</sup> the transcendence of nations and national borders (“transnational”) has started to substitute the national paradigm. Simultaneously, new visions of Asian commonality have emerged that address the danger of a renewed fraternization of transnational regionalism with new forms of de-territorialized imperialism.<sup>69</sup> Within this framework, Wada Haruki, whose map of Northeast Asia challenges the conventional and self-centred way of looking at the region without abandoning nation states immediately, has called for a “new utopia” to build a “common house of Northeast Asia”. As his map of Northeast Asia implies, the problem of territorialisation cannot be overcome simply by transcending the geographical boundaries that have been used for centuries as a social means to control people.<sup>70</sup> Rather, Wada argues, what is required is a reform-oriented utopian mindset that allows for putting political, national, religious and other boundaries into perspective, thereby facilitating peaceful cooperation and exchange, dis-

66 W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, Chicago 1986, 1-2.

67 Louis L. Snyder, *Macro-nationalisms: a history of the pan-movements*, Westport 1984.

68 See *A new East Asia: toward a regional community*, ed. Kazuko Mori and Kenichiro Hirano, Singapore 2007.

69 See, in general, Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge/London 2000 and, with particular reference to East Asia, Kuan-hsing Chen, *Asia as method: toward deimperialization*, Durham 2010.

70 See R. D. Sack, *Human Territoriality*, 5.

cussion and respect as a first step towards “making the impossible possible and pursuing the realization of the unthinkable: utopia”. As Wada concludes, “if a ‘common house of Northeast Asia’ can be realized, a common house of the human race, a common house of the whole planet may be possible, too.”<sup>71</sup> New images and ideas of territoriality, or rather of de-territorialisation, may thus contribute to dissociating a given territory from social control exercised within defined boundaries, be they local, national, or regional.

71 Wada Haruki, *Tōhoku Ajia*, 266-270.