

Elizabeth Keith and Ulric van den Bogaerde's Illustrations for the *Times's Japanese and Russian Supplements:* Artistic Mediations in Print, 1914-1917¹⁾

Peter Robinson
Japan Women's University

This article explores how the evocative black and white line drawings produced by two British artists, Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956) and Ulric van den Bogaerde (1892-1972), for the *Times* newspaper's *Japanese (TJS)* and *Russian Supplements (TRS)*, not only played an important role in enhancing their aesthetic appeal, but also in articulating the ambiguities and complexities of the deeply entangled imperial discourses to which Britain, Russia, and Japan were party in the early twentieth century. It suggests that Keith's professional medium of choice, the Japanese woodblock print or *ukiyo-e*, belied her political and spiritual sympathy for two of Japan's foremost colonial prizes, Formosa (Taiwan) and Chōsen (Korea)—latent sympathies which were already present in the first exhibition of her art work at The Peers Club in Tokyo,²⁾ and the accompanying publication, *Grin and Bear It* (1917). The contradictions between her aesthetic admiration of Japan on the one hand, and instinctive identification with the peoples subjected to Japan's colonial ambitions on the other, mirrored contradictions inherent in her artistic composition too. Drawing from life on location in the East, by comparison with the *TJS* line drawings, her later print portraits appear posed and carefully contrived. Keith's numerous contributions to the *TJS* (twenty-one in total), which was officially backed by the Japanese Government in a campaign to re-invigorate the fading spirit of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, imbued it with much needed credibility through the 'authenticity' and intimacy of the expatriate eye against a backdrop of public criticism that the *Times* received for peddling pro-Japanese propaganda. By contrast, the London-based in-house artist-pressman Ulric van den Bogaerde's contributions to both supplements must be understood in the context of the commencement of his professional career, immediately preceding work on the *Times's* monumental *History of the War* (1914-1921) and subsequent appointment as its

1) This paper was developed as part of the Competing Imperialisms in Northeast Asia Research Network (CIRN). Parts of it were presented at CIRN 1: Concepts and Approaches, Waseda University, Japan (19-20 April, 2019), and CIRN 2: Contested Histories and Histories of Contestation, Queen's University, Belfast (6-7 September, 2019). A collection of key supplements issued by the *Times* is now available through Brill Primary Sources Online portal.

2) Exhibited 22-24 November 1917.

first Arts Editor. Conceived as a vehicle for Lord Northcliffe to awaken British companies to commercial opportunities in Russia, and forming part of a sustained multi-paper project to support the British imperial project *writ large*, Bogaerde's illustrations were drawn from photographs and his artistic imagination, resulting in a less vivid, but more consistent style, and thus offered another perspective on the many contours of imperial rivalries.

I. Introduction

In the *Brittle Decade: Visualizing Japan in the 1930s*, John Dower *et al*, chart the transition of domestic Japanese visual culture from the decadence and confidence of the 1920s to its recruitment in the joint causes of national mobilisation and imperial ambition in the 1930s. While the tropes remained consistent, rotating around modernity, technology, and administrative efficiency –the 'Germany of the East'– they were sufficiently elastic to support first a spirit of civilian optimism, then the mantra of martial duty. These two decades, different in tone but alike in trajectory, also marked the commencement of a process of intensive self-picturing or, to borrow Stephen Greenblatt's phrase, self-fashioning, that was counterpoised by a renewed attempt to shape how Japan was perceived by the world: cultured, traditional and aesthetically coherent, but unique. Publications produced by the Fujiya and Kanaya hotels among many others, and more importantly the *Japan Tourist Library* series (1934-1942) produced by Japanese Government Railways, heavily massaged oriental tropes, and emphasised traditional Japanese crafts and material culture. In so doing, the dissonance between the lived-reality of a rapidly modernising nation, and the cultural image that Japan wanted to project to the world, was exacerbated. When the general editor of the *Tourist Library* series remarked in his introductory rationale that, 'flying visits merely for sightseeing furnish neither the time nor the opportunity for more than a passing acquaintance with the life of the people',³⁾ he was implying that cultural mis-readings and mis-interpretation were partially responsible for the hardening of international opinion against Japan in the 1920s, and that a renewed 'cultural offensive', centred on better presentation of Japan to the West, was needed. This then, was a Japan of contradictions, in a state of denial that was symptomatic of its failure to fully come to terms with the process and consequences of rapid industrialisation and its rise to geo-political significance: still further it represented a failure to understand the impact her quest for global significance and the right to pursue an 'Asian Empire' was having on established World Powers, especially Britain, in the interwar period.

The attempt to wrestle control of its own cultural narrative away from dependence on Western voyeurism, extended to the fine arts too. Tenshin Okakura's famous art journal

3) Manabu Miyoshi, *Sakura-Japanese Cherry*, Tourist Library: 3, [Tokyo]: Board of Tourist Industry, Japanese Government Railways (1935, revised edn. 1941), p. 4.

