

# **HIROHITO:**

Some Thoughts about the 124th Emperor of Japan

**Whose hero was Hirohito Hironomiya?  
Was he worth dying for?  
Was he a puppet propped up by imperialists –  
or point of a holy sword?**

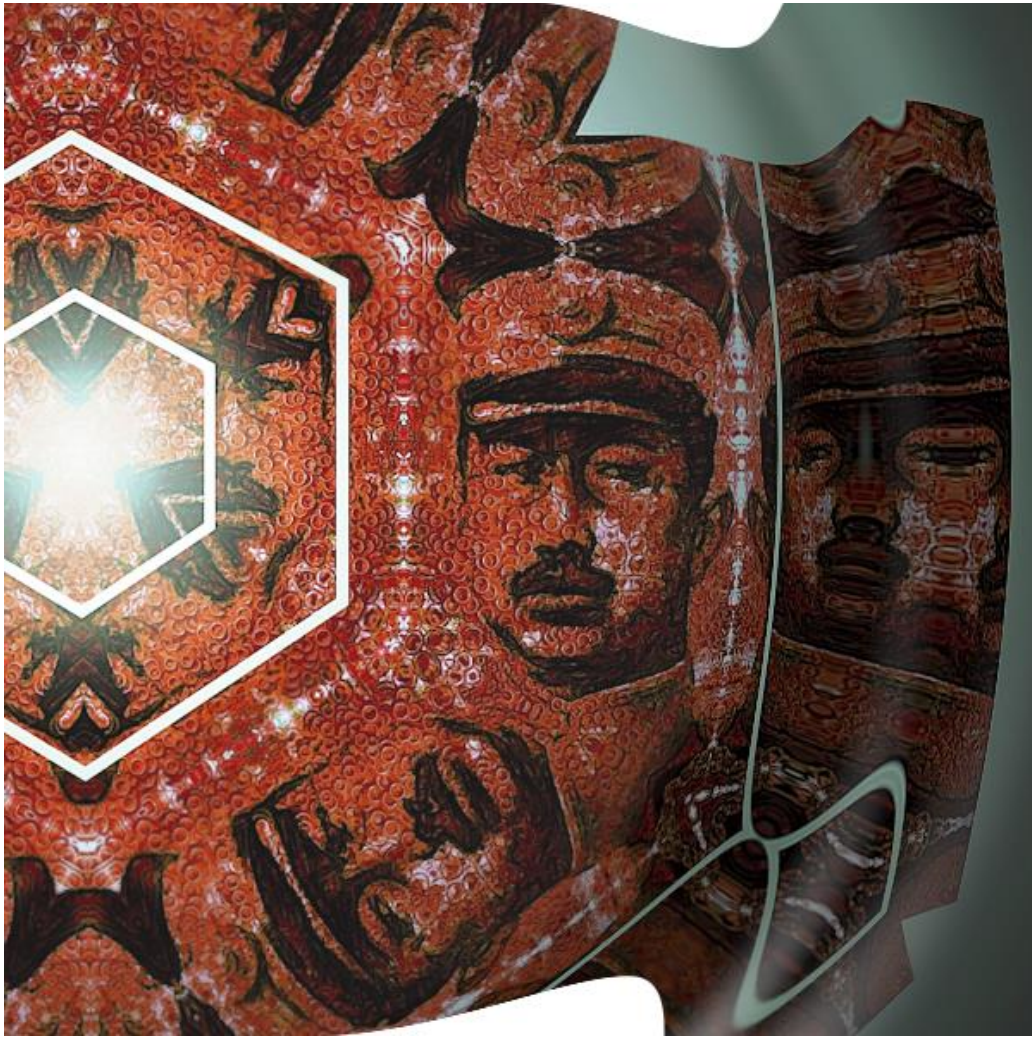
**Once  
God to sixty million  
in dashing uniform  
surrounded by tanks  
Mitsubishi fighters  
and gold chrysanthemums**

**Now  
a tiny pot of ash  
in an oversized grave  
  
that little Mickey Mouse lover  
conquered half the world  
for nearly a thousand days**

**- T Newfields**

Begun: 1996 in Shizuoka, Japan ≙ Finished: 2016 in Xin-Taipei, Taiwan





**Bhāraté:** Well, Hirohito was not my hero.

**Daiki:** Most people will probably never know the actual man behind the symbol.

**Chariya:** It's meaningless to discuss the Japanese emperor without also considering the broader historical context. Shortly after his birth, some type of collision between Japan and the West seemed inevitable.

**An-Yi:** That sounds like a glib endorsement of the atrocities perpetuated under Hirohito's name.

**Bhāraté:** Fascism and colonialism have certainly caused unspeakable misery. The only point I would make is that we should not feel self-righteous: every civilization is guilty of misdeeds.

**Chariya:** Yeah. Too many people point their fingers at others for sins which – at some point in time – they have committed themselves.

**Daiki:** On hindsight, Hirohito seems to have many of the contradictions inherent in all humans. At various times in his life, he was a militarist, politician, marine biologist, and a retiring old man. Was he not a mosaic?