



**FILM AS PROPAGANDA: A STUDY OF BLURRING  
STEREOTYPES OF JAPANESE SOLDIERS IN THE  
FILM *LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* BY CLINT  
EASTWOOD**

**A THESIS  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Bachelor Degree Majoring in American Cultural Studies  
in English Department  
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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SEMARANG  
2018**

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer honestly confirms that she compiles this thesis by herself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3, and in diploma degree of any university. The writer ascertains also that she does not quote any material from other publications or someone's paper except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, October 2018



Elisabeth Dyah Ayu Cintami Wisnugroho

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“Go forth and set the world on fire.”

- **St. Ignatius of Loyola**

“Sometimes the moon looks brighter than the sun.”

- **Pierce The Veil (Million Dollars House (The Painter)**

“Dream as you will live forever and live as you’ll die today.”

- **One Ok Rock (C.H.A.O.S.M.Y.T.H)**

“Never be afraid when fighting

If you just keep silent, nothing will change”

- **DISH// (Katte ni My Soul)**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to my beloved family and friends,  
also to everyone who always support me in my life.

Here is a big gratitude I can give to you,

Thank you.

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*LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* BY CLINT EASTWOOD**

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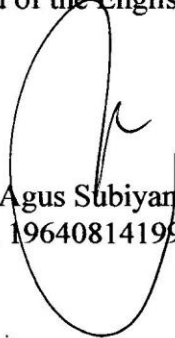
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## VALIDATION

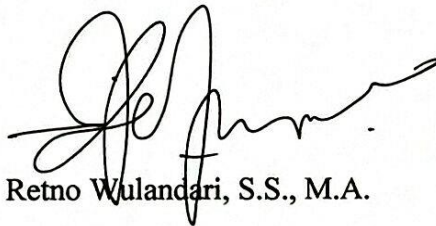
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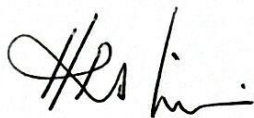
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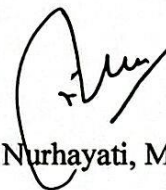
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise be to God Almighty and His blessings in giving me a chance, so the thesis entitled “Film as Propaganda: A Study of Blurring Stereotypes of Japanese Soldiers in The Film *Letters from Iwo Jima* by Clint Eastwood” came to a completion. I would like to convey my gratitude to all of the people who support me to finish this thesis.

The biggest appreciation and gratitude goes to my thesis advisor Arido Laksono, S.S.,M.Hum for his guidances, advices, and suggestions in completing this thesis.

My deepest gratitude also goes to the following:

1. Dr. Redyanto M. Noor, M.Hum., as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Agus Subiyanto, M.A., as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. All of the lecturers in the English Department, especially the American Studies section, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, for their dedication in sharing knowledge and experiences.
4. My beloved parents, Eustachius Marsudi Wisnugroho Subowo and Rita Utami, as well as my one and only younger sister, Monika Dewita Wisnugroho. Thank you for letting me have the best living experiences by your love, support and dynamic life journeys I will never forget.

5. Farah Shovia Hannany, my best brainstorming friend in the world who always gives me her time to share stories, mindful thoughts and even musical discussion. Thank you for your supports in every situation I have, and decision I make. We must surely get our stuff packed as the world waiting for us!
6. My beloved English Department friends, especially Farah Shovia Hannany, Brica Novena Nastiti, Leitetia Putri Ardanaris, Asteriana Alike Aisyah, Rizka Ayu Alifiani, Arina Nur Izzeti and Atsila Yasmin Dewintashia for the time we spent together in this college. Thank you for all supports you gave to me.
7. My beloved friends in Kronik Filmedia especially for *BPH Kabinet Pake Hati*: Cynthia Astari, Rizka Ayu Alifiani, Dwitisya Rizki Desindatika, Riskana Firdya, Geri Cahyowibowo Dargayana, Muhammad Rafif Sujatmoko and all of 2014-2016 batch members who gave me uncountable colorful living experiences in filmmaking as well as in leading an organization which I had never experienced before. Also, thanks to the seniors who were letting me to enter this wonderful organization.
8. My friends from Eling Cinema Semarang, NKRI Sehat, Community Forum JAFF 2016, JDrama ID, EDSA and Semarang film communities; thank you for the supports and the lessons you give to me.
9. My 42 days family, Tim II KKN Undip 2017, Desa Sengon, Kecamatan Subah, Batang; Khanif Ardan, Adissya Mega Christia, Rani Wazkika Fauzi, Fitriani Rahasdi, Vicky Dimas Pradhika, Wahyu Kristiani, Erica

Damayanti Putri Laksono and Raden Rian Girianom for those unexpected journeys we spent together, and for your patience to live with me. Thank you for letting me slept and woke up late every day.

10. Teachers and students in FunArt Studio for having me as a teacher. I am very grateful to have you guys.

Realizing that this thesis is still far from perfect, I will be grateful to receive any constructive criticism, recommendation, and suggestions to make this thesis better.

Finally, I expect that this thesis will be useful to the readers who are interested in Pacific War issues which are represented in modern films.

Semarang, October 2018



Elisabeth Dyah Ayu Cintami Wisnugroho

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## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisis film berjudul *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) arahan sutradara Clint Eastwood tentang perang di Iwo Jima (1945) Jepang yang diceritakan menggunakan sudut pandang tentara Jepang. Dengan menggunakan sudut pandang yang berbeda, penceritaan dalam film ini mengaburkan stereotip yang melekat pada tentara Jepang dalam Perang Dunia II, terutama dalam laga Perang Pasifik sendiri. Stereotip seperti perilaku kejam mereka ketika menyerang pihak tentara Amerika Serikat dan semangat berani mati mereka dikaburkan dalam penceritaan film ini. Maksud dan tujuan tulisan ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk propaganda interaksi simbolik dalam film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), serta apa saja stereotip tentang tentara Jepang yang dikaburkan dalam film ini. Dalam mencari data untuk mendukung penulisan, penulis menggunakan studi pustaka melalui pengamatan mendalam terhadap film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) dan membaca beberapa buku cetak, penelitian terdahulu, buku elektronik, dan jurnal yang mengacu pada objek. Penulis menemukan bahwa film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) merupakan media yang baik dalam melancarkan propaganda untuk merubah pikiran penonton tentang beberapa isu yang ada di masyarakat termasuk isu stereotip terhadap kelompok tertentu.

Kata Kunci: Tentara Jepang, Iwo Jima, Perang Pasifik, Stereotip, Propaganda

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Film is an effective media to share thoughts about any objects. Film can build uncountable perspective of thinking. Metz in *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* states that “cinema is a vast subject, and there are more ways than one to enter it” (1974: 3). Uncountable issues that are adapted in films are possible to make itself into a tool for sharing ideologies and historical events as well as sharing stereotypes and propagandas. Also, Hipler on Hoffman states that “film can exercise an influence on society that is more enduring than that achieved by church or school or, for that matter, literature, the press or radio” (1996:iv). Film can become an effective media to reform any ideas in the world as it has audio and visual aspects which can reach people’s attentions.

*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), a film directed by Clint Eastwood is chosen to be the object of study. It is an American film which uses Japanese actors and Japanese cinematography style telling about the battle that happened in an island called Iwo Jima, Japan in 1944-1945 from the Japanese’s point of view. The film runs with full Japanese language for the Japanese soldiers’ scenes and American English language for the scenes that show interaction between some characters and Americans. The film is a companion to another film of Eastwood entitled

*Flags of Our Father* which issues battle of Iwo Jima from American's perspective.

The film tries to tell about how the Japanese soldiers were actually living when the World War II happened, how they were recruited, and also what they were actually felt as soldiers. James King states in his book *Under the Foreign Eyes – Western Cinematic Adaptations of Postwar Japan*:

Unlike, his predecessor, he was determined to make a film that vanquished mindless generalizing about the Japanese. Eastwood had consistently taken a stereotype and then puncture it (2012: 28).

Based on the statement above, Clint Eastwood, as the director of *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), took the stereotypes that American gave to Japan during World War II then tried to make a film from Japanese point of view to blur the bad imagery of Japanese soldiers. Most American films portrayed the Japanese soldiers with same characteristics. When the prior Western films had exhibited Japanese as mechanical acting and cruel adherents of Hirohito and Tojo, Eastwood in one beat tried to undo that former behavior (King, 20012: 29).