Kokka, founded in 1889, downplayed and increasingly eschewed Japan's cultural debt to China, and sought to establish a distinctive Japanese cultural genealogy, one which would provide robust support for the 'civilizing narrative' underlying Japan's Asian conquests. The reality, was that the spirit of *bonhomie* between Japan and Britain of the 1910s, commencing with the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, and fortified by the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, had long faded, replaced by an atmosphere of mistrust and competition, heightened by the Siberian Intervention (1918-1922), and Japan's disappointment at the Washington Conference in 1921-1922. This resulted in Japan seeking other partners to support her regional aspirations, and the decision not to renew the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1923. Despite these tensions however, like much of the world, late 1920s Japan was thriving. Newspapers and magazines were saturated with consumer images, many pioneered by the 'Magazine King' Seiji Noma (1878-1938), often in part- or full-colour, providing a thrilling visual bonanza and fuelling a burgeoning middle class. While no society escapes the inevitable friction created by economic cycles and generational transitions, the perennial conflict between traditional and modern, the rapidity of Japan's modernisation had been extraordinary, and its complacent adoption of 'Western ways', from medicine to fashion, to music and cinema, intensified her desire for global recognition to match her military and industrial success. This masked the retention of deeply entrenched hierarchical and feudal structures, especially within the military that re-emerged with such tragic effect in the post-Depression era.

II. Elizabeth Keith and Japan

The artist Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956) needs to be situated somewhere in the cross-currents of the distinctive Western orientalism centred on nineteenth-century *Japonisme*, described by Edward Said and others, and Japan's national self-absorption of the 1930s which followed a decade of the relaxation of social restrictions. When the drums of nationalism and percussion of imperial rhetoric combined during the economic turmoil of the early 1930s, Japan crossed the intangible line separating healthy promotion of self-interest to overt propaganda, accompanied by the shutting down of political and cultural dissent. It is within this brief window, before these destructive narratives really took hold, that the Scottish-born Miss Keith, best known today for her richly coloured and much sought-after wood block prints, particularly of Korea and Japan, began picturing Asia. By the late 1920s, she was convinced that *ukiyo-e* was the 'most effective means of conveying to the West', all that she had 'seen, felt, and recorded as an artist'.⁴⁾ She subsequently published a range of books based on her prints, but *Eastern Windows* (1928) and *Old Korea: The Land of Morning Calm* (1946) are

4) Elizabeth Keith, *Eastern Windows: An Artist's Notes of Travel in Japan, Hokkaido, Korea, China and the Philippines*, Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company (1928), p. 12.

perhaps the most memorable. Her first recorded woodblock print is 'East Gate, Seoul', 1920.

The story of how Miss Keith found her *metier* through the intervention of print-maker Watanabe Shōzaburō (1885-1962) has been well established, but much of the modern art criticism that has attended the increasing appreciation of her work has unfortunately intimated that her whole-hearted adoption and mastery of the *ukiyo-e* technique represented a uniquely Eastern artistic sense, a sort of aesthetic nativism that has occasionally been carelessly attributed to Lafcadio Hearn. Contemporaries, and indeed Keith herself, were under no such illusions. As one reviewer of an exhibition of her prints at the Peking Institute of Fine Arts writing in the *North China Standard* astutely noted in December 1921, 'It is only the medium which is Japanese... for one glance at the prints now on exhibit would convince anyone familiar with Japanese colour prints that they are the work of a Western hand, or, perhaps better, the expression of a Western art ideal.'⁵⁾ This contemporary assessment contrasts sharply with later assessments of Keith's artistic contribution that credit her with being much more than a mere foreign interpreter of strange countries, implying that her art effaced or at least mitigated, some of her national prejudices and aesthetic judgments. A full account of Keith's artistic relationship with her subject goes well beyond the scope of this short article, which focusses on her earliest artistic representations of the East: namely her contributions to the *Times Japanese Supplements (TJS)* in 1916, a Japanese-backed supplement produced under the supervision of Robert P. Porter, Director of the Special Supplements Department at the *Times*.⁶⁾ Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that for some contemporaries at least, mastery of *ukiyo-e* as an artistic medium served to heighten, rather than to mask, this cultural appropriation and the imposition of the 'Western Eye', a concept on which so much ink has been dedicated already.

Elizabeth Keith's acquaintance with Japan began in 1915 when she accompanied her sister, Elspeth Keith, and her husband, the writer and editor of The New East Press, J.W. Robertson Scott, to Tokyo. As well as editing the short-lived Foreign Office-backed *New East* periodical, which lasted a little over a year (1917-1918), the curmudgeonly Robertson Scott was also researching and writing a book on rural Japan, published upon his return to England as *The Foundations of Japan* (1922), still considered an important work in the field. Contrary to the rather thin and cavalier biographical portraits that inform us that the 28-year-old Miss Keith travelled to Japan simply as a sojourn, she was in fact employed as Robertson Scott's housekeeper, a role she took seriously, and described in meticulous detail in a hitherto uncredited article titled, 'A Foreigner's Budget', which appeared in two illustrated parts in

5) 'Miss Keith's wood block prints', exhibition review by F.H.H., *North China Standard* (1 December, 1921).

