

# For the Sake of the Nation: Mobilizing for War in Japanese Commercial Advertisements, 1937-1945

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- How did Japanese companies deal with the impact of war on home front consumerism during the Second Sino-Japanese, and then Pacific Wars from 1937-1945? How were military campaigns and patriotism expressed in news ads in major Japanese papers?

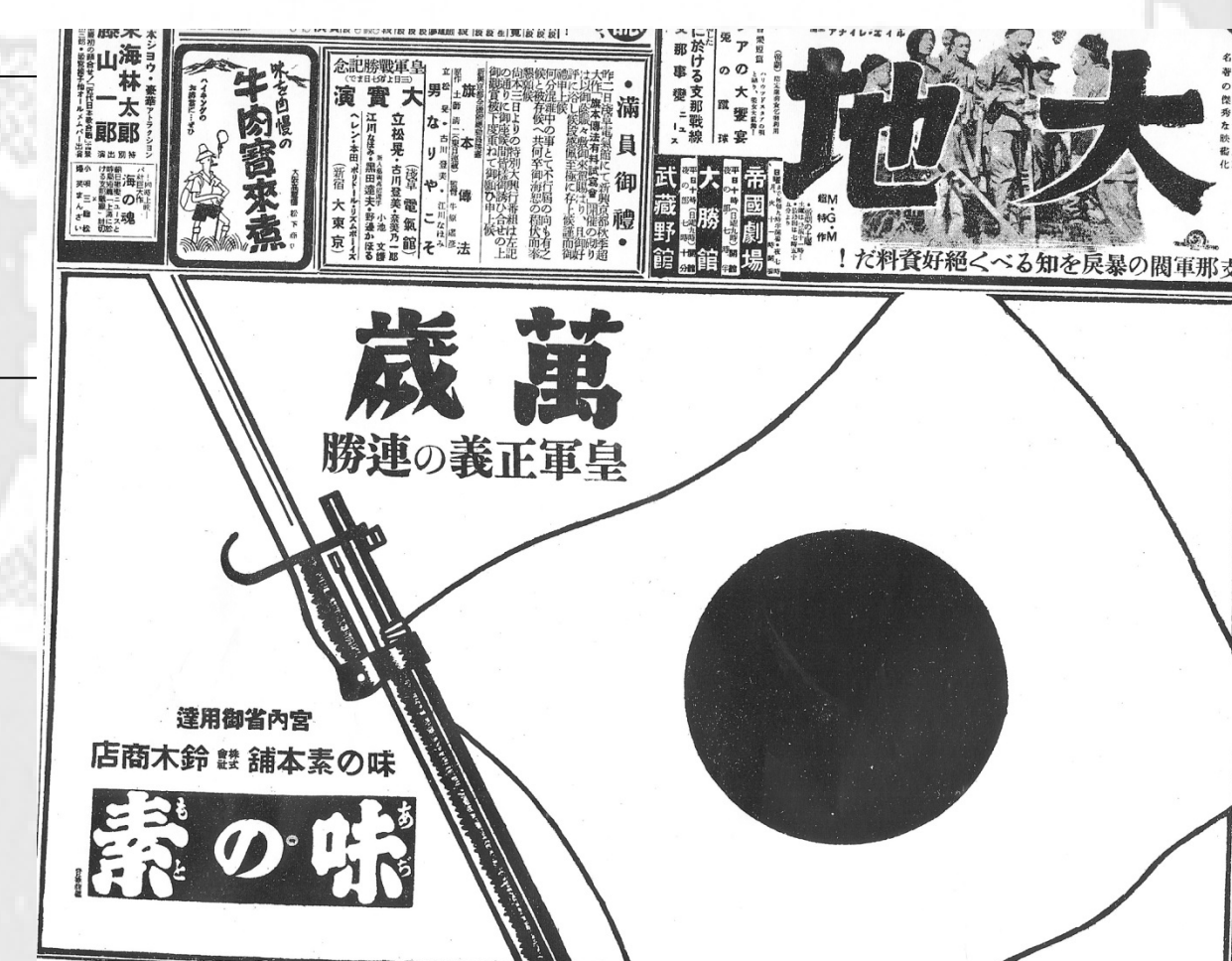
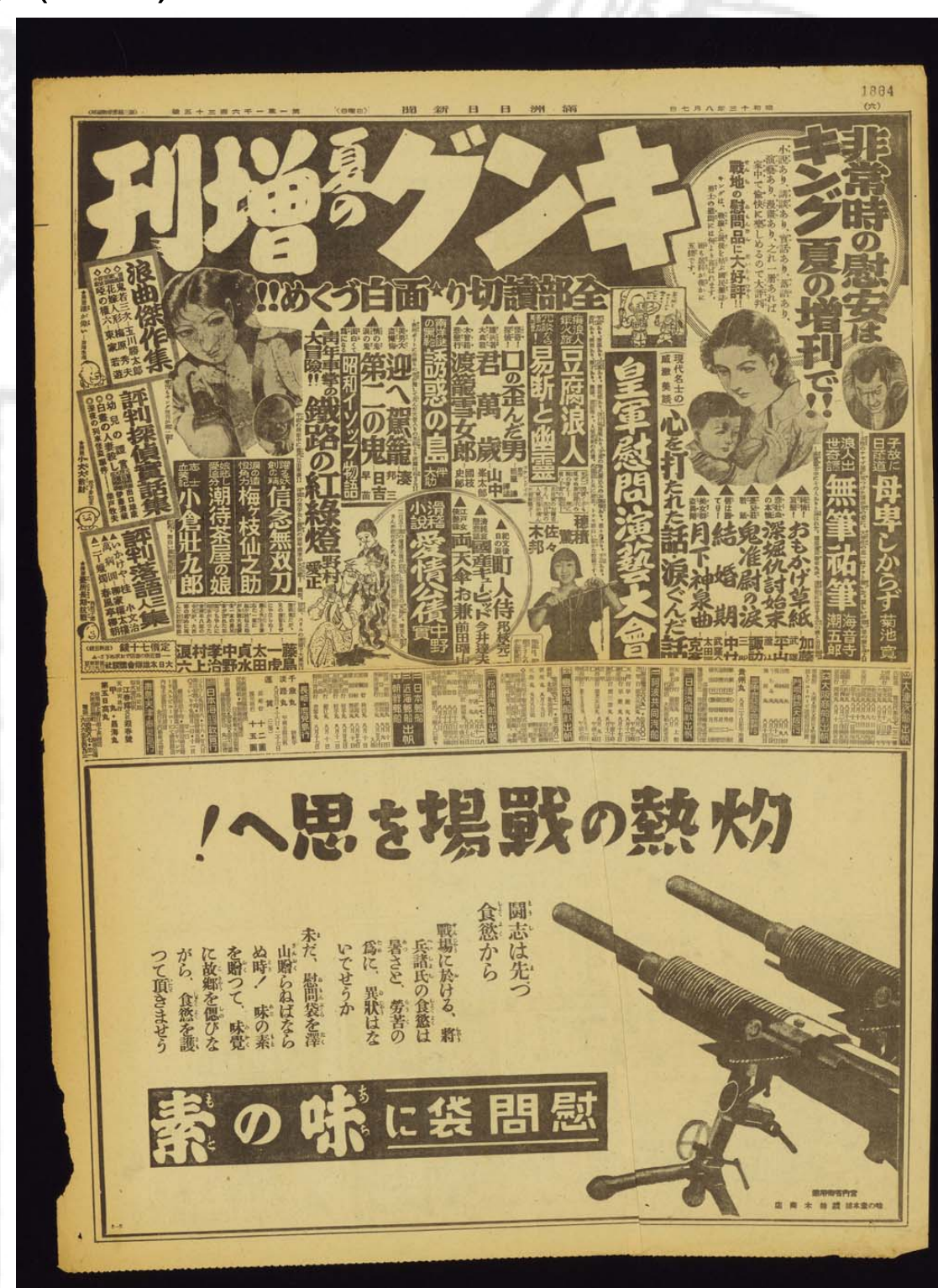
- My research reveals how Japanese advertisers took advantage of popular wartime patriotism in endorsing products, and shows how mobilization of patriotic consumption supported manufacturers and department stores.. Studying newspaper ads and the behaviors they promoted reveals intriguing aspects about Japanese consumerism during wartime, channeled into forms of "acceptable" purchasing, including troop care packages.

