Women and Nationalism during Late Meiji Japan:

A Critical Analysis of Anne McClintock's Theory on Women and the Nation-State

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Introduction

After the Meiji restoration in 1868, Japan broke with the old ways of the Tokugawa bakufu and started to modernize and Westernize. When, in 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States arrived in Japan, he proposed a trade relationship. He sailed into the harbors of Japan with ships and equipment that showed the latest American technology which far outreached Japanese technology at the time. This frightened the Japanese bakufu, since Matthew Perry was not simply proposing a trade, but more or less threatening Japan with war if it did not agree to close a trade agreement. Ultimately, feeling pressured, the Tokugawa bakufu signed the treaty (Convention of Kanagawa), opening eight ports to trade (Gordon 2009, 50). Following this treatise, Japan started to modernize. From the beginning of the Meiji Revolution, Japan started to develop a capitalist industrial economy, thousands of miles of railway lines were laid and compulsory education was introduced.

During a time in which a great deal of the Western countries had been colonizing large parts of the world, including Asian countries, this development of modernizing and Westernizing may seem as a sign of compliance or maybe even a sign of surrendering to the colonizing forces of the West. However, this was not necessarily the case. The decision to Westernize was also motivated as a resistance against the West and Western hegemony due to the potential of being semi-colonized as was China (Hayakawa, 1995, 108). It was a way to show that Japan was a country deserving of respect and equal treatment.

The first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) had exactly that outcome. In 1876, Japan used the same trick on Korea as the Americans did on Japan. Japan threatened Korea with warfare if it did not sign the Kanghwa Treaty which forced Korea to open three ports to trade and would give Japan extraterritorial jurisdiction (Gordon 2009, 113) At the same time, China and Russia also tried to get more influence over Korea. This ultimately led to the Tonghak Rebellion, led by Korean peasants who were unhappy with the economic distress that was caused by Japan, Russia and China. Consequently, Korea's leaders wanted to put down this rebellion and to be independent, thus turning to China (with which Korea had a centuries-long tributary trade connection) for aid. The aid the China promised to give to Korea now put China and Japan on opposing sides, and thus Japan declared war on China in 1894 (ibid, 116). The war led to a victory on Japan's side one year later, which not only proved political and economical valuable to Japan, but it also gave Japan the image that it wanted, the image of an Asian imperial power (ibid, 117)

After Japan's victory, Japan tried to gain more and more influence over Korea. Still dissatisfied with Japan's hegemonic tendencies, the Korean leaders now turned to Russia for help, consequently making Japan and Russia rivals (ibid, 118). Japan proposed an ultimatum: Russia could get full control over Manchuria if Japan could keep control in Korea. This prompted one problem; Japan actually did not really want Russia to have control over Manchuria, and Russia wanted to maintain it's influence in Korea. In the meantime, the Japanese leaders felt pressured by political parties, journalists and Tokyo Imperial University professors who were calling for war. As a result, in 1904, Japan declared war on Russia. The war was ultimately settled because both nations suffered high human and material losses. Japan gained control over Korea but did not receive financial compensation (ibid, 119).

The wars with China and Korea made it clear for Japan that it needed strong and healthy citizens, both men and women, to be able to become a strong and stable nation. Boys would grow into strong soldiers, and girls would develop into responsible, "good wives and wise mothers" who would make sure that their children grow up healthy.

"Good wives, Wise mothers"

Motherhood in Japan has been a fluid concept and the idea of women being responsible for the upbringing of their own children has not always been self-explanatory.

From medieval Japan (1100 – 1600) the family household (*ie*) had a central place in most of people's lives. Within a household the husband was the household head and the wife was the domestic head. Even though the wife was subservient to her husband, her position in the family was quite high, since she was responsible for everything that needed to be done in the household, this included male and female servants if the family had them (Wakita 2006, 12). Moreover, the fact that women were even able to bear children and – the possible successors of the patriarch – made them valued members of the family. Motherhood was thus respected (ibid., 52).

During the Tokugawa period, the saying *danson johi* ('respecting men, despising women') was especially prevalent and the respect for women started to wane. The wellbeing of the family was deemed more important than the wellbeing of its members (Uno 1991, 23). Women (especially as mothers) now played a limited role in the family and were taught according the 'Greater Learning for Women' or *onna daigaku.* In these Confucian works the purpose of a woman's life was described as being limited to subordination towards her husband and her husband's family (Koyama 2013, 16).

Within a family, the wife of the household head had the responsibility of bearing children and helping out with the family business – for working class women this meant working in the fields (ibid., 27), for middle- and upper middle class women this mostly meant sewing clothes and entertaining guests (ibid., 28) or not even having to work at all (ibid., 27). The idea that a family's continuation exceeded the wellbeing of its member is clearly illustrated in the saying "a woman without a child must leave the marriage" (*ko naki wa saru*) (Wakita 2006, 69). Bearing children – preferably boys – was without a doubt a woman's greatest responsibility in the family. If a woman was not able to produce a male heir, her husband might turn to another woman, virtually making the first wife a 'borrowed womb' (*hara wa karimono*) (Niwa 1993, 72).

If a woman did fulfill her role as child bearer, this did not unmistakably mean that she was also responsible for the upbringing of her offspring. While a woman's working capabilities were deemed vital for the family business, she was not believed capable of taking care of her own children (Niwa 1993, 72). Mothers were thought to be too emotional for the task (Uno 1993, 126; Koyama 2013, 17). It would only lead to spoiled and weak children. Instead, the father – or household head – had the leading role in the upbringing of the children. He was to decide what was best for his own children and the actual nursing and taking care of the children were often done either by the parents-in-law in the working classes, or by servants and (wet)nurses in the upper classes (Uno 1993, 126).

In 1875, Nakamura Masanao was the first to coin the phrase *ryōsai kenbo*; "good wife, wise mother" in the *Meiji Six Journal* (Sievers 1983, 22). As an educator who had spent about two years in Great Britain and was strongly influenced by Christianity, he believed that the treatment of women in Japanese society was barbaric and inhumane (Ibid., 18). He explained that "women should provide the religious and moral foundation of the home, educating their children and acting as the 'better half' to their husbands". He believed that this would help Japan grow as a strong nation but that it would also be the best thing to do in principle (ibid., 22).

Still, it was not until 1899 that the ideal of *ryōsai kenbo* became an official government-approved model of the modern Japanese housewife (Sievers 1982, 112). It was the experiences during the Sino-Japanese war and the threat of an upcoming Russo-Japanese war that made it clear for the Japanese government that not only men were vital for the survival of the Japanese army, but that women too should play their part. Women were now supposed to "serve the state by attending to her husband well, and raising her child wisely" (Niwa 1993, 75; Uno 1993, 294).