6) See, Peter O'Connor and Peter Robinson, 'The Times Supplements, 1914-1917': https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads_products/The_Times_Supplements_background_article.pdf (accessed 25 October 2019).



Fig. 1. 'Our Japanese Maid', *TJS*, No. 2 (3 June, 1916)

numbers two and three of the *Times Japanese Supplement* (1916). In addition to providing valuable information about the living conditions of the Robertson Scott group, this article also illustrated by Keith, provides keen insight into her own formative time in Japan, and her first encounter with the daily life of the Japanese. The first illustration, 'Our Japanese Maid' (Fig. 1), depicts a woman of advanced

years reading in a supplicant pose, followed by the second illustration in part two, 'Some Obliging Tradesmen' (Fig. 2). Although the domestic subject matter of this article fits well with patterns of female journalism throughout the West in the early twentieth century, these illustrations also drew upon the West's well-established quasi-anthropological fascination with everyday life in Japan (and the Orient more generally), which simultaneously promoted the levelling idea of shared basic human needs: food, trade, recreation, personal grooming and display, while at the same time emphasising the culturally (and at times ethnically) distinctive solutions to these problems. Thus, Keith's much vaunted observer's lens provides in this sense, a continuity of imagery that can be traced back to the engravings accompanying works by Fenollosa, and the photographic portfolios of the British-Italian Felice Beatto among others. What perhaps provides something a little more unusual is the intimacy provided by the determinacy of the captioning, 'Our' Japanese maid, rather than 'A' Japanese maid, and 'Obliging' tradespeople, a descriptive which mitigated the disempowerment of anonymity.

Yet, in general, Keith's written account of setting up home in Japan suggests an initial reaction to Japanese domestic culture that was more conventional and clichéd than it was instinctively sympathetic. In her rejection of the porcelain of 'garish modern colour imported with other ugly things from the West',⁷ for example, she is guilty of the aesthetic and cultural self-loathing which, far from an abrogation of the 'Western Eye', had become a common affirmation of it. A rich vein of such sentiment runs through the encounters with Japan that a clutch of English poets and artists had from the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, well into the twentieth century, but perhaps more deeply in America where the embrace of Japan's visual culture belied a political and racial sense of superiority under conditions in which both the West and East were trading cultural fictions. Keith's identification with the 'Foreigner's voice' in her writing, epitomising the simplistic East/West dichotomy, strikes one as peculiarly at



Fig. 2. 'Some Obliging Tradesmen', *TJS*, No. 2 (3 June, 1916)

7) [Elizabeth Keith], 'A Foreigner's Budget', *TJS*, No. 2 (3 June 1916), p. 14.



Fig. 3. 'Through the Foreigner's Eyes', *The New East* (1917).

odds with the openness and humanity of her sketches, which in their graphic simplicity and depiction of everyday life, exhibit the intimacy that dissolves the boundary between the artist and her subject. Nevertheless, her willingness to accept the 'observer status' of the foreigner was reinforced a year later in a short series of illustrations for her brother-in-law's periodical *The New East*. In direct contradiction of M. C. Salaman's assertion that Keith never felt her foreignness when travelling through Japan, this series was titled, 'Through the Foreigner's Eyes' (Fig. 3.), and appeared in juxtaposition to a sister series, 'Through Japanese Eyes', produced by an uncredited Japanese artist.

III. Elizabeth Keith and the *Times Japanese Supplement (TJS)*

From the relatively light biographical treatment afforded Keith to date, only the Salaman account draws attention to her first published art work, the line drawings for the *Times*' 'Japanese number', that he suggests gave a focus to her sketches.

In 1908, the mercurial proprietor of the *Daily Mail*, Lord Northcliffe, had purchased the ailing *Times* newspaper from the Walters family. In so doing, he added the 'establishment voice' to his growing portfolio, which could be used to promote his imperial worldview. In an all-out effort to transform the stagnant circulation of the *Times*, he embarked upon a series of geographically-based supplements which were issued *gratis* with the *Times*. Two of the most important supplements were the 'Japanese Supplement' (6 issues: 19 July 1910 – 16 Dec 1916) and the 'Russian Supplement' (28 issues: 15 Dec 1911 – 27 Jan 1917). As O'Connor and Robinson have suggested, these heavily illustrated supplements broadly supported the editorial positions of Geoffrey Buckle (Editor 1884-1912), Geoffrey Dawson (Editor 1912-1919), and Wickham Steed (Editor 1919-23). However, as O'Connor and Robinson argue, the Japanese Supplement was specifically designed and timed to 'reinforce the amities of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902-22 against growing pro-German sympathies in Kasumigaseki, but they also shored up Japanese and South American resentment over the Monroe Doctrine at a time of increasing Japanese emigration to Peru, long before Northcliffe's press campaign urging readers around the world to "Watch Japan!" in the wake of the Washington Conference and the abrogation of the Alliance there in February 1922'.⁸⁾ There were contemporary concerns that the *Times* had compromised itself by publishing the unfailingly pro-Japanese supplement, a concern borne out by the first issue which contained articles by a handful of prominent Japanese statesmen

