



Universiteit
Leiden

Medicine and Propaganda in the Empire of Japan 1895 – 1945

Applicants

Eligible proposals must have at least two applicants from Humanities, preferably with an interdisciplinary approach.

Supervisor Name	Discipline
Dr Maurits Meerwijk	Institute for History, Colonial and Global History 1200 – present
Dr Ethan Mark	Institute for Area Studies, Japanese Studies

Project description

Provide a brief description of the project (max. 300 words)

This project examines the linkages between medicine and colonialism in the Empire of Japan through the lens of propaganda. In the late nineteenth century, advances in scientific medicine and breakthroughs in optical and visual technology allowed health workers to inform large lay audiences about the nature, transmission, and prevention of disease by means of film, photography, and mass color printing. Japanese physicians and officials led the way in developing this new public health practice – “medical propaganda” – and used it more or less extensively in their colonies and occupied territories in Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria, and Southeast Asia (Figure 1). At the same time, scenes of medicine and public health within the empire were broadcast to domestic, colonial, and international audiences to promote an image of Japan as a modern imperial power and – increasingly – an alternative to European colonial rule (Figure 2). This project will investigate these images and help unlock a large visual archive in Asia to the study of medicine and empire.

The first trainee will focus on the production and consumption of medical propaganda in Japan’s “model colony” in Taiwan. A set of primary sources has been identified and additional materials are available in Dutch archives and online. The second trainee will consider the use of medicine “as” propaganda. They may focus on the use of medicine in promoting the Japanese imperial project *and / or* postcolonial and pan-Asian futures: within Japan itself, its empire, or to audiences abroad. Both work packages link up to Meerwijk’s project on the early development of health messaging in Southeast Asia and both trainees will be invited to contribute to the project’s database and outreach activities. Both projects also connect with Mark’s ongoing research on the social and cultural exchanges and experiences within the Empire of Japan between the 1920s and 1940s.

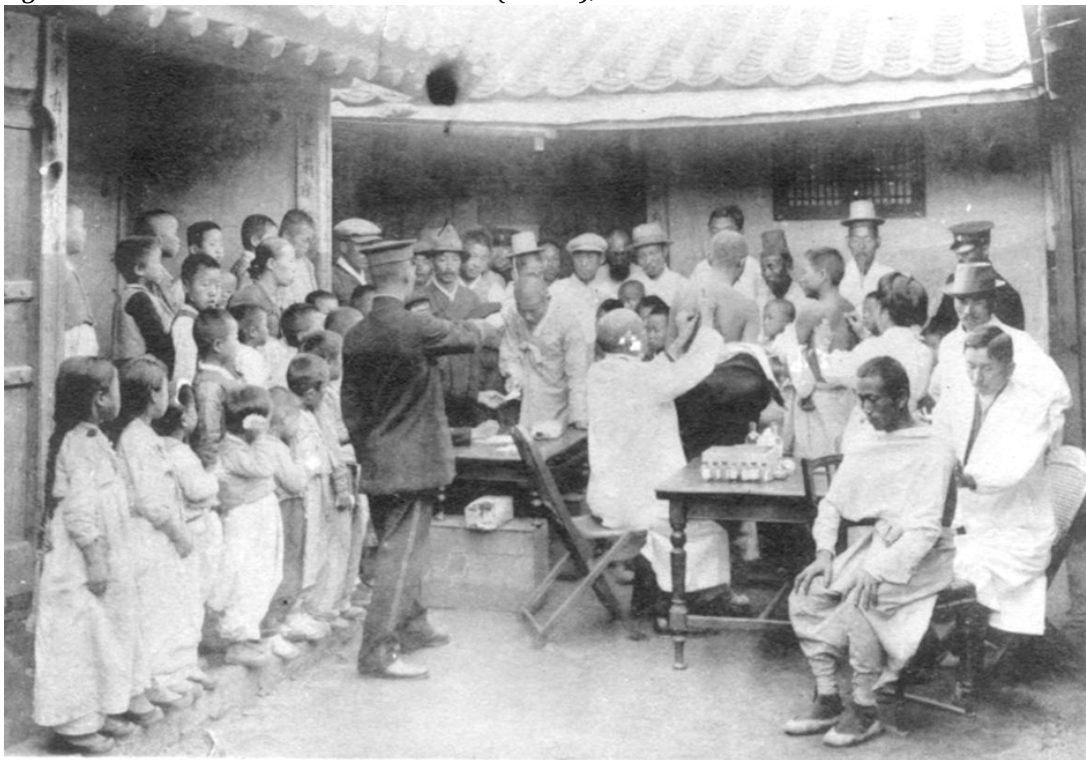
Words: 299

Figure 1: Anti-plague propaganda in Taiwan, c. 1917.



Source: National Taiwan University Library.

Figure 2: Cholera inoculation in Incheon (Korea), 1919.



京畿道仁川府ニ於ケル豫防注射實施ノ狀況

Source: *The 1919 Report on Cholera Prevention Activities* (Seoul: Chōsen sōtokufu, 1920).

Research Trainee Profile

Each proposal requests two Research Trainees. Describe the general tasks of the research trainees, how these tasks are academically challenging to the research trainees, whether they need any preliminary knowledge (regarding the topic and/or research methods) and which skills the research trainees should have. Also specify which type of students are eligible to apply (3rd year Ba, Ma, ResMa).