In the *Letters from Iwo Jima* storyline, the Japanese soldiers are portrayed differently from other films about World War II that have Japanese characters. They actually do not want to be sent to the battlefield, they do not want to leave their family, and they are forced to join the military troops because of the lacking people in military. The film also tells about the suffering of the soldiers as Iwo Jima is a dry and infertile island, some soldiers are dead of dysentery, dead of

malnutrition and dead of killing themselves. Their defenses also become weaker as there are no cover from the air and the sea. They can be attacked easily.

Besides the portrays of the Japanese soldiers who are suffering along the war reflected by Saigo and his comrades' scenes are shown, some portrays about how General Kuribayashi and Baron Nishi are having close relationships with some Americans are also depicted. The premise and storyline of the film seems to be a new propaganda that conceals the old propaganda in order to blur stereotypes of American to Japanese with historical values.

*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) is an interesting film which portrays the battle of Iwo Jima. As it is shown from the title, the plot is focused on the events happened in Iwo Jima in the Pacific War sequence of events. This film uses Japanese characters to drive the plot as it also see the war from Japanese point of view. From this film, I found that there are some signs of propaganda that blur stereotypes to Japanese soldiers in the World War II depicted in the narrative and cinematography aspects of this film. Therefore, I entitle this thesis "Film as Propaganda: A Study of Blurring Stereotypes of Japanese Soldiers in the Film *Letters from Iwo Jima* by Clint Eastwood".

## **1.2. Scope of the Study**

This study discusses an American film entitled *Letters from Iwo Jima* directed by Clint Eastwood and released in 2006. This study will discuss the form of propaganda which is blurring the stereotypes of American towards Japanese

soldiers that is reflected in the film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) with historical approach in the narrative and cinematography elements of the film.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

1. To describe and analyze the intrinsic elements of film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006).
2. To identify the forms of propaganda which blur stereotypes of Japanese soldiers in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) directed by Clint Eastwood.

### **1.4. Method of The Study**

Method of the study is methodology that is used in writing the study to solve the research issue. It accounts for the sources of information come from and how the data are collected. To analyze the problems of the study, two methods namely method of research and method of approach are used.

#### **1.4.1. Method of Research**

For the method of research, library research method is used in order to collect the data which are needed to support the analysis of the study. According to George, “library research entails identification the obtained sources that have factual information or opinions from personal/expert which meet the research question” (2008:6). The data are obtained by watching the film and reading the reference books that have relevance to the study. The data are also obtained by browsing the internet in order to gain more information and articles related to the topic of study.

### 1.4.2. Method of Approach

Method of approach is used to analyze the obtained data. In this study, I use objective approach to analyze the intrinsic aspects and historical approach to analyze the extrinsic aspects.

Abrams states in his book *A Glossary of Literary Term about Objective Criticism* that “objective criticism deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called an extrinsic relationship to the poet, or to the audience, or to the environing world” (2008: 63). The objective approach is used to analyze narrative and cinematography aspects of the film.

Out of the intrinsic aspects of the film, there are also extrinsic aspects included in the film which are researched by using historical approach. Historical approach is used “to understand a literary work by investigating the social, cultural, and intellectual context that produced it” (Kennedy & Gioia, 1995: 1790). Historical aspects are important to look back in the past events and past development of cinematic works to analyze the film as media propaganda in blurring the stereotypes of Japanese soldiers in World War II as the film *Letters from Iwo Jima* is a historical film that is set on the World War II period. By using this approach, I apply stereotype theory and propaganda theory to dig out the blurred stereotype of Japanese Soldiers in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006).

## 1.5. Organization of the Study

This study has five chapters where each chapter has some sub-chapter, namely:

**Chapter I : INTRODUCTION**

Containing Background of the Study, Scope of the Study, Purpose of the Study, Methodology of Research, and Organization of the Writing.

**Chapter II : SYNOPSIS OF *LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* (2006)**

Containing the synopsis of the film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) directed by Clint Eastwood.

**Chapter III : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Discussing theories used in this study. The theories explain intrinsic and extrinsic aspects to investigate this study.

**Chapter IV :BLURING STEREOTYPES OF AMERICANS TOWARDS JAPANESE SOLDIERS IN THE FILM *LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* BY CLINT EASTWOOD**

Discuss the relevance of the theory and its relation to the findings. The intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the film will be discussed further in this chapter.

## **Chapter V : CONCLUSION**

This chapter consists of the conclusion of the study.

Furthermore, it contains the result obtained in this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### SYNOPSIS OF *LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* (2006) FILM

The soldiers are digging up trenches on the Iwo Jima coast. A narration is spoken by a soldier who is still digging the trench, Saigo. He writes letters to his wife and talk about the fact that he always digs holes on Iwo Jima. He also thinks that perhaps the hole will be his grave someday. He also thinks that it is better to the Japanese troops there to give up and hand Iwo Jima over the American.

Then General Tadamichi Kuribayashi comes by plane. He is a General who used to live in America as a military attaché. After his arrival, he sees two soldiers are beaten by Captain Tanida, one of them is Saigo: He is beaten because of his thoughts about giving Iwo Jima to American as he becomes frustrated of being there. Seeing that useless act, General Kuribayashi stops the punishment to the two men and lets the soldiers have a break. In the break time, Saigo talks with his two friends Nozaki and Kashiwara that Kuribayashi had studied the Americans thus he has different perspectives to defend against American Soldiers.

As there are no cover from the air and sea, the island of Iwo Jima is not safe. General Kuribayashi has a talk with Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi, a famous Olympic gold medalist of equestrian jump about a plan of digging tunnels to hide the troops into Mount Suribachi in Iwo Jima. The idea is conveyed by Kuribayashi to the troop officers in Iwo Jima. Then, the idea is rejected but

General Kuribayashi says that American technologies cannot be disregarded, so Japan should use different methods to defend the United States.

Malnutrition and unsanitary conditions happened; many soldiers died of dysentery, including Kashiwara, Saigo's friend. The troops start to use the caves. Kashiwara is replaced by Superior Private Shimizu. Nozaki and Saigo suspect that Shimizu is a spy from the *Kempeitai* as he acts like a *Kempeitai* member.

American starts to show up and barrage the island. A couple of days after that, the U.S. Marines arrive. The American soldiers endure substantial setbacks, but the resistances are quickly overcome, as Kuribayashi has anticipated, and the attack turns to the positions on Mount Suribachi. The battle has begun and here is the scene where Japanese troops on Iwo Jima fight against American troops. Before the climax of the fight begins, the radio broadcasts a song entitled *Song for Defenders of Iwo Jima* which is sung by children from Kuribayashi's homeland. It signifies that everyone in Japan is finally letting go of the soldiers who fight on Iwo Jima.

Many lives have been taken away by American soldiers' attack and also by *seppuku*. The *seppuku* is happened when a captain feels that he has failed and would rather die in honor by killing himself than die of American attack. The captain will ask or force his subordinate to do *seppuku* or commit suicide with him.

Saigo always runs from the duty to do *seppuku*. He would rather fight until dead than kill himself cowardly. He runs until meets General Kuribayashi who latter orders Saigo to destroy all the documents and also his letters to his child and family while he launches a final attack to America. Saigo decides to save the letters and bury them.

On that night, a large portion of soldiers are dead, and Kuribayashi is badly injured. However, Kuribayashi's faithful subordinate, Fujita, drags him away. In the following morning, Kuribayashi orders Fujita to cut his head; nonetheless, Fujita is shot till dead by an American sniper before he can do it. Saigo shows up after burying the letters and reports. Kuribayashi requests that Saigo to bury him, at that time he shoot himself with his gun, Colt45 year 1911 — a gift that was given to Kuribayashi by an US military officer before the war. A sad Saigo buries him.

Afterward, a Marine discovers Fujita's body. One Marine officer discovers Kuribayashi's gun and puts it into his belt. They look through the surroundings and find Saigo with his scoop. Seeing the gun in the Marine lieutenant's belt, Saigo starts raging and attacking the Americans with his scoop. Excessively frail, making it impossible to fight, he is beaten and collapsed. Wake up on a stretcher, Saigo sees the setting sun and smiles.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many aspects used in film making which build the whole storytelling and story building of the film. They are also used to analyze the film itself, and then later those aspects are divided into two main aspects namely intrinsic and extrinsic aspects.