8) O'Connor and Robinson, *Op cit.*

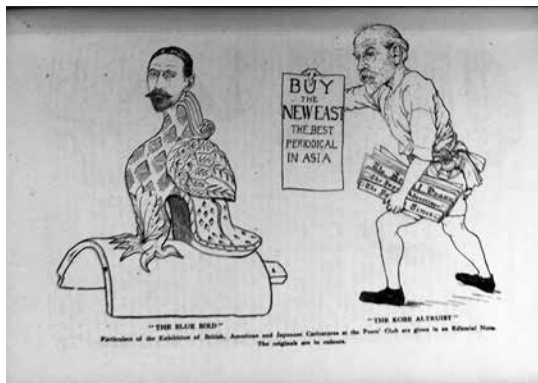


Fig. 4. Keith's satirisation of her Brother-in-law in *New East* periodical. Vol. 1 no. 6 (Nov. 1917)

caricatures of the foreign community in Japan. Reminiscent of the style of the Japanophile French artist Georges Fernand Bigot, they were displayed at The Peers Club, Tokyo 22-24, November 1917, in aid of the War Fund. Robertson Scott's New East Press imprint published these colour images as *Grin and Bear It: Caricatures* (1917), and a further four images from this series appeared in black and white in volume. 1 no. 6 (November, 1917) of *The New East* periodical (Fig. 4). *The New East* in fact carried other line drawings by Elizabeth Keith that in style and subject belong to the group of illustrations produced for the *TJS* that ended abruptly in December 1916 as a result of the acute wartime paper shortages and criticism of the tone of the publication in London. It is apparent, therefore, that these images were originally intended for the *Times Japanese Supplement*.

The naiveté of the drawings produced by Keith in the first year of her life in Japan, when she would go out onto the busy streets of Tokyo and Kyoto and plant her easel, offers a refreshing contrast to the more tightly controlled, self-conscious, and posed woodblock prints for which she later received praise. Unlike her sister, Elspeth, Elizabeth's written contributions to the *TJS* were never credited, and it is likely that several other anonymous articles were authored by her. Despite contributing twenty-one signed or initialled illustrations —the greatest contribution by a single artistic— oddly, she was never given any specific acknowledgment. This is especially curious when it is noted that all advertisements for the *TJS* mentioned the, 'many portraits and sketches' it contained.⁹⁾ Even her most successful and overtly political image, 'The New Japan', the powerful and prescient front cover for the third issue of the *TJS*, although signed and dated, failed to solicit any further acknowledgment (Fig. 5). In making it to the front cover, however, Keith was now in somewhat exalted company, the previous issue having borne the image of an archer by the noted Japanese artist and professor, Saburosuke Okada (1869-1939).

9) 'The Times' Japanese Supplement', *The Times*, 31 May 1916.

The Times

JAPANESE SUPPLEMENT

No. 3.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1916.

[Issued Gratis with The Times.]



THE NEW JAPAN.

Fig. 5. 'The New Japan', *TJS*, No. 3 (15 July 1916)

IV. 'Politics cut out'

Elizabeth Keith's striking cover image, 'The New Japan', works through a montage of the key elements of Japanese modernity, with more than a hint of *yamato-damashii*. In the lower right corner, factories belch out smoke, symbolising Japan's established industrial power; while above, the Japanese fleet testifies ominously to Japan's undisputed naval power, recognized by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902-1923, and further brought to the World's attention during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). On the left and foregrounded, a soldier stands dispassionately but resolutely clasping the Japanese flag. Next to him, his younger brother, still traditionally garbed, points enthusiastically at the departing fleet, caught in the moment of metamorphic change from innocent childhood to martial adulthood and obedience. In the background, the omnipotence of the rising sun promises imperial success. Yet, smuggled into the bottom left corner, a mother in traditional kimono looks at the scene hesitantly, an infant clinging to her back stares directly at the reader in some sort of appeal, vividly contrasting with her brothers – two worlds colliding. Anxiety pervades here, but also a certain sense of inevitability, as the forces of modernity sail inexorably towards the bleak militarism that would be Japan's fate. This then, while not an exceptional representation of Japan during the 1910s, is exceptional in Keith's artist and literary output in which, as her sister-editor remarked, 'All dates are ignored and politics cut out'.¹⁰⁾ In its composition and use of strong motifs the image anticipates Koga Harue's *The Sea* (1930), a surrealist image, that is lighter and more playful. In this famous image, the machine age is eroticised, the Japanese soldier replaced by a woman in a swimsuit, her arm raised in a salute to progress. Though structurally similar, in the fifteen years between the two images all remnants of doubt have disappeared, seriousness has given way to lightness and decadence, and the capacity to question Japan's course removed.