## •RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- Investigated wartime editions of Tokyo newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* [Morning News].
- Explored databases of wartime postcards.
- Visited Shiseidô corporation archives and viewed wartime ads and museum exhibits.
- Used Ishigaki Collection of primary and secondary advertising sources for early 20<sup>th</sup> C. at Waseda University Library.
- Visited Advertising Museum Tokyo archives and Museum for primary/secondary materials.

## •FURTHER STUDY:

- The brutal 1937 Nanking Campaign heralded congratulatory department store sales, reinvigorating marketing of "comfort items" for troop care packages.
- These allowed home front consumers to connect with loved ones on the battlefield. These items supposedly improved troop morale, and thus ensured "victorious" campaigns.
- However, **wartime consumption evolved in stages** as the "China quagmire" bogged down, and troops soon fought suicidal battles in the Pacific.
- Contrasting with previous studies emphasizing wartime frugality, **patriotic consumption helped ensure wartime sales** until Allied bombing campaigns brought the war to the home front.



This research informs my larger book project:  
Advertising the Empire:  
Consuming Japanese  
Imperial Modernity, 1880s-  
1945  
and a forthcoming article:  
Battlefield Comforts of  
Home: Commercialization of  
War and the  
Military Care Package  
Phenomenon in Japan 1937-  
1945