The first research trainee should be familiar with Japanese *and / or* Chinese to interpret the available sources and identify new ones. They are ideally pursuing a Master's degree in History or Asian Studies but may also have a background in an affiliate discipline (Anthropology, Visual Studies) in combination with experience of doing historical research. Previous experience with using (audio)visual sources and affinity with colonial history or early twentieth-century history would be an advantage. The research trainee will concentrate on writing a historical essay or peer-reviewed publication for a journal appropriate to their career stage. In the process, they will identify, translate, and analyze relevant source material; contribute to a project database; and are invited to participate in knowledge utilization events organized by Meerwijk and Mark.

The second research trainee should be familiar with a language relevant to their preferred research theme (e.g., Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Tagalog, Indonesian) to interpret the available sources and identify new ones. They are ideally pursuing a Master's degree in History or Asian Studies but may also have a background in an affiliate discipline (Political Science, War and Peace Studies) in combination with experience of doing historical research. Previous experience with using (audio)visual sources and affinity with colonial history or early twentieth-century history would be an advantage. The research trainee will concentrate on writing a historical essay or peer-reviewed publication for a journal appropriate to their career stage. In the process, they will identify, translate, and analyze relevant source material; contribute to a project database; and are invited to participate in knowledge utilization events organized by Meerwijk and Mark.

Collaboration

If applicable: Describe how your research improves collaboration and cross-pollination between the disciplines involved (max. 300 words)

This research project will help forge new connections between staff in the Institute for History, the Institute for Area Studies, and ideally also the staff at the University of Leiden Library (which is host to several relevant materials). The project is inherently interdisciplinary and will contribute to new, collaborative research around the theme of health humanities and may also draw on the experience and expertise of other researchers in the Faculty of Humanities with an interest in the use of visual sources. In addition, the project would speak to researchers at KITLV and individual health researchers at LUMC and FGGA.

The project will help the students and researchers involved to gain a better understanding of the social and cultural connections within the Empire of Japan and – crucially – with neighbouring empires in Asia. After all, given the language skills required, there is but limited comparative research on late-colonial Southeast Asia that successfully considers the Japanese Empire and vice versa. The collaboration between Meerwijk, Mark, and the trainees will consequently lead to a uniquely broad perspective on the history of this region. In addition, we will gain valuable new experience in using visual sources for the study of medicine and empire *and* help to unlock these materials as a resource for future scholars.

Already in preparing for this application, Meerwijk and Mark discovered several unexpected areas of overlap in our research, such as our respective interest in pre-war and wartime youth movements in East and Southeast Asia. While Mark has been studying the role of these organizations in fostering social and national identities, Meerwijk examines how youth movements were rallied to promote new medical practices and ideas: an overlap that one of the trainees could conceivably explore.

Deliverables

Enumerate intended project results: papers, research proposals or otherwise. (max 200 words)

Both trainees will concentrate on writing a historical essay that could be published online or in a peer-reviewed journal appropriate to their career stage. They will receive assistance from Meerwijk and Mark through regular meetings. Publishing outlets could include a website that Mark is currently building for his project *Global Histories of WWII: Imperial Crises and Contested Loyalties*, the Harvard History of Contagion website, student journals, and minor humanities journals on medicine, colonialism, and the visual. More ambitiously, a co-authored publication could be prepared for a relevant journal such as *East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine* or *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*.

Both trainees will be encouraged to pursue a popularising publication for a Dutch-language outlet (e.g. *Wonderkamer*, *Geschiedenis Magazine*). Their work will be promoted through the Leiden University webpages and social media (<https://twitter.com/HHMSEA2022>, <https://twitter.com/EthanMarkLeiden>).

Both trainees will contribute to a database of medical propaganda items that is maintained by Meerwijk. In addition, they will be invited to our respective project events. These may include a workshop at Rijksmuseum Boerhaave, a talk at a seminar series on the history of medicine/knowledge, and a conference on “global histories of health messaging” co-organized with Manon Parry.

Words: 199

Planning

Provide a breakdown of the project into phases with tentative timing (max 150 words)

Time management (c. 160 hours)

Archival research	20 hours
Processing images (<i>database entry, translations, descriptions</i>)	20 hours
Preparing for and participating in events	20 hours
Preparing a popularizing publication	10 hours
Preparing a historical essay / peer-reviewed publication	90 hours

Schedule

February – March 2023

- Read literature and sources
- Research (archives and online)
- Workshop Rijksmuseum Boerhaave
- *Milestones: formulate research question, identify journals*

April – May 2023

- Read literature and sources
- Process images
- *Milestones: draft paper outline and start writing*

June – July 2023

- Read literature and sources
- Process images
- *Milestones: discuss first draft paper*

August – September 2023

- Prepare a popularizing publication
- Finalize tasks
- Evaluate
- *Milestones: discuss second draft paper, submit to publisher*

November 2023 – March 2024

- Participate in conference *Global Histories of Health Messaging*

Words: 116

Student Application

Provide information on how to apply e.g. required documents for application (resume, motivation letter etc.) and an email address where student applications should be sent to.

A 1-page CV detailing the student's academic background and language abilities.

A 1-page motivation letter stating the student's motivation.

Applications may be submitted to m.b.meerwijk@hum.leidenuniv.nl