#### 3.1. Intrinsic Aspects

The intrinsic aspects of film build the storytelling by the technical terms that are required. According to Pratista, “intrinsic aspects consist of two elements: narrative and cinematographic aspects” (2017: 23). Narrative aspects consist of plot, characters, setting, and conflict that are used in analyzing the film for this study. Meanwhile, there are three points in elements of cinematography that is used in analyzing the film for this study namely camera distance, *mise en scene* and sound.

##### 3.1.1. Narrative Elements

Narrative Elements consist of character, setting, conflict and plot. According to Pratista in *Memahami Film (Edisi 2)*, “*unsur naratif berhubungan dengan aspek cerita film*” (2017: 24) [narrative aspects connect with the storyline of the film]. The elements are interacting together to arrange a combination of

events which has a particular purpose. In short, the narrative elements lead the audiences to understand the purpose of the film.

### **3.1.1.1. Characters**

Characters are figures in films that have important roles to show the storyline to the audience. Characters lead how the plot goes. In addition, characters have different roles played by the actors. The messages in a film are delivered by the characters to the audiences. According to Barsam and Monahan in *Looking at Movie: An Introduction to Movie*, “there are two characters, which are having major and minor roles namely major character and minor character” (2009: 135).

#### **3.1.1.1.1. Major Characters**

Major characters play the most important in the storyline of a film. They appear in the film mostly to drive the story, and most events happen to them. Their appearances affect the plot and the storytelling of the film from the opening to the ending.

#### **3.1.1.1.2. Minor Characters**

Minor characters play less important roles in the whole film storyline, and their appearance mostly only for moving the plot forward. Despite of their less importance, minor characters usually encourage the major characters or in contrary, against them.

### **3.1.1.2. Setting**

Setting supports film storyline to show the audience where it is taking place, time, and social background. It becomes another important element in film that helps to reveal the background of the story. There are three types of setting, which are setting of place, setting of time, and setting of social background (Kennedy, 1987: 68).

In cinematography fields, setting is a part of *mise en scene* which can provide information about a time period, the place of story to who is the character. The set of time and space are used to make those aspects become clear (Pratista, 2017: 97). Setting that is used in a film should be arranged as relevant as the real setting of the story context. It means that if the story is set on World War II, there will be battlefield, military properties and guns in the film. Everything on the screen must be visually and audibly relevant.

### **3.1.1.3. Conflict**

Conflict is a crucial state of the living of characters on film. It is highly essential to makes storyline becomes more interesting to be watched. Without conflict, there will not be a story. Conflict happens when two people or groups are having some differences in some aspects such as mindset, ideology and belief that can drive a conflict to be existed. According to Ansen Dibell's conflict is "attitudes turning into motives, meeting resistance, creating conflict, and leading

to consequences—becoming plot” (Dibell, 1988 : 8). There are two types of conflict which are called internal and external conflict.

#### **3.1.1.3.1. Internal Conflict**

Internal conflict is a conflict occurred from the characters by themselves to themselves. Internal conflict happens when a character is hostile to him himself. Generally it occurs when the character must settle some particular.

#### **3.1.1.3.2. External Conflicts**

External conflict is a conflict occurred between a character to another character. It can also happen to a group of characters in a small or large number. It shows clearly in the story or in the dialogue.

#### **3.1.1.4. Plot**

Plot is the main events in the film that is written carefully to make dynamics in the film. Plot is the sequences and the moments of the story that is told in the film. According to Dibell, plot is construction of important events in a given story – important since they have significant impacts (1988:5). It is audio-visually told in film with five structures, which are exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and conclusion. Exposition gives information about the background of the story before it begins. Rising action consist problem or conflict which are started to appear. Climax consist the total conflicted condition and

turning point of the story. Falling action is the action brought by climax as the conflicts are resolved. Conclusion contains of the resolution of the story.

### **3.1.2. Elements of Cinematography**

Elements of Cinematography are used to analyze the audio visual aspect in a film such as camera distance and *mise en scene* in the film that affect the plot, particularly in the film “Letters from Iwo Jima”.

#### **3.1.2.1. Camera Distance**

Camera distance is the most important aspect of framing and composing a scene. The length between camera and subject determines size of the screen image and also affect the implied distance between the audience and the characters (Stadler and McWilliam, 2009: 34). Shot size determines the important meaning in visual aspect of film. The most often used shots are long shot, medium shot, medium close-up shot and close up shot. There are seven different basic camera distances in cinematography (Pratista, 2017: 146-148), namely:

##### **3.1.2.1.1. Long Shot**



Picture 3.1  
Long Shot Technique  
 (“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

This kind of camera distance makes all of the human body looks clear from the top to the toe; however, the background is still dominating the frame (Pratista, 2017: 147).

### 3.1.2.1.2. Medium Long Shot



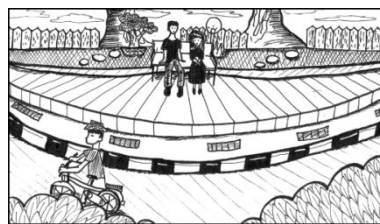
Picture 3.2

Medium Long Shot Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

Medium long shot shows human body from under the knees to the top. With this camera distance, the human body and the environment are balance (Pratista, 2017: 147).

### 3.1.2.1.3. Extreme Long Shot



Picture 3.3

Extreme Long Shot Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

Extreme long shot is the farthest camera distance from the camera lens to the main object. The human body is barely visible in the frame. This kind of technique is used to depict a far object with the panorama around it (Pratista, 2017: 146).

#### 3.1.2.1.4. Medium Shot



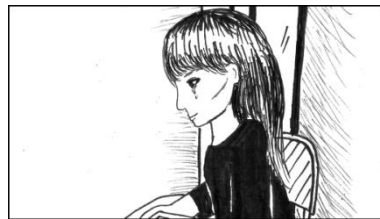
Picture 3.4

#### Medium Shot Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

This technique is framing the human object from the waist to the top of the head. With this technique, the gestures and facial expression of characters will be much exposed (Pratista, 2017:147).

#### 3.1.2.1.5. Medium Close-Up



Picture 3.5

#### Medium Close-Up Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

This technique portrays human body from the chest to the head. Human body is dominating the frame where the background is no longer dominating the frame. A normal conversation is usually taken with this technique (Pratista, 2017: 147).

### 3.1.2.1.6. Close-Up



Picture 3.6

#### Close-Up Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

Generally this technique shows face, feet, hands or other little objects.

Close-up can show the expression and gestures in very detail manner. It can be used to show more intimate dialogues and acts (Pratista, 2017: 147).

### 3.1.2.1.7. Extreme Close-Up



Picture 3.7

#### Extreme Close-Up Technique

(“Storyboard for Short Movie Black Dress” by Elisabeth Dyah .A.C.W)

This technique is the nearest distance in taking a shot in film making, where it is used to portray the detail of the object. The detailed point of face such as eyes, nose and ears are taken with this technique (Pratista, 2017: 147).

### 3.1.2.2. *Mise en Scene*

According to Bordwell and Thompson (1986: 119), *mise en scene* is the fact of putting into scene; it is applied to the stage direction. The four main aspects of *mise en scene* are setting, lighting, costume and make-up, as well as the

acting of the actors. “This element is the easiest element we can identify as almost everything we see in the screen while watching a film is part of *mise en scene*” (Pratista, 2017: 97). Understanding *mise en scene* is a way to understand the film as it visually shows audiences the message of the film. The space and time are portrayed by the sets of property, costumes, actors and lighting. We can investigate who the character is and also when an even occurs by seeing the *mise en scene* elements.

### **3.1.2.3. Sound**

According to Pratista, sound in film is “*seluruh suara yang keluar dari gambar, yakni dialog, musik, dan efek suara*” (2017: 197) [all of the sounds which come out from the picture, namely dialogue, music and sound effect]. Dialogue is verbal communication language spoken by the characters to build the story. Music is all of the musical composition used to build the mood of the film. Sound effect is all of the sound produced by the objects depicted in the film.

The sound composition can bring the audiences to the deeper world of the film story, such as “when watching a war film, we can feel the atmosphere of the real battlefield” (Pratista, 2017:197). The atmosphere is much influenced by those sound elements. They have an important role to support the whole narrative aspects and film aesthetics.