Produced less than a year after arriving in Japan, the image is Keith's most explicit political comment and, unlike her street-level sketches which provide stolen glimpses of ordinary life, it offers a complete narrative, demonstrating a penetrating and potent understanding of the latent forces at work in late Meiji and early Taisho Japan. Rather like an Utamaru print, viewers are left with a sense of her ambivalence towards the direction Japan is taking. This subtle critique is however, curiously discordant with the positive messaging of the *TJS* as a whole, which promoted the (undoubted) industrial achievements of Japan through a slew of articles by Japanese politicians and naval officers, and innumerable trade advertisements extolling the virtues of Japanese industrial goods.

If the subtlety of Keith's message was disguised and disfigured by the boldness of her

10) *Eastern Windows, op cit.*, p. 15.



Fig. 6. 'A Formosan Aborigine', by E. Keith, *TJS*, No. 6 (16 December 1916)

symbolism, she was more openly critical of what she perceived as the cultural iconoclasm of Japan's imperial project and its capacity for unnecessary material evisceration. In an undated letter to her sister, written some time before 1928, she remarked pointedly, 'The Japanese have demolished the fine old gates and walls of this ancient city [Hamheung, Korea], apparently for no reason'¹¹. Sympathy for Korea, which had been annexed by Japan in 1910, was rather mixed among Europeans, but in his polemical pamphlet, *Korea and Her Oppressors* (1919), S.D. Irwin expressed a similar view, exposing Japan's dismantling of Korean institutions, their attempt to 're-educate' Koreans by setting up schools teaching Japanese language and culture, and trying to gain control by 'the use of force and display of superiority' (my emphasis).¹² Elizabeth Keith's reservations about Japan's imperial hand that she experienced first-hand in Korea and Formosa were not, however, shared by the more sympathetic views of her sister. In 'A Journey Up Arisan in Formosa' published in the *TJS*, she explained with some admiration that, 'the modern Japanese is a practical man, brimming over with ambition and new ideas. In testing his young genius as a colonist in Formosa, he is not actuated by sentiment, but by clear practical issues'.¹³ Elizabeth Keith provided two illustrations for her sister's article, of which her portrait of a 'Formosan Aborigine', whom she depicts sympathetically, possessed of great charm and wisdom is the most impressive (Fig. 6).

It has been suggested that Keith's images for the *TJS*, despite her sister's insistence that they were free of political colour, did nonetheless include political elements. Her portrait of Kamichika-san, the noted lady-journalist Ichiko Kamichika stands out (Fig. 7). It was published just four months before Kamichika was arrested and sentenced to four years imprisonment for stabbing her lover, the noted anarchist-socialist and anti-imperialist Sakae Ōsugi, in what was known as the Hayama Hikage Chaya scandal. While there is no evidence that Keith met Ōsugi, given Keith's disposition to draw from life, it is likely she was acquainted with the bluestocking Kamichika-san, her traditional kimono belying



Fig. 7. Kamichika-san, E. Keith, *TJS*, No. 3 (15 July 1916)

11) *Ibid.*, p. 29.

12) S. D. Irwin, *Korea and Her Oppressor*, Ohio (1919), unpaginated.

13) Elspeth Keith, 'A Journey Up Arisan in Formosa', *TJS*, No. 6 (16 December 1916), p. 10.

her radical edge.

Putting aside the imaginative metaphorical composition of the cover illustration as an exception in Keith's *TJS* output, the 'authenticity' of her other contributions, which were drawn from life and therefore conveyed an intimate knowledge of her subject, was important for the credibility of the supplement as a whole. Following accusations that it was a vehicle for Japanese propaganda, a space for hagiographical mutual back-slapping where cordiality mingled too easily with sycophancy, all in the interests of a shared defence of both British and Japanese imperial projects, these simple line drawings of everyday life had a refreshing honesty that was appealing.