Yet women did not occupy themselves only with bearing and rearing children. This due to the fact that the ideal of ryōsai kenbo was very much a double standard based on a distinction between middle and upper class and working class women. Middle and upper class women had the means to solely focus themselves on the children because of the employment of maids and staff in the house, aside from that they were also able to help during the wars as nurses or through monetary aid.

Unlike these upper classes the working class women often had to help in the family business or were working in textile mills to support the family financially (Sievers 1983, 54). Some women also worked as prostitutes to keep the soldiers at the fronts 'sane' (Frühstück 2003, 38; Park 2014, 116). Due to the financially weak position they were in, the sole focus on children was often not applicable to working class women.

Methodology

For this thesis I have chosen to test the applicability of Anne McClintock's essay '"No Longer in a Future Heaven": Nationalism, Gender, and Race', to the case of women in late 19th century Japan. I chose this piece of literature specifically because McClintock lists five ways in which women have generally been implicated in nationalism. I will elaborate on this list in the next section.

I will be discussing this list point by point in the form of a critical literature analysis to see to what extent this list of nationalistic implications applies to women during Late Meiji Japan. In doing so, I will base my critical literature analysis on a selected number of books:

- *House and Home in Modern Japan : Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture, 1880-1930* by Jordan Sand[1]
- *Flowers in Salt : The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* by Sharon L. Sievers[2]
- *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* by Sabine Frühstück[3]

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[1] Sand, Jordan. *House and Home in Modern Japan : Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture, 1880-1930*. MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.

[2] Sievers, Sharon L. *Flowers in Salt : The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1983.

[3] Frühstück, Sabine. *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan*. University of California Press, 2003.

- *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* by Vera C. Mackie[4]
- *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of 'Good Wife, Wise mother' in Modern Japan* by Shizuko Koyama[5].
- *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600 – 1945.* By Gail Lee Bernstein[6].

Relevance of this thesis

In this thesis I want to show that there are multiple sides to the story when it comes to women's positions in times of nationalism. By using an intersectional study of nationalism in Late Meiji Japan in which I focus on gender as well as class, I argue that not only did notions of nationalism mean something very different for women than it did for men, but they also differed from woman to woman due to class differences. Acts of nationalism or patriotism represented something very different for women from the working class than they did for women from the middle and upper middle classes. It is important to keep these differences in mind while discussing women and nationalism so that we do not stumble in the pitfall of generalizing women's lives and the ways they have been affected by nationalism.

What time period is discussed in this thesis?

In this thesis will discuss women during the Late Meiji period, a period starting roughly from 1890 until 1912. This is a particularly interesting period due to the fact that a lot of politically and institutionally crucial changes started to take place. It was a time in which the leaders of Japan consolidated their power in a Western oriented top-down government and became the first non-Western country to promulgate a constitution (1889) (Yamazaki 1985, 8). It was also a time of profound nation building in which not only men, but also women were meant to fulfill their own roles to benefit the state. This decision to make women a part of the nation building

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[4] Mackie, Vera C. *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality.* Contemporary Japanese Society. Cambridge University Press, 2003

[5] Koyama, Shizuko. *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of 'Good Wife, Wise mother'* in Modern Japan. Boston: Brill, 2013

[6] Bernstein, Gail Lee. *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*. Berkeley, Calif. [etc.]: University of California Press, 1991.

process brought with it a number of changes that women had to undergo. For instance, in 1890, and women were banned from participating in politics under Article 5 of the Police Security Regulations (Sievers 1983, 52) since it was believed that women should focus their attention on childrearing instead of political issues. This and the aforementioned newly government approved ideal of *ryōsai kenbo* prompted multiple instances in which women fought for their own rights and against the patriarchy in feminist activities such as community organizations (i.e. discussion groups, study groups, freedom houses and public-speaking societies) (Sievers 1983, 36; 42), unified through an expanding number of print media such as magazines.

Structure

As I will explain in the following section, I have chosen a structure for this paper that is based on the five ways that women's functionality has been implicated in times of nationalism to benefit the growth of a nation-state. I believe that this is one of the clearest ways to compare my case study (Japan) to that of McClintock's (South Africa) and since this list – which is borrowed from her fellow scholars Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias[7] – also reflects many of McClintock's own arguments, I regard this structure as the most complete one.

After I have elaborated on McClintock's theories I will test each of its theoretical aspects in separate sections. This means that in Section 1 I will elaborate on women as biological reproducers of the members of national collectivities. With the introduction of the ryōsai kenbo ideal, women were encouraged to procreate for a stronger nation-state – entailing not only of a larger number of potential soldiers for the armed forces, but also smarter and healthier citizens. But how realistic was this ideal? I will explain that the idea of ryōsai kenbo was not applicable to all women in the Meiji period due to class differences.

Section 2 will have women as symbolic signifiers of national difference as topic. Japanese women were expected to be the traditional, stable pillars in a society which felt the substantial effects of westernization and modernizing processes. As I will explain later in this essay, McClintock claims that non-Western developing nation-states have the West as example to strive after (McClintock 1996, 263). This also implicates that a non-Western nation-state might lose its historical identity in the process. I will elaborate on how this development of the Japanese nation-state concretely affected women from different classes in correlation with men.

[7] Yuval-Davis, Nira; Anthias, Floya and Campling, Jo. *Woman, Nation, State*. Basingstoke [etc.]: Macmillan, 1989.

The following section, Section 3, concerns the implication of women as active transmitters and producers of the national culture. As McClintock aptly states, national culture is often transmitted through Anderson's notion of 'print capitalism' (Anderson 2006, 5) (McClintock herself also adds the notion of 'commodity spectacle' since literacy has only become widespread) (McClintock 1996, 273). I will elaborate on how ryōsai kenbo relates to notions of print capitalism and commodity spectacle and what this effectively meant for young women as the future mothers of the Japanese nation-state.

In Section 4, I will discuss women as reproducers of the boundaries of national groups. According to one of McClintock's earlier essays, women – in times of nationalism – were being discouraged of engaging in relationships with men outside of the nation, since these relationships were prone of "racial and cultural" contagion (1995, 47). In this section I will explore whether the same could be said about relationships in Meiji Japan? How was sexuality managed in this time period and what did this mean for Japanese women?

Section 5 will focus on women as active participants of national struggles. McClintock states that in South Africa, a portion of Afrikaner women actually took up arms to fights for their nation (McClintock 1991, 111). Can the same be recognized for Japanese women? In this section I will elaborate on how the ideal of ryōsai kenbo withheld women from actually becoming soldiers, but that there were other ways in which they expected to support their modernizing nation.

Lastly, in the conclusion, I will put together all the aforementioned sections and conclude to what extent McClintock's fivefold list of women's relation to nationalism can be applied to Japan during the Late Meiji period.