## **3.2. Extrinsic Aspects**

In this aspect, propaganda theory, stereotype theory and historical approach is used to analyze extrinsic aspects of the film.

### **3.2.1. Propaganda Theory**

Propaganda is one of communication methodologies. It indicates a way of telling message to influence people. Propaganda would consist of advertising, political campaign and public relations. Propaganda also deliberately manipulates thoughts and behavior of people related to the beliefs of norms and values. The practice of propaganda had been existing from the beginning of society was formed, however, “the word propaganda itself has emerged when Roman Catholic Church used it as an instrument to propagate the religion teachings” (Shoelhi, 20012: 34).

According to Lasswell in Shoelhi’s, “propaganda is not bomb, as well as it is not bread, but it is word, picture, song, parade and many other medium which is typical to arrange propaganda” (2012: 36). Such propaganda is a control of opinion which is done through symbols which have meaning and tells opinion which is concrete and accurate through pictures, a story, rumors and many other forms of information which can be used in social communication strategies. Propaganda also uses symbols to reach the purposes in manipulating collective behavior. Lasswell also mentioned in Barran and Davis’ *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future* that, “generally propaganda affects

people smoothly and slowly. It creates a new featured symbol that can be used to induce new form of somebody's action and mind" (1994: 119).

Film is the best example of propaganda media since it has complete material to send the propaganda thoughts to the world easily. According to Hipler in Hoffman's *Triumph of Propaganda*:

In comparison with the other arts, film has a particularly forceful and lasting psychological and propagandistic impact because of its effect not on the intellect, but principally on the emotions and the visual sense. (1996: iv).

According to Combs and Nimmo, "propaganda is an important addition for practical and institution which are related to the increasing of modernity" (1993: 23). It makes the possibility of making film for propaganda purposes as film is a modern and strategic product that can be easily consumed by people.

According to Cole in Shoelhi's *Propaganda dalam Komunikasi Internasional*, there are many types of propaganda which are divided into eight sub-types (2012: 42-45):

### **1. Based on Source**

Based on the source, there are three types of propaganda, namely Concealed Propaganda, Revealed Propaganda and Delayed Propaganda. Concealed Propaganda has closed and unknown source. Revealed Propaganda has clear source that can be accessed by people. Delayed Propaganda has unknown source for the first time, but it is gradually revealed.

## **2. Based on Methods**

Based on methods, there are two types of Propaganda, namely Coercive Propaganda and Persuasive Propaganda. Coercive Propaganda uses threats or even violence. Persuasive Propaganda uses interesting messages to the targets of propaganda to gain sympathy.

## **3. Based on System**

Based on the system, propaganda theory is separated into two sections namely Symbolic Interaction Propaganda and Propaganda by the Deed. Symbolic interaction propaganda is propaganda that uses symbols to stimulate souls. Propaganda by the deed is where real actions are frequently used to gain people's sympathy.

## **4. Based on Characteristics**

Based on characteristic, it is divided into four sections namely white propaganda, black propaganda, grey propaganda and rational propaganda. White propaganda is propaganda that uses honest, true and sportive methods to convey the purpose of propagandist; black propaganda is in opposite of white propaganda as it uses cunning, tricky and dishonest methods; grey propaganda gains people's hesitations and confusion; rational propaganda is in opposite of grey propaganda as it gives sources and explanations rationally and clearly.

## **5. Based on Activities**

Based on activities, there are five types of propaganda, namely Marketing Propaganda. Political Propaganda, War Propaganda, Cultural Propaganda, Religious Propaganda. Marketing Propaganda includes advertisement, display, show, presentation, parade and expo. Political Propaganda includes spreading doctrine and certain political ideologies. War Propaganda is a propaganda which destroys the authority of other countries in war. Cultural Propaganda uses cultural products such as artwork, film screening and science development to launch the propaganda. Religious Propaganda includes the spread of religious teachings through religious sermons and rituals.

## **6. Based on Mass Communications**

Based on mass communications, propaganda is divided into two types namely Vertical Propaganda and Agitated Propaganda. Vertical Propaganda uses many kinds of mass media and has hierarchy impacts. Agitated Propaganda uses many kinds of mass media to distract certain interests and display threats.

## **7. Based on Interpersonal Communications**

Based on interpersonal communication, there are two types of propaganda namely Horizontal Propaganda and Integrative Propaganda. Horizontal Propaganda is taken through interpersonal communication or organizational communication to target certain individuals and then make the society as the overall target. Integrative Propaganda targeting certain people to tell sustainable doctrine.

## **8. Based on Regions**

Based on regions, there are three types of propagandas namely Regional Propaganda, National Propaganda and International Propaganda.

### **3.2.1.1. Symbolic Interaction Propaganda**

Symbolic interaction propaganda is a type of propaganda based on system that uses symbols to stimulate souls. “It uses communication symbols such as spoken or written language, pictures and signs that are properly formulated” (Shoelhi, 2012: 43). The symbols can be in the form of dialogue, pictures and music. Symbolic interaction “sees meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (Blumer, 1969: 5). As it has been said from the statement mentioned before, the symbols in visual and auditory contents are the products that are made by society where we interact to. As a type of propaganda, the symbols “(i) must be popular things, (ii) transmit knowledge to society, (iii) must be a flexible media, (iv) used proper methodologies” (Shoelhi, 2012: 41). Those are the characteristics that indicate the signs of propaganda.

### **3.2.2. Stereotype Theory**

Stereotype is a simple representation about generalized people with using particular category by their gender, race, ethnicity and jobs. According to Barker in The SAGE Dictionary of Cultural Studies, “a stereotype is a vivid but simple representation that reduces persons to a set of exaggerated, usually negative,

character traits” (2004: 188). Stereotype usually takes the form of a conservative concept built according to an inflexible arrangement into a stale image that typecasts people in a certain group. It works by putting negative attributes on people who are considered different from us. Its process also excludes people that are different from social, symbolic and moral order since stereotypes are closely related to anyone who are excluded from the so called normal world. According to Baron and Paul in Sobur:

There are two factors occurring stereotype namely tendency to divide the world by two categories: we and they; and tendency to do cognitive work as little as possible in order to understand people (2009: 391).

Because of these factors, society tends to generalize people in some so called categories or groups in order to simplify the way they understand others. The lack of information and comprehension that bring them into a situation of knowing everything which cause those so called groups which have been built by the society look homogeneous. As well as what Lippmann in Langenhove and Harre’s “Cultural Stereotypes and Positioning Theory” Theory of Social Behavior has stated before that “the real environment is altogether too big, too complex and too floating for direct acquaintance” (1995: 359). Thus, by making generalization to groups that seems to have some similarities such as gender, work and ethnicity, societies think that they understand people. Lippmann also states in his book Public Opinion that “consequently the stereotype not only saves time in a busy life and is a defense of form all the bewildering effect of trying to see the world steadily and see it whole” (1922: 144).

According to this statement, stereotype is not only a negative concept but also a positive thought which can lead society to know each other. Nevertheless, the tendency of embedding negative labels to people who looks different that make this concept sounds negative.

### **3.2.3. Japanese Soldiers in American World War II Films**

United States is considered as a superpower country and the most multicultural country in the world as well as the country with biggest film industry in the world. As the biggest film industry in the world, United States has Hollywood that always produce various types of films with various themes and issues every year. The issue of foreign countries is also never missed to be exhibited on the silver screen. They create various types of films include war themed films. World War II themed films are the example of frequently made film in America.

Talking about World War II, it can be separated with Pacific War where Japan is the major villain character frequently shown in silver screen. In the film themed Pacific War, United States mostly put Japan as the main enemy, primarily, Japanese soldier. Based on the American point of view, the Japanese soldiers are depicted as barbarian army. Films issued Pacific War tragedy are always made from the American's or other Westerner's point of view. James King also states in his book *Under The Foreign Eyes – Western Cinematic Adaptations of Postwar Japan* that “Furthermore, most of the films under consideration seek to create a version of a “true” Japan that they will attempt to portray realistically” (2012:10).

“Those films sometimes enlarged Japanese customs as “differences”, then, the artworks produce their own different realities” (King, 2012: 12). Through this fact, those American filmmakers who produce films with Japanese character always make interpretation of Japanese by their own.