V. Ulric van den Bogaerde and the *Times Russian Supplement (TRS)*

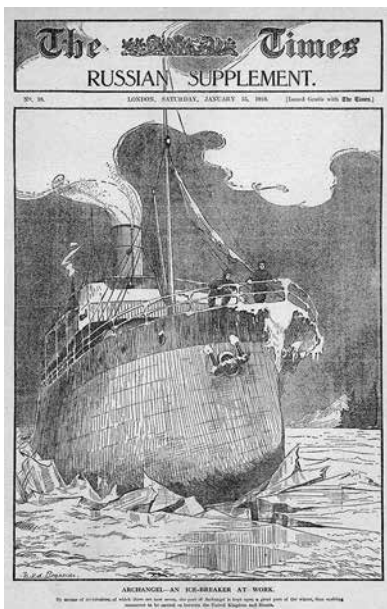


Fig. 8. One of Bogaerde's most powerful illustrations but not from life. *TRS*, No. 16 (15 January 1916)

Keith's illustrations for the *TJS* offer an alternative, if indirect, reading of aspects of Japan that reflect the many contours and tensions of modernity and absorption of Western culture. Embedded in a publication that had as its stated goal to, 'promote fuller reciprocal understanding of Japanese and British aims and interests',¹⁴⁾ they offered an intimate, but somewhat editorially asymmetrical 'line' on Japan as she experienced it, ranging from the hackneyed trope of old versus new, to heartfelt rejection and moral outcry concerning Japan's treatment of her colonies, which she witnessed first-hand on several visits with her sister Elspeth. She was by no means anti-imperialist in principle, but bemoaned the impact Japan's colonial control had on Korean's traditional way of life, customs, and material culture, aspects which she would depict so vividly and obsessively throughout her artistic life.

However, it is perhaps revealing to draw a contrast between her illustrations for the *TJS*, and those produced for another of the *Times*' supplements, the *Times Russian Supplement (TRS)*. The vast majority of these were produced by the charismatic Ulric van den Bogaerde, a young man who worked tirelessly for the *Times*, producing hundreds of drawings, often for no extra remuneration. With Belgian ancestry, the young Bogaerde was schooled first at Brighton Grammar School, and later the St. Martin's School of Art in London, giving him the formal training that Elizabeth Keith lacked. In July 1912, he was employed directly by the *Times* as a

14) 'Britain and Japan', *TJS*, No. 2 (3 June 1916), p. 2.

line artist, initially doing advertising work. It gave him a sense of artistic loyalty and creed that he would retain throughout his career. Ulric worked quickly, professionally, and to order. In 1914, his then boss and overseer of the 'Special Supplements', Robert Porter, wrote to Northcliffe in support of an increase in his remuneration: 'I found him most useful in making the line drawings of the Special Supplements. He did nearly all of these drawings and I think his work was admirable'.¹⁵⁾ Ulric furthered his name as an illustrator by producing a phenomenal number of images for the *Times*' monumental *History of the War* (1914-1922). His efforts were indeed rewarded by a salary increase, and later the post of first Art Editor for the *Weekly Times*, where he played an influential role in introducing colour photographs to the British



Fig. 9. Bogaerde's cover for the *TRS*, no.13. Showing imperial friendship.

newspaper reading public in 1931. The images he produced were formulaic, often derived from stock photos, simplified, and finished off at his desk. Preponderant were portraits of famous Russian people or statesmen, with some thirteen of his thirty-plus contributions to the *TRS* of this nature. His contributions to the *TRS* ended with the February 1916 issue. Having enlisted in December 1915, he continued to draw for other *Times* supplements until active service began in July 1916. Little is known about his wartime activities, but he witnessed the horrors of the Somme, and his time at 'The Front' was clearly traumatic. Keith and Bogaerde could therefore not have been more different, the latter technically trained, a career man at the *Times*, genuinely interested in the process of illustrating newspapers, working at a publication which became his 'mistress'. The other, a young woman abroad, untrained, stimulated by what she saw around her, at the right place at the right time.

The *TRS* began on the 15 December 1911 and ran for 28 issues until 27 January 1917, when the same paper shortages that affected the *TJS* combined with the impact of political turmoil in Russia to make its continuance impossible. Its initial justification was perhaps less obvious than its counterpart, the *TJS*, but the span of its publication covers a period of great political and social change in Russia, leading up to the February Revolution. A full content analysis of this important supplement would no doubt be instructive *vis-a-vis* the polarisation of attitudes towards Russia in Britain. For many on the Left, the Tsar was their *bête noir*. Public figures like Labour MP George Lansbury saw the Tsar as tyrannous, and an outpouring of socialist delight following the February Revolution was given visibility by the 'Russia Free' rally at the Victoria and Albert Hall on the 31 March 1917, and later the 'Leeds Convention' of the 3 June 1917. Reaction, however, was similar to the response to the French Revolution in 1789: initial celebration of the removal of a despotic monarch, followed by subsequent fear over the excesses (the 'Terror' and execution of the Tsar and his family on 17 July, 1918), and of

15) Cited in John Coldstream, *Dirk Bogaerde: The Authorised Biography*, London: Phoenix (2005).

what might replace him. A weak Russia would upset the balance of power, affect their war contribution, and meant that she could not act effectively as a bulwark against penetration of the Russian East, where deep ethnic issues accompanied the construction and control of highly strategic railways.