Theoretical Framework

Anne McClintock has written a range of works which mainly discuss notions of sexuality, gender, race and colonialism. These include books such as *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995)[8], along with articles and reviews, such as "Race, Crossdressing and the cult of Domesticity" (2004)[9] and "Fanon and Gender Agency" (1999)[10].

The article referred to in this essay revolves around nationalism and how it is constructed around notions of family, gender and race. In ""No Longer in a Future Heaven": Nationalism, Gender and Race" (1996)[11] McClintock took the case of South Africa as focal point to explain that nationalism should be always be understood as a gendered concept.

Thus, she begins her essay by stating that "all nationalisms are gendered" and "no nation in the world grants women and men the same access to the rights and resources of the nation-state" (ibid., 260). To support her statement she firstly argues that nationalisms are often constructed around the idea of 'family' with the added implication of a certain hierarchy structure (ibid., 262); secondly, the 'natural division' of gender resolves a paradox in a nation's representation of time (ibid., 263); thirdly, she refers to Frantz Fanon's argument that during times of nationalism women enjoy an agency by men's invitation only (ibid., 265). In her case study of South Africa she regularly comes back to these three components, along with references to a list of five ways in which the role of women in the nation-state have been implicated which was originally constructed by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (ibid., 261). In this chapter I will elaborate on McClintock's statement of nationalisms being a gendered concept.

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[8] McClintock, Anne. Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York, NY [etc.]: Routledge, 1995.

[9] McClintock, Anne. "Race, Cross-Dressing and the Cult of Domesticity", in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, eds. Sara Mills and Reina Lewis, (Edinburgh University Press 2004), 635-66.

[10] McClintock, Anne. "Fanon and Gender Agency", in Nigel C. Gibson, ed. *Rethinking Fanon: The Continuing Dialogue* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 66-81

[11] McClintock, Anne. "No Longer in a Future Heaven: Nationalism, Gender, and Race", in *Becoming National*, edited by Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 260-284

According to McClintock, nationalisms are often constructed around the idea of family which is important in two ways. Firstly, it offers a 'natural' type of hierarchy based on gender roles with the masculine leader at the top (ibid., 262). She demonstrates that in the case of South Africa this type of gendered hierarchy comes forward in multiple ways. In the Afrikaner nationalism there was, for instance, the icon of the *volksmoeder*. In a time when South Africa was progressively being controlled by the British, Afrikaner women played an essential part in the development of Afrikanerdom. The power of Afrikaner motherhood was mobilized in the service of white nation-building (ibid., 276). So here, McClintock identifies a paradox: on the one hand, the icon of the *volksmoeder* recognizes the power of (white) motherhood; on the other hand, it is icon of gender containment, containing women's mutinous power within an iconography of domestic service (ibid.)

At the same time, in 1918, a secret, exclusively white male society was launched called the Broederbond (the Brotherhood) which was dedicated to the advancement of Afrikaner interests and one of the driving forces behind *Apartheid* (Dubow 1992, 211). Even when its power started to wane at the beginning of the 1990's, when the society started to take on colored Afrikaans speaker, women were continued to be barred (McClintock 1996, 272). So, in Afrikaner nationalism men could unite outside of the home to promote Afrikanerdom, while women had to stay inside.

Also in African nationalism, this gender division can be identified. In 1912, the Union of South Africa was formed which was supported by a white parliament. As a reaction against this, Africans launched the African National Congress (ANC) in 1914 which was, just as the Afrikaner Broederbond, all male. The wives of congress member could join as "auxiliary members" but did not gain the power to vote or formal political representation (ibid., 278).

What we can see here, is that not only within the nationalisms themselves did this familial hierarchy become apparent – men as the leaders over a national family – but also on the outside; the white Afrikaner nationalism took on the fatherly role of governing the black African 'children' (ibid., 262). The family trope thus justified both gender and racial discrimination.

Apart from the family trope offering a 'natural' structure of hierarchy, it also provides a way of figuring "national time" (McClintock 1996, 262). To explain, McClintock states that nations take shape as a contradictory figure of time: "one face gazing back into the primordial mists of the past, the other into an infinite future" (ibid., 263). What is suggested here is the paradox of a nation having to look back at its past (to gain self-definition) to be able to strive forward. In times of nationalism, notions of traditions and a supposedly shared past is important

to unify people and to make them feel that they are all on the same track to the future. On top of this, McClintock adds another dimension to this idea. She claims that this paradox of time is resolved by figuring the contradiction in the representation of time as a natural division of gender: “women are represented as the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition […], embodying nationalism’s conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity […], embodying nationalism’s progressive, or revolutionary, principle of discontinuity” (ibid., 263). After this elaboration on ‘nation time’ there is one question that remains; why is there a need to resolve ‘nation time’ in the first place?

McClintock explains that “national history is imaged as naturally teleological, an organic process of upward growth, with the European nation as the apogee of world progress” (ibid.) Thus a nation is ‘supposed’ to grow and develop in the future, leaving its past behind. However the past remains important for a nation’s self-definition therefore it needs to be placed somewhere on the nation’s developmental track. This is where the ‘natural’ gender division becomes relevant. As a result of this gender division, a nation’s male leadership can uphold its forward-striving, active role, while women get the task of preserving the traditional past.

This task division of men actively fighting for the growth of a nation, and women having to preserve the past makes it seem as if women are submissive, inert and lack agency. What becomes apparent in McClintock’s essay, is that Frantz Fanon argued that women do not have an agency on their own. They only have a designated agency – an agency by men’s invitation only (ibid., 269). This means, according to Fanon, that women can only actively partake in a nation’s growth if the men want them to do so. For instance by fighting in a war only if there is a deficit of male soldiers. McClintock makes clear that she does not agree with this statement entirely. She cites the example of the Bantu Women’s League, who, out of discontentment, fought against the white leadership of Union of South Africa when it wanted black African women to carry passes – which would give them entrance to ‘white’ parts of South Africa – to preempt their migration to the cities (ibid., 278). African women united not because the men of the ANC wanted them to, but because they themselves felt strongly about the issue.

The active role that the Bantu Women’s League played in the African nationalism is one of the five implications (by Yuval-Davis and Anthias) that McClintock lists in the introduction of her essay; ‘women as active participants in national struggle’ (ibid., 261). Even though McClintock does not structure her case study around this list, we can still recognize each mentioned implication as such, therefore I will give an overview of these five implications.

The list starts with ‘women as biological reproducers of the members of national collectivities’. Women have the main function of reproducing and rearing strong and healthy

citizens that form the future of the nation. McClintock does not give any examples on how this implied role for women can be traced back in the history of South Africa, but in one of her earlier essays which also deals with South Africa she states that "in 1961, […], all white women were exhorted to do their national duty and "Have a Baby for Republic Day"" (McClintock 1991, 110). Thus, in the Afrikaner nationalism women were encouraged to reproduce the future citizens of the white nations.