Films that tell about Pacific War such as *Empire of the Sun* (1987) by Steven Spielberg and *Pearl Harbor* (2001) by Michael Bay are quite popular. These films have portrayed the Japanese with the basic given stereotypes. *Empire of the Sun* (1987) tells about Japan invasion to China in 1941. In this film, Japanese soldiers are depicted as heartless people. Their arrival was a horror for the people in China; even they are Chinese or foreigners residents, with their terrors and assaults. However their powerfulness leads the main character, a British boy named Jaime or Jim, being interested with them, particularly in their flight capabilities. Nevertheless, the stereotypes about how wicked the Japanese soldier is still attached. When Jim accidentally finds Japanese troop’s camp, his father and his father’s friend find him; they react like Jim is nearly attacked by a pack of wolves or any wild animals. It can be seen in the 00:19:00 – 00:19:24 when Jaime is ordered not to run and not to look back after seeing those Japanese soldiers. Also, as their powerfulness seems to make Jaime gives up, he decides to surrender as seen on 00:37:16. After he says that, the Japanese soldiers start to mock and to make fun of him.

Meanwhile, *Pearl Harbor* (2001) tells about the beginning of Pacific War ferocities with a touch of romance story behind. In this film, Japanese soldiers

joining Kamikaze are fighting bravely. They are ready to face the death and bombard Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in a Sunday. The typical stereotype is also given to the Japanese in this film. In addition, the Japanese soldiers in this story not only attack the military unit, but also the civilians indiscriminately. In contrary, Japan is considered as inferior according to President Roosevelt in this story which can be seen on 02:03:55 – 02:04:09. The President also mentioned that America must strike back the Japanese. Also Admiral Yamamoto, a Japanese commander says that he is afraid if Japan is just waking a sleeping giant up (01:59:22) proving that Japanese actually know the consequences of attacking United States and silently feel the so called inferiority.

There is also a film themed Pacific War depicting battle of Iwo Jima directed by Clint Eastwood titled *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006) which tells about the battle from American's point of view. This film was released before the *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) telling about the rising flag in Mount Suribachi by the United States troops following with the aftermath. In this film, Japanese soldiers are portrayed as powerful enemy who are cannot be underestimated. The American soldiers are taught that the medical team must be aware of the Japanese soldiers as they are told about assaulting the medical team first. As Iwo Jima is a real part of Japan country, Americans consider they will set their feet in Japanese holy land and must be prepared with all the risks (00:16:32 – 00:16:37) as the Japanese have no time to be polite. The stereotype of how wicked Japanese soldiers are also shown at 00:24:22 – 00:24:38 when one of the character gives some photographs of Japanese soldiers execute their prisoners by beheaded them.

Nonetheless, the Japanese troops are infrequently shown in this film as they hide themselves in the cave and silently attack the American soldiers.

In short, films issuing Pacific War from United States are mostly using the American or Westerner point of views. The characterization and stereotype of Japanese soldiers as enemy is almost the same for one to another. The typical victorious and happy ending ideas are frequently used in the build of storytelling of Pacific War themed film from America without looking for the enemy's background as the only matter is the American's victory in the war.

#### **3.2.4. The Battle of Iwo Jima**

History is used to tell about the past events of humans. According to Daliman, "even the past events involving all sides and very vast, but the object study of history is only past events which were experienced by human" (2011:8). The World War II was the event that had big impacts to the human being in the world, and the battle of Iwo Jima itself were an event that could not be forgotten in the history of World War II.

The Battle of Iwo Jima or also called Detachment Operation (19<sup>th</sup> February - 26<sup>th</sup> March 1945) is a sequence of Pacific War happened in Japanese land. This warfare is considered as the worst and the most savage battle ever in Pacific War as United States lost one third of all marines in this war. Also, on Japanese's side, almost all of the troops are dead. The war which is expected to be only completed in 5 to 10 days actually lasts up to 36 days, and it is considered as 36 days of hell

by the Americans. According to Pasaribu in *Sejarah Perang Dunia*, there are 4189 marines are dead, 15308 are injured, 441 are lost on American's side. Whereas, there are also 22000 soldiers dead and arrested on Japanese's side (2009: 108).

Iwo Jima is a small island which is included in the Ogasawara sub-Prefecture, Tokyo. It is a novel volcanic island which located in Pacific Ocean with only has an area around 21 km<sup>2</sup>. There were two airfields that became a serious threat to bombers planes of United States to launch a bomb into Japan because from there, the American plans could be disrupted. United States decided to attack Iwo Jima first before attacking the mainland of Japan. On October 3rd 1944, Admiral Chester Nimitz as Commander of the American Pacific fleet was ordered to seize Iwo Jima.

United States marines under Lieutenant General Holland Smith performed an amphibious mission with three Marine divisions over 70.000 men from the 3rd, 4th and 5th, most of them were experienced veterans of earlier campaigns (Wright, 2001: 15). The Operation Detachment had been postponed since there are shortage of ships and landing craft to support because of Philippines invasion of MacArthur. Whilst, Japan, under Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, they dug the island from Suribachi to the north side and made caves. Japanese troops did not use Banzai attack as Kuribayashi considered it as a waste of human souls. There are 21,060 totals of Japanese troops by February 19, 1945; it was more than the American calculation of 13,000 (Wright, 2001: 16). As they made

caves in the island, all of the forces that supposed to be on the beach were also attacking from the cave.

<b>1941</b>	December 7	Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. United States declared war on Japan.	<b>1944</b>	February 2	Marines attacked Kwajalein in Marshall islands.
	December 8	Japan attacked Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaya and Wake Island.		June 11	United States Task Force 58 bombards Mariana islands.
	December 11	Germany and Italy declared war on United States.		June 15	Invasion of Marianas begins at Saipan.
<b>1942</b>	February 15	Singapore falls to Gen Yamashita.		June 19	Battle of the Philippine sea – destruction of Japanese naval air power.
	March 12	General MacArthur leaves Philippines.		August 8	Islands of Guamin Marianas occupied.
	May 6	All United States Forces in Philippines surrendered.		September 15	First Marine Division assault Peleliu in Palau islands.
	May 7	Battle of The Coral Sea – First Japanese setback of the war.		October 20	United States Army under MacArthur land on Leyte in Philippine.
	June 4-7	Battle of Midway – Japan lose 4 carriers; turning point of Pacific War.		November 27	B29 Super fortress bombers firebomb Tokyo.
	August 7	United States Marines land on Guadalcanal in Salomon Islands.	<b>1945</b>	February 19	3 Marine divisions assaulted Iwo Jima.
<b>1943</b>	February 1	All Japan troops evacuate Guadalcanal.		February 19 – March 26	Battle of Iwo Jima.
	June 30	Operation Cartwheel – operations against remainder of Solomon islands.		March 26 - June 30	Battle of Okinawa.
	November 20-23	Battle of Tarawa – start of Marianas island hopping operations.		August 6 and 9	Atomic Bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
				September 2	Japan surrender aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

Table 1

Pacific War Chronology

Taken from Wright's *Campaign 81, Iwo Jima 1945, The Marines Raise the Flag on Mount Suribachi*, 2001

## CHAPTER 4

### BLURRING STEREOTYPES OF AMERICANS TO JAPANESE SOLDIERS IN THE FILM *LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA* BY CLINT EASTWOOD

#### 4.1. Intrinsic Aspects

##### 4.1.1. Characters

##### 4.1.1.1. Major Characters

Film *Letters from Iwo Jima* has two major characters that have most important roles in the storytelling of the film; they are General Tadamichi Kuribayashi and Private First Class Saigo.

#### 1. General Tadamichi Kuribayashi



Picture 4.1  
Wandering the island  
00:17:32



Picture 4.2  
Kuribayashi talks to Fujita  
00:17:00



Picture 4.3  
Kuribayashi talks to Ohsugi  
00:39:29

General Tadamichi Kuribayashi is the main character of *Letters from Iwo Jima* as he has the biggest role in the film. As a leader of the troops in Iwo Jima, Kuribayashi has the biggest responsibility in order to lead the Japanese troops to fight American soldiers who attack the country, Japan. The name character of Tadamichi Kuribayashi himself is taken from the real life person, General Tadamichi Kuribayashi. The character in the film portrays his real life when he

was a deputy military attaché in United States and when he was a general of Japanese soldiers in Iwo Jima. The characteristic of Kuribayashi is fully depicted by using his image.