However, Bogaerde's work has a wider context regarding attitudes towards Russia in Britain. The *TRS*, coincided with the high-water mark of interest in the Russian Empire in Britain. Two distinct images of Russia emerged: one based on economics, advancing the idea that Russia was industrializing and westernizing, and might soon be able to fully enter the 'European Club'. This was driven by massive foreign direct investment from the 1860s onwards, especially in textiles, mining, and metallurgy. The other contrasting image had its roots in cultural difference, based on the notion of 'oriental spirituality'. This view was cemented by the much-anticipated visitation of Diaghlev's Ballet Russe to Covent Garden in June 1911, when the exotic costumes and dance routines gave audiences a flavour of the mysterious East.

These two views were not as antagonistic to each other as might at first appear to be the case. Manifest cultural interest in Russia was underpinned by significant capital flows from Britain to Russia, with some economists suggesting that around half of all industrial investment was foreign in the last decade of the nineteenth century. After a hiatus between 1900-1906, the nature of foreign economic involvement with Russia evolved, with foreign companies acting more in the capacity of passive providers of capital for domestic entrepreneurs.¹⁶⁾ The *TRS* was thus partly a response to this change and integral to the realignment of British interests in Russia. At the same time, the 'cult of Holy Russia' which had gained traction in pre-revolutionary Russia through the writings of Stephen Graham, who depicted the simple spirituality of the peasantry, 'transfixed a swathe of the British intelligentsia on the eve of the First World War, convincing numerous artists and writers that Russia could become an unlikely source of a cultural and spiritual renaissance destined to sweep the world'.¹⁷⁾ Graham pioneered the use of photographs in travel books on Russia, which were carefully designed to add to the authenticity of the written text, giving a veneer of realism that could not always be achieved by words alone.

Although belonging to the same family of Northcliffe publications falling under the stewardship of the dynamic Robert Porter, and despite following the same physical format, from the outset the *TRS* was a very different publication. The content was largely British-derived, produced ostensibly to highlight Russia's continued economic potential for capital

16) For a good discussion of this concept, see Gregory Guroff & Fred V. Carstensen's (eds.) *Entrepreneurship in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, Princeton University Press: New Jersey (1983).

17) Michael Hughes, 'Searching for the Soul of Russia', in *Beyond Holy Russia: The Life and Times of Stephen Graham*, Open Book Publishing (2014), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vjtr4.8> (accessed 31 October 2019), p. 1.

investment, tourism, as a supplier of raw materials, and as a vast untapped market. The commencing article, 'Anglo-Russian Trade' by Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace, set the tone for the publication, which was invariably wrapped in eight pages of advertising material for Russian banks, holiday resorts, and announcements of foreign revenues. Wallace put it simply: 'The first requisite for normal successful trade between two countries is that their economic condition should be widely different, so that each can supply what the other requires... In this respect, England and Russia are admirably adapted to extensive commercial intercourse'.¹⁸⁾ Bogaerde produced a powerful visual articulation of this idea in his front cover for the thirteenth issue of the *TRS*, published on the 18 September 1915 (Fig. 9). In the symbolic image, the British and Russian Empires are represented side by side, almost intertwined. On the right, Britannia holds the royal coat of arms below the royal crown. At her feet she is surrounded by symbols of British industrial and military prowess: a steam locomotion and canon. To the left and of equal stature, Mother Russia holds the Russian state emblem, the double-headed eagle, while a sturgeon, wheat sheaf, and oil rig showcase Russia's agricultural and natural resources. The message is one of mutual strength, and an explicit endorsement of imperial practices. At the centre, towards the bottom an anchor testifies to the seafaring traditions of both countries. There is also a hint of the familial connection between the Romanovs and house of Windsor. Commerce was driving British Government policy on Russia prior to the Revolution, whereas with Japan, Britain was pursuing a strategic partnership. Bogaerde followed this issue with a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II captioned, 'The Tsar of All Russias'. This staunchly pro-imperial editorial line, textually and visually concordant, made a post-revolutionary supplement all but impossible. However, given the workmanlike nature of the Bogaerde's illustrations, it is difficult to assign personal sympathies to the images. Different motivations behind publication, and different artistic styles and methods of composition. Whereas Keith's images were drawn directly from street observations and her curiosity and fascination with Japanese and Korean life, Bogaerde's muse of choice was the British Museum, and the power of his vivid imagination: a Russian peasant festival experienced through his reinterpretation of an engraving in the British Museum; the likeness of 'Vladimir of Kiev' taken from Mrs. Howe's *A Thousand Years of Russian*



Fig. 11. Bogaerde's image of E. Keith's housekeeper, 'Mrs. Jones', *TJS*, No. 3 (15 July 1916)

18) D. Mackenzie Wallace, 'Anglo-Russian Trade', *TRS*, No. 1 (15 December 1911), p. 17.