Second on the list; 'women function as symbolic signifiers of national difference in male discourse' (McClintock 1996, 261). This should be understood in light of the aforementioned concept of the 'gendering of nation time'. Because, according to McClintock, it is a nationalism's purpose to grow – with the "European nation as the apogee of world progress" (ibid., 263) – I argue that the outcome may be that all nationalisms will be looking the same. In order for a nation to keep it's own identity, while still being able to grow, women are exhorted to be the traditional keeper of a nation's culture and expected to be the stable pillars. McClintock states in reference to the *Tweede Trek*, or the *Eeufees,*[12] that "[women's] starched white bonnets and white dresses set a stark chiaroscuro of gender difference against the somber black of the men's clothes. Photographic captions [in the *Gedenkboek*] hail women in the Victorian iconography of cleanliness, purity and maternal fecundity as the gatekeepers of the nation" (McClintock 1996, 276).

Third on the list is the implication 'women as active transmitters and producers of national culture' (ibid). While raising their children, women are considered the main educators and thus are important in spreading the cultural norms and values of the nation. According to Anderson, the transmitting of national culture is important for the nation-state in securing an imagined community so that all citizens feel as if they belong to the same community, and the transmitting is done so through print capitalism (2006, 5 – 6)[13]. One way in which the Afrikaner

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[12] The Tweede Trek (Second Trek) in 1938 was a celebration of the first Great Trek in 1836, an organized migration of thousands of white farmers (often Dutch, Flemish, German and French Huguenots), who lived in the Cape of Good Hope before Britain formally annexed it from the Dutch in 1814 (Laband 2005, 11)

[13] McClintock agrees with this statement, except, she believes that national culture is mainly transmitted through 'commodity spectacle' rather than print capitalism (McClintock 1996, 273). "More often than not, nationalism takes shape through the visible, ritual organization of fetish objects – flags, uniforms, airplane logos, maps, anthems, national flowers, national cuisines and architectures as well as through the organization of collective fetish spectacle – in team sports, military displays, mass rallies, the myriad forms of popular culture and so on" (ibid., 274)

culture was spread in the household, was through Afrikaans, the language that had to unify all Afrikaners – who did not have a common language or identity up until that point (McClintock 1996, 272).

Fourth, women were implicated ‘as reproducers of the boundaries of national groups (through restrictions on intercourse and marriage)’ (ibid., 261). Women were expected to only engage with men from their own nation, since relationships with men outside the nation are prone to obscure the boundaries between two nations, and are also thought to produce degenerate offspring because of ‘racial and cultural contagion’ (McClintock 1995, 47). Restrictions on intercourse and marriage were meant to prevent this from happening. In an essay that McClintock wrote on South Africa in 1991 she elaborates on the Group Areas Act which was promulgated in 1950. This act meant that “if people marry across their racial groups a white partner, male or female, takes the classification of the other partner, whether black or colored” (McClintock 1991, 112). This discouraged white Afrikaners (not only women) from marrying colored, or black people since this would mean that they would lose their white privileges.

Lastly, women can function as ‘active participants in national struggle’ (McClintock, 1996, 261). McClintock proofs this implication in her essay with the aforementioned Bantu Women’s League.

While most of McClintock’s essay is focused on nationalism’s effects on white Afrikaner women, she does however remind us that nationalisms in South Africa not only created gender divergence, but also class divergence among women. There is a difference between the effects that nationalism on both men and women in South Africa, but also white Afrikaner women and black African women. Especially during instances in which Afrikaner women tried to fight for women’s rights. During the 1960’s and 1970’s, when Apartheid had consolidated white supremacy in South Africa, white feminist Afrikaner women claimed to give a voice to a ‘universal sisterhood in suffering’. However, for black African women, this statement was debatable (McClintock 1991, 118):

> “Many employed black women in South Africa are domestic worker, and for these women, ferrying between plush suburbs and the desolate townships, the terms of white liberal feminism had scant relevance and appeal. At this time, moreover, women’s position within the nationalistic movement was still precarious, and women could ill afford to antagonize men so embattled and already so reluctant to surrender whatever patriarchal power they still enjoyed” (McClintock 1991, 118).

After this analysis on McClintock's essay and her arguments, I will research to what extent the five implicated roles for women in nationalism – that McClintock has applied to white Afrikaner women – can be applied to women in Late Meiji Japan.

1

Women as Biological Reproducers of the Members of National Collectivities

According to Anne McClintock, in her essay 'No Longer in a Future Heaven', the first implicated role of women in times of nationalism is that they "serve as biological reproducers of national groups (the biological mothers of the people)" (1996, 261). The meaning of this is quite straightforward. Within their wombs, women carry the baby's that form the future of a nation. Although McClintock hardly comes back to this implication in the rest of her article to explain what this exactly meant for African women – except for one statement about Afrikaner women[14] - we can actually see that in Late Meiji Japan, women were encouraged by the government to procreate for the nation-state.

This was a rather new development in Japanese history. As noted above, during the Tokugawa period, women were merely seen as borrowed wombs (Niwa 1993, 72) who ought to produce children to secure the future of the family and its bloodline. The infant mortality rate was very high at that time, so a higher number of children born in the family meant a more stable future for the family and family name. Thus, before the Meiji period, bearing children was rather tied to the private sphere and focused on a family's wellbeing. Having children as an advantage to the nation-state seemed not so much envisioned.

During the Meiji period the focus on the family started to shift towards women having to procreate for society in its entirety. The wars with China (1894-1895) and Russia (1904-1905) made it crucial for the Meiji government to promote an increase in population. Thus in 1899, four years after the first Sino-Japanese War, the government started to focus on women and how they could fulfill their role as being a part of the new Japanese nation-state. The ideal of ryōsai kenbo was adopted and women, especially middle and higher class women, were now meant to serve the state by making sure that their children would grow up healthy and wise.

To further reinforce the increasement of population, abortion became an illegal act in 1907 (Norgren 2001, 23). Women no longer had the opportunity to abort a pregnancy if needed

[14] McClintock states that "in 1961 [..] all white women were exhorted to do their national duty and "Have a Baby for Republic Day"" (1991, 110).

or wanted, and thus were forced to carry their children to full term even if a child had come in to existence as a consequence of rape; women were “the pillars for the continuation of the race” (Frühstück 2003, 127). The Japanese government even went so far as to hand out awards to families with more than ten children (ibid., 167).

Yet, as in the Tokugawa period, the infant mortality rate was still very high. According to Frühstück, there was a steady rise in the infant mortality rate between the 1880’s and 1920’s[15] that was caused by infectious diseases and by “the general deterioration of social life, which was, in Japan and elsewhere, associated with urbanization and industrialization (2003, 24). In an attempt to minimize the infant mortality rate, measures were taken by the government to make sure that women and children stay healthy, for instance by promoting hygiene in girls’ schools (Mackie 2003, 76; Frühstück 2003, 49) and in magazines aimed at housewives (Sand 2003, 68).