Picture 4.1 which is taken by using long shot shows Kuribayashi wanders Iwo Jima by himself to study the area, particularly, the beach. The scene shows that he is walking along the beach and climbing the hill. He is also measuring and analyzing the area by himself. It shows that Kuribayashi is a persistent leader who always considers everything before building a strategy but tends to do everything by himself. Picture 4.2 which is taken by using medium close up shows that Kuribayashi is talking to Fujita about evacuating the civilians who live in Iwo Jima. Picture 4.3 which is taken by using medium shot shows Kuribayashi when he is talking with Ohsugi. He wants Ohsugi to go back to the main land because he needs help from the country.

He is a general who does not want to waste the lives of his troops. He refuses the suicidal actions. He also does not want any negativities control him in leading his troops. It is depicted when he and Nishi have a talk about Major General Hayashi at 00:43:15 to 00:43:33:

NISHI : General, may I speak with you?  
KURIBAYASHI : Go on.  
NISHI : Please keep an eye on Major General Hayashi.  
KURIBAYASHI : Thank you for your concern, Nishi. But we don't have any time to waste. We must think about what we can do at this moment.  
(*Letters From Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:43:15 – 00:43:33)

Since he was lived in United States for a couple years and had a good relationship with Americans, he studied the Americans quite well. He believes that United States is the last country in the world that Japan should fight. His knowledge of Americans makes him more aware about the attacks that will be done by them. However, his knowledge about American cannot bring him to an absolute victory.

## 2. Private First Class Saigo



Picture 4.4  
Saigo talks to Hanako  
00:35:58



Picture 4.5  
Saigo sees Kuribayashi  
00:24:37



Picture 4.6  
Saigo talks to Nozaki  
00:33:01

Private First Class Saigo has a big role in this film as he is the one who buries the letters of the troops and particularly General Tadamichi Kuribayashi's letter which then drives the whole storytelling of the film. His appearance seems on different segment with Kuribayashi's appearance but actually they are connected. As an army, he looks fragile visually and cannot fight with guns. Saigo and Kuribayashi are actually connected as the General has saved him three times: first when he is punished by his commander, second when he is about to be killed by Lieutenant Ito because of escaping from suicide order in Suribachi, and the third is when the General accommodates him and other soldiers from Nishi's cave. It can be seen on the dialogue at 01:58:00 to 01:58:32 when Saigo arrives at the Kuribayashi's place:

KURIBAYASHI : (Looking to Saigo) You look familiar (take a look for a while). Ah, you almost lost your head.  
SAIGO : (Sigh) Yes, that was second time you saved me. The first time was the day you landed on the island.  
KURIBAYASHI : Of course, I remember. Well, everything happens in three.  
(*Letters From Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:58:00 – 01:58:32)

Saigo is one of low class army who actually does not want to be involved as a soldier to serve country. However, his past life as a baker was also not going well because everything he and his wife had had been taken away for the sake of country. In the Picture 4.4 which is taken with long shot, Saigo and his wife, Hanako discuss about their future if Saigo goes to the battle as a soldier. At that scene, Hanako is pregnant, and she wants her husband to always be her side as she always hears the rumors about men who go to the battle are never coming back even their soul. Saigo also knows about it but he cannot do anything if he has been scouted by the country. In the Picture 4.5 which is taken with medium close up, Saigo sees General Kuribayashi in the beach. He secretly puts his hope to the general as he has been saved once at that time. He believes that he can be saved and going home, come back to his family someday. In Picture 4.6 which is taken with close up, when he talks to Nozaki, he complains about the food he eats.

In the end, Saigo is the last soldier who is still alive in this film. He is carried by American troops after being caught. There is no further explanation about his life after the war ends.

#### 4.1.1.2. Minor Characters

In *Letters from Iwo Jima*, there are many characters that play roles, and those characters play important parts to build the whole story. Despite that fact, there are only three minor characters of the film that are discussed in this study, they are Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi, Superior Private Shimizu and Lieutenant Ito. Those characters have important role in this story even their appearance are less frequent than the major characters.

##### 1. Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi



Picture 4.7  
Nishi talks to Kuribayashi  
00:19:18



Picture 4.8  
Nishi talks to Sam  
01:28:19



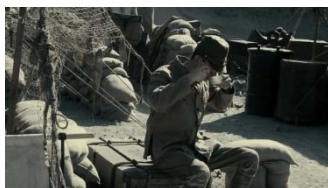
Picture 4.9  
Finding unfaithful people  
00:41:32

Even though he is a minor character, Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi's name itself is taken from a real life figure. Nishi was an Olympic gold medalist for equestrian sports before becoming Lieutenant Colonel. It can be seen on the Picture 4.7 taken with long shot shows that he is riding his horse while meeting Kuribayashi in the beach. This shot shows that Nishi is not a typical soldier as he has honored position, and he is high ranked soldier. Also in Picture 4.9 taken with medium shot shows that he is bathing his horse when suddenly finds some unfaithful people who do not want to rely on Kuribayashi. By looking at those pictures, it can be also seen that Nishi also has a close connection to General Kuribayashi.

Nishi had been living overseas before becoming an army. Because of that fact, he becomes an open minded person who does not think that all Americans are bad. He is also able to speak English fluently, and he can speak casually with an American soldier, Sam, his prisoner (Picture 4.8). It also can be seen on their dialogue at 01:27:29 – 01:28:55 :

NISHI : Where are you from, Soldier?  
 SAM : Marine, Able Company—  
 NISHI : Okay Marine, I mean where is your home town?  
 SAM : (No answer)  
 NISHI : I lived in California for a while. Do you know of Marry Pickford? Or Douglas Fairbacks?  
 SAM : Sure, everybody knows them.  
 NISHI : They are my friends. I've had them as our house guest in Tokyo.  
 SAM : No kidding? You somebody famous?  
 NISHI : I was in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics.  
 SAM : Is that The God's honest truth?  
 NISHI : This is the picture of me and my horse jumping. (Gives a photograph to SAM)  
 SAM : No kidding – (Gives the photograph back to NISHI) Oklahoma. It is where I'm from.  
 NISHI : (Signaling to shake hands with SAM) Takeichi.  
 SAM : SAM (Shakes NISHI's hand).  
 (Letters From Iwo Jima (2006), 01:27:29 – 01:28:55)

## 2. Superior Private Shimizu



Picture 4.10  
 Shimizu eats grass soup  
 00:32:42



Picture 4.11  
 Shimizu talks to Saigo  
 01:47:14



Picture 4.12  
 Shimizu arrives in Iwo Jima  
 00:27:49

Superior Private Shimizu is an ex-member of *Kempeitai* or military police of Japan who is sent to Iwo Jima. He looks strict and rigid from his gestures in Picture 4.10 and Picture 4.12. He is considered a *Kimpeitai* spy in the first time he

arrived in the cave, but his arrival in Iwo Jima simply because he has been fired by *Kempeitai* after he refuses to kill a dog. As an ex-member of *Kempeitai*, he has enough knowledge in military world and also the most eager person in his circle troops. He wants to be a soldier who always does the right things that Japanese soldiers believe. He also says that American soldiers are not as disciplined as Japanese soldiers (00:42:13 – 00:42:48):

TANIDA : Now, to be truthful, we will likely be outnumbered in every sector. But we have a great advantage. Can anyone tell me what that is?

SHIMIZU : The Americans are weak-willed and inferior to Japanese soldiers.

TANIDA : Very good, Shimizu. Why is that?

SHIMIZU : They are not as disciplined and they let their emotions interfere with their duty.

TANIDA : That's correct.

(*Letters From Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:42:13 – 00:42:48)

Although he speaks that way, in the end he surrenders to American troops and dies in their hands.

### 3. Lieutenant Ito



Picture 4.13  
Walks to the battleground  
01:23:50



Picture 4.14  
Ito becomes furious  
01:14:23



Picture 4.15  
Ito talks to Ohsugi  
00:12:43

Lieutenant Ito is one of antagonist character from Japanese side in this film. He secretly against Kuribayashi's commands and decides to go to the battlefield by himself. He uses his emotions to interfere his task as one of officer in Iwo Jima. Picture 4.13 taken with long shot shows that Ito has entered the battlefield

without his comrades. Picture 4.14 taken with medium shot shows that he becomes furious as Saigo, Shimizu and some soldiers from Suribachi entering his cave even though they must have committed suicide with their comrades. At this scene, Ito is going to cut Saigo's head with a katana, but it can be prevented by Kuribayashi. In Picture 4.15 taken with close up shows Ito talks about his plans to Ohsugi. It can be seen by Ito's facial expression in this picture that he is the one who will become unfaithful to the general.