Fig. 10. Ulric van den Bogaerde's simplified copy (left), of an image of Vladimir of Kiev in Mrs. Howes', *A Thousand Years of Russian History* (right).

History (Fig. 10); Russian porcelain statuettes of peasants copied from items in the Franks Collection. The close fidelity, but flatness and lack of liveliness of the copyist is evident here, but more importantly, the contrasting compositional methods point to the balance of power between the three nations. Nevertheless, the strongly derivative nature of his work did not preclude the creation of powerful images. His 'Archangel: An Ice-breaker at Work' (Fig. 8), which served as the cover illustration for the 15 January 1916 issue, is a good example.

VI. Conclusion

Curiously, in an interesting twist in the story of the artistic contributions made to the *Times* supplements by Elizabeth Keith and Ulric van den Bogaerde, several illustrations by Bogaerde appeared in the *TJS*, despite his having never apparently set foot in Japan. The most important of these illustrations was his 'Mrs. Jones' (Fig. 11), which illustrated Keith's own article 'A Foreigner's Budget', referred to at length already. This most peculiar artistic colonisation of her own narrative depicting a person with whom she had daily intimacy, in favour of an imaginary portrait, has wider implications for the relationship between text and image in the supplements as a whole. It reminds us of the potential infidelity of the artist, and the difficulty of retaining control over even the most personal of narratives, let alone metanarratives such as the competing imperialisms to which the two illustrators unwittingly contributed. Whereas accuracy and direct factual accountability are demanded of textual contributions by knowledgeable and engaged readers, newspaper illustrators in this period were given the 'artistic license' to reside at very different places in the spectrum of possible representations, from figments of the imagination to direct copying, to life-sketches. They jostle on the page, cheek by jowl, giving a richness to the discourses which they help to visualise and reward further study.

Appendix I. Illustrations by Elizabeth Keith for the *Times Japanese Supplement* (1916)

3 June 1916 (no. 2)

1. Banner-Bearer of a Rural Young Men's Association, ills. 'Outside the Cities: Enthusiasm for Rural Instruction', by Robertson Scott, p. 5. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
2. The Cha-no-yu or Tea Ceremony, ills. 'The Tea Ceremony: A Refuge for the Spirit', by Elspeth Keith, p. 13. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
3. Our Japanese Maid, ills. 'A Foreigner's Budget', [att. Elizabeth Keith], p. 14. Signed Elizabeth Keith.

15 July 1916 (no. 3)

4. The New Japan, cover ills., p. 1. Signed Elizabeth Keith, Tokyo.
5. In a Japanese Train, ills. 'Railways of Japan' by Dr. J.H. Soyeda, p. 4. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
6. Kamichika San, Lady Journalist, ills. 'The Woman Reporter' (anon.), p. 7. Signed E. Keith.
7. Some Obliging Tradesmen, 'A Foreigner's Budget', [att. Elizabeth Keith], p. 13. Signed Elizabeth Keith.

2 Sep 1916 (no. 4)

8. How Sunshine is Shut Out of Rokko, ills. 'Formosa: Its past and Present', [att. Elizabeth Keith], p. 14. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
9. The Imperial Theatre, Tokyo, ills. 'Imperial Theatre: The Aim of Its Founders' [anon], p. 17. Signed Elizabeth Keith, Tokyo 1916.

14 Oct 1916 (no. 5)

10. Westernizing Tokyo: The Big Mitsukoshi Store in the Background, ills. 'Architecture: Ancient and Modern Styles', by Josiah Conder, p. 6. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
11. The Wadakura Gate: One of the Entrances to the Imperial Palace, ills. 'Architecture: Ancient and Modern Styles' by Josiah Conder, p. 7. Signed E.K.

16 Dec 1916 (no. 6)

12. Osaka, ills. 'The Cities of Japan: Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto', [anon.], p. 7. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
13. Yokohama Bay from Kanagawa, ills. 'The Cities of Japan: Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto', [anon.], p. 9. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
14. A Formosan Aborigine, ills. 'A Journey Up Arisan', by Elspeth Keith, p. 10. Signed E.K.
15. An Arisan Train, ills. 'A Journey Up Arisan', by Elspeth Keith, p. 10. Signed E. Keith.

16. A Bit of Kobe Harbour, 'The Cities of Japan: Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto', [anon.], p. 11. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
17. Young Japan, ills. 'The Cotton Industry: Increased Output Since the War' [anon], p. 15. Signed E.K.
18. Kyoto, ills. 'The Cities of Japan: Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto', [anon], p. 16. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
19. A Business Quarter of Tokyo, 'The Cities of Japan: Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto', [anon], p. 17. Signed Elizabeth Keith.
20. The Memorial Museum, Formosa, 'A Journey Up Arisan', by Elspet Keith, p. 18. Signed E.K.
21. A Japanese Student, ills. 'Contemporary Fictions: A short Survey of the Situation', by Y. Takenob[u], p. 19. Signed E.K.