We can see however that the ideal imposed on women by the government to procreate as much as possible was not necessarily a realistic one. We have to take in to consideration that not all women had the time and money to take care of multiple children. Indeed, women from the middle and upper middle classes were capable of taking care of their children due to servants in the household and not having to help financially. There is however a large portion of women in the Meiji period that could not afford such a luxury. Working class women had to work in the family business or in cotton mills to make ends meet.

In her book, Sharon Sievers elaborates on women in cotton mills. She states that by the end of the Meiji period in 1912, Japanese women had made their country the world’s leading exporter of silk (1983, 56). Sievers elaborates on how working class women had to work long days at textile mills to gain a little bit of income. Most often to support their parents back home and also to alleviate the financial burden of having to feed an extra mouth at home. Nolte and Hastings stand by this statement saying that the workforce in light industries, such as textiles, during the late Meiji was “60 to 90 percent female and produced 40 percent of the gross national product and 60 percent of the foreign exchange”[16] (1991, 153).

[15] Frühstück states that between the period of 1880 until 1920, the average mortality rate of infants less than one year of age per 1000 normal births rose from 117 to 159 (2003, 24).

[16] Nolte, Sharon H, and Hastings, Sally A. "The Meiji State's Policy toward Women, 1890-1910." In *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, 151-74. 1991.

Here, Sievers makes clear that working class women did not have the time and money to take care of children. Mackie elaborates in her book that this reality for working class women and its effect on their role as procreators was picked up on by different parts of society. She states:

> "Commentators of all political persuasions lamented the toll which factory work took on women's bodies, and struggled to come to terms with the reality of such work which made it difficult for women to bear and look after healthy children. Anxieties about modernity and industrialization were expressed as anxieties about the bodies of potential mothers" (2003, 75).

While Sievers thoroughly elaborates on the struggles that were caused by the cotton mills in women's lives when it comes to their rights as laborers and women, she neglects to touch upon the mill work and the effects that it has on governmental ideals such as ryōsai kenbo.

We can conclude in this section that the first mentioned implication by McClintock – women being expected to be the biological reproducers of national collectivities – is only applicable to Meiji women to a certain extent. Indeed, all women were meant to procreate for the state and were applauded by the government whenever they did so. However, in reality this ideal was seen to be only attainable for middle and upper middle classes.

We can see here that the gender norms clashed with the reality of class division in Meiji Japan. Even though women were now meant to be the main producers and caretakers of their children due to the newly introduced ideal of 'good wives, wise mothers' - which was meant to be applied to all women in the Japanese nation-state - in reality it proved not to be applicable to working class women. Despite women not being able to take care of children due to their personal situation, their labor, especially in the textile mills, was far too important for the nation-state's economy[17].

[17] I have to note here that not all working class women were active in the textile mills. Most of the working class women were rather engaged with agriculture during the Late Meiji period.

2

Women as Symbolic Signifiers of National Difference

> "In societies that are changing very rapidly, ambiguous signals are presented to women. Fears are often translated into attempts to prevent changes in their roles. They become the repositories of "traditional" values imputed to them by men in order to reduce the stresses men face. Resistance to women's greater participation in economic and political life may be felt especially strong among groups most exposed to rapid social change and most ambivalent about it (Papanek 1977, 15).

This quote from Hanna Papanek[18] is a very sharp description of the traditional and conservative roles that women were implied to fulfill in nationalistic nation-states and a clear example of McClintock's idea of a 'gendered form of nation time'(McClintock 1996, 263). A nation's fear of losing its identity in the process of fast modernization, puts women in the positions of securing the past.

In her essay, McClintock shows us the example of the Afrikaner nationalism. She states that: "A gendered division of national creation prevailed [in Afrikaner nationalism], whereby men were seen to embody the political and economic agency of the *volk*, while women were the (unpaid) keepers of tradition and the *volk's* moral and spiritual mission" (1991, 108, italics in original). As example, McClintock elaborates that women donned the ancestral bonnets during the Tweede (Second) Trek (ibid.).

We can recognize a similar pattern in late Meiji Japan between men and women. Whereas men were encouraged to be more active and progressive, women had to be 'stable pillars' of Japanese society. For instance, during the Meiji period, the influence coming from the West started to set foot in Japanese society. In an attempt to measure itself against the West, the Japanese government began to promote the Western look for men. This look meant shorter hair (in contrast to the longer hair that was typical for samurai during the Tokugawa period) and western clothing (Sievers 1983, 14).

The western look was however not meant for women. Sievers states that even though women wanted to show that they stood in solidarity with the country's march to progress, they

[18] Hanna Papanek (1927 – 2017) was an American anthropologist and feminist. She received a PhD in Social Relations from Harvard University.

were banned from wearing short hair in 1871 (ibid.) However, this did not stop women's rights activists, since they could just cut their hair at home.

The feminist Haru Hiratsuka (best known as Raichō Hiratsuka) describes in her autobiography that there were differences between how men and women were supposed to present themselves to the outside world. As the second daughter of an upper-class Tokyo family (her father was a high-ranking official at the Audit Board of the Meiji government and her mother came from a family that furnished physicians to a Tokugawa branch house), Raichō was able to attend Ochanomizu Girls' High School from 1898, an elite girl's school in Tokyo (Hiratsuka 2006, vii). Raichō recalls in her autobiography a moment at this school that clearly shows that amidst times of big social changes women were to be the stable pillars of society:

> "[…] by the mid-1890's, a general reaction to Westernization had set in […]. Japan was once again to be "pure, and in the wake of the war with China, the calls for a return to traditional values and a more assertive nationalism had become more strident. Even before the outbreak of the war, the Western-style parlor in our home had been made over into a room with a tatami floor. The reproductions of Western paintings on the sliding doors had been taken down and replaced with paper with Japanese designs. My mother no longer wore dresses, and instead of curled bangs, she arranged her hair in a traditional marumage. My sister and I had also forsaken our dresses and wore kimono, with our hair done in Japanese style. [..] My father was an upright government servant, and for him this was undoubtedly the meet and proper thing to do" (Raichō 2006, 41).

What this quote clearly describes is that only the women of Hiratsuka' family seem to have gone back to the traditional Japanese garments and hairstyles and that their home needed to be restored according to traditional Japanese esthetics, however the man of the house, Raichō's father, is not mentioned to follow along in these changes. He only seems to oversee the changes to be made as it was the "proper thing to do".

When we look at Sievers' and Raichō's statements, it seems as if intentionally dressing in Western or Japanese clothing for political purposes – even if forced to do so – was a socially widespread phenomenon among Japanese women, however we should pay attention to what group of women are discussed here. The aforementioned activists and Raichō's family are from middle and upper middle classes, this is important to keep in mind since they were the women who actually had the time and opportunity to concern themselves with these Western-oriented

(or reversing back to traditional Japanese) outward appearances. This attention for outer appearances most probably were of no concern for working women[19].