#### 4.1.2. Settings

The settings of *Letters from Iwo Jima* are separated into setting of place, setting of time and setting of social environment.

##### 1. Settings of Place



Picture 4.16  
Beach in Iwo Jima  
00:00:56



Picture 4.17  
Settlement in Iwo Jima  
00:12:43



Picture 4.18  
Cave in Iwo Jima  
00:12:43



Picture 4.19  
Battlefield in Iwo Jima  
00:12:43



Picture 4.20  
Saigo's house  
00:12:43



Picture 4.21  
United States  
00:12:43

Setting of place in this film story is absolutely in Iwo Jima, Japan. In the setting of Iwo Jima there are four main settings which are portrayed, they are beach, cave, settlement and cave. In Picture 4.16 which is taken with extreme long shot, it shows the beach in Iwo Jima in 2005 as the opening of the film to drive the whole story. The Mount Suribachi is also shown to mark that it is Iwo Jima. Then, in Picture 4.17 which is taken with long shot, shows the settlement of civilians living in Iwo Jima. The civilians are evacuated to the mainland before the war starts. Picture 4.18 which is taken with medium shot shows the cave as the setting of place. The cave is the most frequent place portrayed in this film as Japanese troops use it to hide themselves. In Picture 4.19 which is taken with long shot, the battlefield of Iwo Jima where some tanks and boombs are landed.

Out from Iwo Jima, there are also some setting of places depicted such as Saigo's house and United States. Picture 4.20 which is taken with medium shot shows the scene when Saigo is scouted to join Japanese troops. This house is also shown when Saigo remembers his wife. Whilst in Picture 4.21 which is taken with medium profile shot shows the United States scene where Kuribayashi is joining American's party when he is still being a military atache. In this scene, he is given a gun named Colt 45 from an American military officer as a reward of friendship.

## 2. Settings of Time



Picture 4.22  
Iwo Jima 1944  
00:02:30



Picture 4.23  
Japanese soldier's uniform  
00:12:43

The setting of time in *Letters from Iwo Jima* is in the World War II, precisely at the battle of Iwo Jima which is one of Pacific War sequence. As seen on Picture 4.22 which is taken with medium close up that shows some soldiers including Saigo are digging trenches in the beach of Iwo Jima in 1944 as seen on the picture title. Picture 4.23 which is taken with medium shot, it shows the old style of Japanese soldier's uniform worn by Kuribayashi and other soldiers.

## 3. Settings of Social Environment



Picture 4.24  
Only men  
00:12:43



Picture 4.25  
Command from the superior  
00:12:43

The settings of Social Environment in *Letters from Iwo Jima* are there are only men living in this island as seen on Picture 4.24 which is taken with medium long shot technique. It shows that there are only soldiers living in the Iwo Jima milieu. The civilians are evacuated to the mainland, and the soldiers leave their wives at home. In 00:18:13 – 00:18:50 Saigo tell his wife in his letter about

Lieutenant Colonel Baron Tekeichi Nishi, he also tells the fact that only men left in this island:

SAIGO : Hanako, we have a celebrity here. Baron Nishi, the Olympic gold medalist in horse jumping. He will lead the 26<sup>th</sup> tank regiment, and he has just arrived from Tokyo. Nishi is very handsome, and there are rumors of womanizing skills. But there are no women left on this island to woo. (*Letters From Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:18:13 – 00:18:50)

Besides only men living in the island, as there is a warfare environment, then there is a hierarchy in the military forces from the low rank soldiers to the high rank soldiers. The high ranks as superior always give their command to do things in the action of all soldiers that must be obeyed. As depicted in Picture 4.25, where Colonel Adachi who leads the troops in Suribachi feels that his stronghold is collapsed gives a command to all of his comrades to commit suicide. After the command is given, the soldiers with lower rank of him must obey it. His superiority seems very strong as many soldiers obey it and commit suicide.

### 4.1.3. Plot

#### 4.1.3.1. Exposition



Picture 4.26  
Excavators dig the cave  
00:02:23



Picture 4.27  
Soldiers dig the beach  
00:02:47

*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), accompanied by soft trumpet and piano music, starts with a scene where some excavators start to visit and dig in a cave in Iwo Jima Island as seen on Picture 4.26 which is taken with medium long shot, some excavators find something strange. Then, the act moves to 1944 where soldiers in Iwo Jima are digging holes there. Picture 4.27 which is taken with long shot shows the scene of 1944 in Iwo Jima where soldiers are digging its black sand. From this scene, the foreshadow of their struggle in the war is also depicted when one of soldiers, Saigo says that it would be better if Japan give Iwo Jima to America.

#### 4.1.3.2. Rising Action



Picture 4.28  
Kuribayashi talks to his comrades  
00:11:53

The rising action is happen when Kuribayashi and some of his comrades such as Lieutenant Ito and Admiral Ohsugi (Picture 4.28) which leads to an unsynchronized condition as they do not want to obey Kuribayashi's command. Lieutenant Ito decides to go to the battlefield, Ohsugi who is moved to the mainland after this scene tell his people that Kuribayashi is incapable in the battlefield so no need to obey him, and some others decide to kill themselves.

#### 4.1.3.3. Climax



Picture 4.29  
A Japanese soldier is running  
00:44:12



Picture 4.30  
United States bombarded Iwo Jima  
00:44:45

The climax is occurred when the American Marines attack Iwo Jima, and there are many victims. America drops their bomb and shot the guns as seen on the Picture 4.29 dan 4.30 which are taken with long shot and extreme long shot. The explosion and destruction are seen and heard clearly. However, in the climax stage, the victims mostly come from Japanese side even there are some American dead in this film. In this stage, internal conflicts from the Japanese side are shown such as betrayal, surrender and *et cetera*.

#### 4.1.3.4. Falling Action



Picture 4.31  
Kuribayashi attacks  
02:04:43

Falling action is happened when Kuribayashi decides to bring his comrades to the battlefield as he knows that this assault will be the last decision that can bring them to the death. In Picture 4.31, Kuribayashi shows his katana as

he will fight with the soul of Samurai, and he is also ready if the death comes in this action. However, when he decides to go to the battlefield with his soldiers, he orders Private Saigo to stay in the cave and burn all documents, which later the letters left there are buried by him.

#### **4.1.3.5. Resolution**



Picture 4.32  
American Marines find Saigo  
02:12:51

The resolution is the fact that Saigo is still alive when everyone dies as seen on Picture 4.32 which is taken with medium close up shot. American marines find him after finding Fujita's dead body on the ground. Since he finds so many Japanese soldiers die in the battlefield, he begins to rage and attack the Americans with the shovel he held. After doing that, he is beaten by one of those Americans and being fainted. When he awakes in the Americans camp in the beach of Iwo Jima, he looks to the sunset and smiles. Then, the act moves to the excavators' scene. They find a bunch of letters in a sack which are buried by Saigo when the last battle starts. Sad music composed from trumpet and piano starts to play again.

#### 4.1.4. Conflicts

##### 4.1.4.1. Internal Conflict



Picture 4.33  
Not underestimating US  
01:36:59



Picture 4.34  
Digging is tiring  
00:03:57

The internal conflicts in *Letters from Iwo Jima* come from Kuribayashi and Saigo as the major characters of this film. Kuribayashi who actually knows that Japan surely will be lost from the United States, but he still arrange the best strategies to defeat America. It cannot be denied if America's stronghold is far stronger than Japan moreover in the number of marines who come to Iwo Jima and the technology they use. Kuribayashi who learns about America sometimes has insecurities in defeating America. He also says that America is the last country in the world that Japan should fight because of America's superiority. In Picture 4.33 which is taken with medium close up, Kuribayashi is sketching the milieu in United States when he attends a dinner party with American military officers. When he recalls the memories in United States, he also recalls how strong the Americans actually.