Except for outer appearances, women were also expected to partake in and study the more traditional arts of Japanese culture such as handicrafts and music (Koyama 2013, 44), which I will come back to in the next section.

We can conclude in this section that McClintock's notion of nations gendering their nation time in order to justify the paradox that they face in the process of westernization and modernization is applicable to Meiji Japan. Meiji omen were seen as the signifiers of national difference. By dressing in traditional clothing and being forced to wear the traditional hairstyle – in contrast to men who were able (or even also forced to) wear more Western and progressive attire – they were assigned the atavistic role and were seen as the stable traditional pillars of society.

[19] Certain caution has to be taken when talking about the outward appearances of working women, due to the fact that all books that are discussed in this thesis are very scant in their description of the working class.

3

Women as Transmitters and Producers of the National Culture

McClintock opens her essay with the statement that all nationalisms are invented and gendered (1991, 104). She refers here to Anderson's theory on nations as "imagined communities" (Anderson 2006, 5) which can be explained as systems of representation whereby people come to imagine a shared experience of identification with an extended community (McClintock 1991, 104). McClintock states that The Tweede Trek of the Afrikaners in 1938 was such an event in which nationalist traditions were invented and an imagined unity was celebrated (ibid., 108).[20] Interestingly, in contrast to Anderson, McClintock shows here that not only print capital is important in forming imagined communities. Next to printed products, it has also been non-print capital products, such as the use of flags, patriotic songs, costumes, and even the Tweede Trek itself, which carried nationalistic meaning for the Afrikaner nationalism (McClintock 1996, 274), she calls this "collective unity through […] *commodity spectacle* (ibid., 273).

Afrikaner women had a large cultural influence in Afrikanerdom. According to McClintock "the family household was seen as the last bastion beyond British control, and the cultural power of Afrikaner motherhood was mobilized in the service of white nation building" (1991, 110). She states in accordance with Andersons theory, that products of print capitalism such as magazines were of vital importance for Afrikaner women to begin "the enormous task of transforming virtually every aspect of daily life in to the ciphers of the Afrikaner spirit" (ibid.)

Except for Anderson's theory, we can also recognize the theory of another scholar which McClintock focusses on in her essay: Fanon and his theory of 'designated agency' (McClintock 1996, 265). Even though McClintock expresses skepticism towards Fanon, it seems here that

[20] McClintock is rather vague in her essay as to what she means with the Tweede Trek inventing nationalist traditions. It is suggested here that during the Tweede Trek the identity of Afrikanerdom was born. However, at the same time she mentions that twenty years prior to the Tweede Trek the Afrikaner language was officially recognized and that the Broederbond [the Brotherhood] was founded with the purpose of encouraging white culture (1996, 107). Rather, it seems to be intended here that the Tweede Trek put the Afrikaner traditions under a magnifying glass and was spread vastly along the route as to intensify the imagined community.

the idea of women now being mobilized in the service of white nation building is patriarchal in essence. A white mother's capabilities were now seen as the most suitable way of securing the spread of Afrikanerdom.

In Japan, a similar situation can be recognized. From the beginning of the Meiji period, the construction of a national character began to be reinforced and forced on the population, with – among others - the use of stamps, banknotes, school textbooks and songs sung in public schools (Patessio 2011, 18) and with the introduction of ryōsai kenbo, women now became a vital part of achieving a Japanese imagined community.

Women were now deemed the main educators and thus the main transmitters in spreading the cultural norms and values of the nation. In her book 'Ryōsai Kenbo; The Educational Ideal of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" in Modern Japan, Shizuko Koyama discusses quite elaborately about women's education during the Meiji period. She shows, for instance, that in 1901, girls' education was somewhat different from boys' education. She states:

> "In comparison with middle schools, none of the following subjects was offered at girls' middle schools: classical Chinese (*Kanbun*), natural history, physics and chemistry, and law and economics. Foreign languages were offered only as an elective subject. Furthermore, girls' middle schools allotted fewer than half the hours to mathematics and foreign languages as boys' middle schools, with the difference made up by morals (*shūshin*), housekeeping, sewing and music" (Ibid. 2013, 44).

This quote shows that, more so than boys, girls were educated in traditional skills. Whereas boys learned about subjects that would prepare them for a future in politics, science or business, girls were trained in skills that would make them "good wives" and "wise mothers". School subjects such as morals, housekeeping and sewing were meant to instill girls with the right ideas so that their future children will grow up with the right life lessons. Hiratsuka Raichō recalls in her autobiography that the school she attended as a young woman was:

> "[..] put under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education. As such, the school's philosophy was based on the perpetuation of the traditional family system, its immediate goal the education of young girls who would become "good wives and wise mothers", as the phrase went. To enforce this educational policy, the Girls' High School Act of 1899 emphasized practical subjects such as sewing, home economics, needlework, and etiquette, rather than academic study and general culture" (Raichō 2006, 41).

Here we have to keep in mind that it was often rather the girls from the middle and higher classes that would get such an education.[21] Girls' education was not meant for girls from the lower social strata, since they customarily were already in the home and therefore did not need to be educated to fulfill their roles within their home (Bernstein 1991, 158). On top of that, most working families were reluctant to enroll their children in schools since they were a valuable extra pair of laboring hands (Frühstück 2003, 32).

As stated in the beginning of this section, McClintock claims that magazines for Afrikaner women were of vital importance for achieving a nation with Afrikaner spirit. In Late Meiji Japan, a similar situation to the spread of magazines for Afrikaner women took place. From around 1900, the spread of women's magazines started to develop enormously. Within the first five years after 1900, a total of sixty-four women's magazines had been founded (Sand 2003, 163). These magazines such as 'Ladies Companion, The Housewife's Companion (*shufu no tomo*) and Women's Education Magazine (*jogaku zasshi*) focused their content on domestic management and included articles on health, cooking and home economics. The majority of these magazines had been created by men and were published as an addition to the education that their readers already received. Furthermore, members of these magazines had to pay a monthly fee, therefore making them only accessible for women from the higher classes (Patessio 2011, 111).

However, even though the boom of women's magazines might have seemed to be endless, the Meiji government imposed censorship whenever it saw fit. Censorship was most often imposed on magazines that were feminist in nature and seemed to threaten the 'good wives, wise mothers' ideal. The most famous one of these magazines would be *Seito* (Bluestocking). This magazine, founded by Hiratsuka Raichō in 1911, saw multiple issues banned by the government for spreading content that were deemed unfit for public consumption (Raichō 2006, 171).

Thus, we can see that the implication of women serving as transmitters or producers of national culture is only partially applicable to women in Late Meiji Japan. The ryōsai kenbo ideal that floated in the background of women's education and women's magazines shows that ryōsai kenbo in itself created a gender divergence (between men and women) and class divergence (between higher class women and working class women). Girls' education and women's magazines that had to make women into 'good wives and wise mothers' was only

[21] There was a portion of girls from higher classes (especially in the Osaka-Kyoto area) who were not allowed by their parents to receive an education. The parents felt that they should protect their marriageable daughters by keeping them inside the home (Sievers 1983, 34; 41)

focused on girls from these higher classes and therefore excluded women from the working classes. Furthermore, the fact that most successful women's magazines had been created by men shows that the educational development of women was patriarchal in essence and also strengthens Fanon's idea of women's agency being a designated one. Unfortunately, McClintock does not specify whether the magazines for Afrikaner housewives have been created by men, therefore we cannot be sure to what extent these magazines are patriarchal.

4

Women as Reproducers of the Boundaries of National Groups

According to McClintock, the fourth implicated role of women in times of nationalism is that they function as reproducers of the boundaries of the nation (by accepting or refusing sexual intercourse or marriage with prescribed groups of men) (1991, 105). What this comprises, is the expectation that women do not engage in relationships with men outside of the nation. These relationships are perceived to be prone to obscure the boundaries between two nations and were thought to produce degenerate offspring due to "racial and cultural contagion" (McClintock 1995, 47).

Just as with the first implication – women as biological reproducers of national groups – McClintock hardly explains how Afrikaner women in South Afrika were meant to be the reproducers of the boundaries of the Afrikaner nationhood. McClintock only describes that by merely standing side by side as the wives of important white male power figures such as army colonels or cabinet ministers, women formed the boundary of the nation. In this way they kept the white group closed off from the black African people, and warded off "racial and cultural contagion".

The implication of women being the boundaries of national groups is often notable in times of war, since it is during these times that a confrontation between people from different nations with conflicting nationalisms is at its highest. Frühstück provides an elaborate explanation on women's function as the boundary of the nation. Her explanation mostly revolves around periods of war, such as the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), but also the second Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945) and the Second World War (1939-1945).

Frühstück's book on sex and imperialism, clarifies McClintock's statement that relationships between men and women from different nations were perceived as prone to produce 'racial and cultural contagion'. During the first Sino-Japanese War, Japanese soldiers and Japanese government were warned by medical staff that the Chinese were a "promiscuous race" and that the "country was rife with syphilis" (Frühstück 2003, 37), therefore encouraging the soldiers not to engage in sexual activities with Chinese women – or at least take caution

with it – since venereal diseases such as syphilis among the Japanese soldiers were a significant problem (ibid, 35).

Having "learned" from these "problems with venereal diseases" during the Sino-Japanese War in Korea and strong soldiers being infected with the life-threatening syphilis, the Japanese government started to authorize certain brothels during the Russo-Japanese War and also built brothels that were particularly meant for Japanese soldiers (ibid, 37). To limit the spread of diseases even more, condoms were handed out to soldiers, which were imported from the Netherlands until the first condom made in Japan was introduced in 1909 (Frühstück 2003, 40). Frühstück states that by doing this the Japanese government attempted to:

> "[…] control the sexual activities of soldiers and subjugate both soldiers and prostitutes under the authority of military physicians. Thus, prostitution within and outside of the military was geared toward the functionality of male sexuality through the use of female bodies in order to secure the power system within the military and over the empire" (ibid, 37).

This 'functionality of male sexuality' was believed to be important by key figures of the Japanese Imperial Army. According to Mori Rintaro, a surgeon who served in the Imperial Army and studied hygiene, medicine and psychiatry in Germany in the 1880's:

> "the 'healthy and strong male' was characterized by his 'ferocious natural desire' and should be provided, thus, with frequent opportunities, or ration outlets, for the animal satisfaction of heterosexual desire within the regulated form of licensed prostitution" (Park 2014, 116)

Thus, these prostitutes were only there to cater to the Japanese man's urges. The question remains, however, who were these prostitutes? Often they were Japanese women who came from financially vulnerable backgrounds, such as the lower classes. They were often enslaved by the imperial forces under false pretenses, for instance by the promise of employment. Other evidence shows that women were sometimes sold by their fathers or brothers or fled an abusive family only to be stranded at a brothel (Frühstück 2003, 41).

In contrast to their working-class counterparts, women from the middle- and upper classes could be potential marriage partners for the soldiers. Their education in patriotic and traditional subjects and skills made them the exemplary women who could marry Japanese men to form the strong and healthy family that the Japanese nation-state needed during Meiji Japan (Mackie 2003, 233). We therefore can say that the implication of women serving as the boundary of a nation is certainly true for women from the higher classes of Japanese society.

While both the prostitutes from the working classes and the marriageable women from the upper classes kept the borders closed for potential “racial and cultural contagion”, it was really only the women from the upper classes that had the potential of reproducing ‘racially pure’ offspring. The women from the working classes were targeted as mere objects of the soldiers’ lust.

5

Women as Active Participants in National Struggles

The last implication that McClintock has named in her writing is that of women serving as active participants in national struggles. She explains that while trying to form a white Afrikaner nation in South Africa, Afrikaner women served an active role in the defense of the Afrikaner spirit. They became “political participants in defense of white power, in public forums, in conservative women’s organizations, in an auxiliary capacity within the army, or carried arms as citizens on farms along the borders” (McClintock 1991, 111). Even though this may seem as if women had a direct influence in the national struggles, McClintock quickly nuances this by stating that Afrikaner women’s military power was often muted and contained within an infantilized and sexualized ideology (ibid.). Women soldiers were often called ‘Botha’s Babes’, ‘trooplets’ or ‘*soldoedies’* (a denigrating substitute for the word ‘soldier’ in Afrikaans) (Macdonald 1987, 119).

In contrast to the Afrikaner women who took a militaristic active stance, Meiji women did not partake in such activities as carrying guns and political participation. The latter due to the fact that Meiji women were banned from politics in 1890 due to Article 5 of the Police Security Regulations (Sievers 1983, 52).

This ban had its roots in a political movement which developed roughly ten years prior; the Movement for Freedom and Popular Rights. Launched by impoverished samurai who still remembered their proud lives during the Tokugawa period, and now felt sidelined by their own government after the Meiji Restoration[22], this movement called for a more liberal approach to politics, with the introduction of a constitution and a more democratic political system, with a broader electorate (at that moment, only men who paid the highest taxes had voting rights) (Gordon 2009, 83).

Even though women were not the target group of this movement right from the beginning (the samurai called for more equal rights for all men, not necessarily all people in general), they managed to fight their way into it, calling for equal rights for women (Sievers

[22] After the Meiji Restoration, the samurai, who once formed the ruling elite of the feudal Tokugawa period, were replace by non-hereditary civil administrators and a conscript army (Yamazaki 1985, 10).

1983, 27; Bernstein 1991, 155). Women like Kishida Toshiko and Fukuda Hideko started to attend and speak at well attended popular rights rallies, advocating equal political and legal rights for women and men, education for women and equality within the family (Gordon 2009, 88).

The rise of the liberal movement in itself was already a threat to the conservative government, which tried to put down liberal activities such as the popular rights rallies and censor liberal publications. But the fact that women were involved was one step too far for the government. The Meiji government deemed it not to be the task of women to partake in politics because it could stand in the way of women performing their duties as 'good wives and wise mothers' (Hayakawa 1995, 111).

In 1884, two major popular rights parties collapsed due to state repression. These parties were of vital importance for the political active women as they gave them a stage for their feminist agenda. On top of that, in 1890, women were banned from politics, barring them from joining political organizations, speaking at or attending political gatherings, or even sitting as observers in the Diet gallery (Gordon 2009, 89).

If not through politics and military acts, then how were Late Meiji women involved in the wars? Mackie explains:

> The Russo-Japanese War saw an expansion of the membership of the Patriotic Women's Association, and several other women's organizations also became involved in activities which supported the war effort, including fund-raising and the preparation of packages to send to soldiers serving overseas. Women could prove their femininity by crying for their lost husbands and sons, by supporting the war effort through charitable activities, and by travelling to the front as nurses, in the same way as men proved their masculinity on the battlefield (Mackie 2003, 31).

Thus, according to Mackie, women's involvement in wars was more focused on proving their femininity than their political will to win the wars. This, I argue, was again due the fact that women were expected to focus on a stable and healthy home for their children and soldier husbands, direct involvement in wars would only obstruct their roles as housewives. In *kaji* (housework) textbooks that were used in girls' education, the role of the housewife was aggrandized by comparing "housewives to figures of power in a male world outside. The housewife was the 'prime minister' of the household or a soldier whose 'battlefield' was the home (Sand 2003, 61) and representatives of the military praised girl students by saying that becoming good wives and wise mothers was "equally as valuable to the nation as was [their] fighting on the sea (Bernstein 1991, 159).

Here too, a great contrast between middle and upper middle class women and working class women can be detected. Whereas women from the higher classes supported the soldiers with financial aid, women from the working classes often got enslaved to perform sexual duties and were forced to work as cooks, waitresses and seamstresses during the day. Now, it is debatable to what extent these activities can be perceived as actually supporting soldiers and the wars, however, as explained in the previous section, the Imperial Army believed that strong and healthy soldiers had innate urges and desires that needed to be catered to, in order to make sure that the soldiers stayed healthy.

Conclusion

After having discussed all five implications that McClintock addressed in her essay ""No Longer in a Future Heaven"; Women and Nationalism in South Africa" we can safely conclude that all of them can be applied to Late Meiji Women to a certain extent. In Section 1 it became clear that as a result of the ideal of ryōsai kenbo – which was approved by the Japanese government in 1899, women were indeed perceived as the biological reproducers of national groups. Women were now expected to procreate for the state to enlarge its number of potential future soldiers. However, not all women were capable of doing so. The ideal of 'good wives, wise mothers' proved to be an unrealistic ideal for working class women. They had their hands full on working for the family business or in cotton mills and did not have the financial means to devote their attention solely to raising children. This in contrast to women from the higher classes of society were able to spend time and money on taking care of multiple children.

In Section 2 we have seen that women were the signifiers of national difference. They were often expected to stay traditional in their manners and clothing in an attempt to de-stress men in the rapid changing period that was the Late Meiji Era. However, it became clear here as well that this implication had most of its impact on women who could afford to pay attention to their outer appearances.

Furthermore, Section 3 has shown us that only women from the middle and upper middle classes were implied as transmitters and producers of the national culture. Through the education they followed and magazines they were able to read, these women were instilled with the right morals of Meiji Japan to ensure that their future children would learn the same. Since working class girls often did not attend schools due to them being a valuable source of labor, these girls and women did not receive as much exposure to the Late Meiji morals. In this section, and also the prior section, it becomes clear that as a case study Meiji Japan supports McClintock's idea of nation time and that it is often gendered in modernizing nations. For the Japanese government women were the appointed persons to secure the Japanese identity, rather than men.

In Section 4 it becomes clear that only the women from higher classes who obtained an education with 'ryōsai kenbo' ideals, served as the boundaries of national groups. During the wars, the women who worked as prostitutes in brothels which catered towards Japanese soldiers were merely seen as objects of lust. These women often had a working-class background and were usually sold by their family in exchange for badly needed money. Only the women brought

up with the right morals could be potential marriage partners to soldiers, to make sure that no degenerate offspring would be produced.

Lastly, in section 5, we have seen that even though women did not directly participate in wars and national struggles, they did support the soldiers by sending monetary aid or taking care of them in their capacities as nurses. But also here, as shown in all the other sections, this type of support was only limited to women from higher classes. The only way in which women from the lower classes supported the soldiers was through their bodies, making sure that the soldiers could act on their "ferocious natural desires" and therefore would be kept "sane".

Thus, these five implications are generally applicable to Late Meiji women to some extent. Nevertheless, not all implications were equally applied to all women (due to class differences) and how women felt about their government-issued responsibilities varied per woman. From McClintock's standpoint, it may seem as if women suffered the consequences of living in a nationalistic Meiji period, being forced to obey to certain rules of conduct. But we have to take caution here; according to Sand, the ideal of ryōsai kenbo may have felt as a relief to some women, freeing them from labor at shops or farms (Sand 2003, 62) and giving them opportunities to obtain an education and ultimately arguments to ask for a higher or university education (Patessio 2011, 64).[23] On the other hand, there were women who found their government-issued responsibilities to be restrictive since they were not able to voice their opinions in politics due to Article 5 of the Police Security Regulations (Sievers 1983, 52).

As a reminder, I would like to specify that since we have seen that McClintock's theories and the five implicated roles of women have not been entirely applicable to Late Meiji Japan, this essay should be understood as McClintock's vision on reality and her attempt to interpret the past. This essay is therefore a conceptual theory and should not be perceived as the only approach that can be taken towards discussing and researching women's history. Instead, it does provide us with a good stepping stone to gain more insight into the connection that women have with nationalist societies all around the world throughout different periods of time. By recognizing different ways and which women have been positioned in nationalisms we gain a better understanding of women's history and that we therefore should be careful not to tar all women in a nation – and their counterparts in other nations - with the same brush.

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[23] Whether this feeling of relief of not having to work is applicable for women from the working classes is debatable since they played a vital part in keeping the household financially healthy. The loss of an extra pair of hands would most probably be difficult to cope with and it is therefore not realistic to think that working class women would lay down their work for the ryōsai kenbo ideal.

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