Whereas internal conflict Saigo deals with is that actually he does not want to join the military force. He feels that he is only a usual baker with nothing special to be given to the country. He also thinks about his family at home and

hopes that he will return to them someday. As he feels the frustration, he once says that it is better to give the land to American instead. As seen on Picture 4.34 and on 00:04:00 – 00:04:10:

SAIGO : Damn this island! The Americans can have it. Nothing grows here.

*(Letters from Iwo Jima (2006), 00:04:00 – 00:04:10)*

As the island is actually arid and dry, this fact can stimulate everyone to get frustrated to be there. In this case, Saigo feels that way. He also cannot use his gun, so there is no reason for him of being in the Iwo Jima and join the battle. He is desperately trying to stay alive although his comrades die of many factors such as illness and suicide.

#### 4.1.4.2. External Conflict



Picture 4.35  
Ohsugi is ordered back to the mainland  
00:39:27



Picture 4.36  
Beware of unfaithfulness  
00:43:21

The external conflicts are occurred when Kuribayashi meets Ito and Ohsugi from the navy to see the defense plans. Their defense plans are too focused on the beach and also do not place the army forces that make Kuribayashi disagree with the plans. In short, the plans are only for navy troops. Kuribayashi

says that fortifications at Suribachi are the priority. From this scene, the gap between navy and army can be seen clearly.

The tunnels and caves are dug and the plans are changed that the troops will be concentrated in the higher ground, however, Ito and Ohsugi consider the excavation is useless. Then, there a time when Ohsugi is ordered to move back to the mainland to ask supports from there as seen on Picture 4.35 which is taken with medium shot. Ohsugi tells Kuribayashi that tunnel-digging is wasting time as he disagree with Kuribayashi's plans. When Ohsugi will be departed to the mainland, he meets Hayashi, his subordinate who also disagree with what Kuribayashi is done. But when they are talking, Nishi accidentally overheard their conversation and as seen on Picture 4.36 which is taken with medium close up, he tells Kuribayashi to beware of Hayashi who is likely to violate his order later.

There is also another external conflict when the war is ongoing. It is when some officers decide to commit suicide after losing the battle. This scene is represented by Colonel Adachi's scene when Saigo is ordered by Captain Tanida to ask machine gun. Adachi is calling Kuribayashi and telling him that Suribachi has fallen, thus he asks to commit suicide with his comrades. Actually, this action is prohibited by Kuribayashi but Adachi is insisted to do so. The same action also happens in other divisions but they are not entirely portrayed in storyline of the film. This suicide mission can significantly decrease the number of soldiers and detrimental to Japanese defense in this warfare

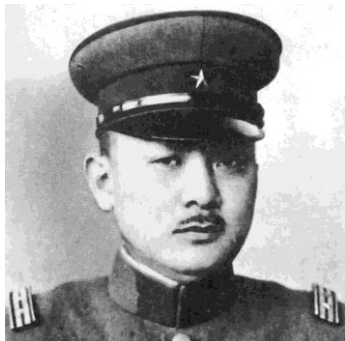
## 4.2. Extrinsic Aspects

### 4.2.1. Propaganda in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006)

Propaganda is a communication technique that influences people and controls opinion by using any medium. *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) can be a good example of propaganda media. As a media as well as a film, *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) can potentially change people's perspective of thinking by its storytelling, *mise en scene*, dialogue and other aspects that matter.

By using symbolic propaganda theory, the signs of propaganda lay in the film *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) can be identified from the dialogue, picture and musical aspects. These elements were arranged by the filmmaker based on the real events happened in the past. By using historical approach, the signs of propaganda can be identified.

The first sign of propaganda can be seen from the using of the real life figures as characters in this story; they are General Tadamichi Kuribayashi and Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi.



Picture 4.37

Real life Tadamichi Kuribayashi  
<http://upload.wikimedia.org>



Picture 4.38

Tadamichi Kuribayashi in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006)  
(00:03:47)



Picture 4.39  
Real life Baron Takeichi Nishi  
<http://upload.wikimedia.org>



Picture 4.40  
Baron Takeichi Nishi in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006)  
(00:19:28)

The name General Tadamichi Kuribayashi and Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi are taken from real life characters while the rest characters in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) use fictional names. By using real life character's names and figures, the historical aspects of *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) will become stronger and more acceptable. Although it was inspired by Kuribayashi's letters to his family, *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) was not a biographical film. It is true that Kuribayashi is the main character of the film, but he is not only one to be focused here. Meanwhile, Nishi's character in this film is only taking a minor role. It can be seen in Picture 4.37 and Picture 4.38 as well as Picture 4.39 and Picture 4.40 where Kuribayashi and Nishi in the film are not physically portrayed as similar as the real life characters. Only properties such as costumes with emblems and horse as well as their gestures can describe who they are.

In real life, General Tadamichi Kuribayashi was famous as the leader of the troops in Iwo Jima who ignored banzai attack that had been ordered by the country. He did the best to maintain the lives of his troop as well as to fight for his country. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi, the leader for 26<sup>th</sup>

tank regiment, was a famous Olympic gold medalist for equestrian sport in 1932.

Two men had good relationship with United States before the war happened.



Picture 4.41  
Kuribayashi is given a gift  
01:35:30



Picture 4.42  
American Officer's talks about war  
01:36:00

The relationship of Kuribayashi and Americans in the past can be seen on Picture 4.41 and 4.42. In Picture 4.41 which is taken by using medium close up shot technique shows that General Kuribayashi is handing a gift, Colt 45 1911, that is given by an American military officer as a friendship gift. Also in Picture 4.42 which is taken by using medium close up technique shows when an officer's wife talks to Kuribayashi in the dinner time about if America and Japan went into a war. The conversation can be seen in 01:36:00 – 01:36:50:

OFFICER'S WIFE : How would you feel if America and Japan went enter to war?  
KURIBAYASHI : I believe they would make splendid allies.  
OFFICER : No, I think she means to against each other.  
KURIBAYASHI : The United States is the last country in the world Japan should fight, but if this were to happen, I would serve my duty to my country.  
OFFICER'S WIFE : You mean that Bertie was in the opposite side, you would shoot him?  
KURIBAYASHI : I would have to follow my convictions.  
OFFICER : You mean you have to follow your convictions? Or your country's convictions?  
KURIBAYASHI : Are they not the same?  
OFFICER : Spoken like a true soldier.  
OFFICER'S WIFE : Oh that's awful. Bertie, that means you're dead.  
KURIBAYASHI : No. No. Never.  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:36:00 – 01:36:50)

From this conversation, Kuribayashi is telling about his belief that both countries will make good allies as well as his belief about United States is a superpower country that Japan should fight in the last time. He knows that America's power is more advanced than Japan's. As he learns about Americans, he knows that Japanese must be careful in order to beat them.

On the other hand, the fact of Kuribayashi has good relationship with Americans gives two different perspectives at once to his comrades. The first is that he knows the strengths and weaknesses of Americans which help the troops to fight them, and the second is that he is the friend of Americans and silently promotes the Americans to win the war.

It can be seen at 00:09:27 – 00:09:42 when Saigo, Nozaki and Kashiwara are on their break time and they have a talk about Kuribayashi:

NOZAKI : I heard he lived in America. Maybe that's why he doesn't want us digging trenches. Maybe he likes Americans.  
SAIGO : No, stupid. He studied the Americans. So now he knows how to beat them.  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:09:27 – 00:09:42)

From this conversation, Kuribayashi's past can make two possibilities, they are trust and doubt. The trust comes from the belief that his knowledge about Americans makes him knows their weakness that makes Japanese's side becomes stronger. The doubt comes when the Japanese assumes that someday Kuribayashi will cheat them since he has become friends with Americans. The doubt is also strengthened by the words of the people on the side of the Lieutenant Ito that

Kuribayashi is the American henchman, so there is no need to believe and obey his command at 01:17:18 – 01:17:35:

ITO'S SOLDIER : Major General Hayashi is leading an attack. We are to join him.  
SAIGO : But General Kuribayashi's orders are to remain in this cave.  
ITO'S SOLDIER : Lieutenant Ito says Kuribayashi is a weak American sympathizer.  
SAIGO : (Sigh)  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:17:18 – 01:17:35)

Since the trust of the soldiers was shaken, many of them were completely unwilling to obey Kuribayashi's order. However, they do not know that Kuribayashi's knowledge about Americans and his living experience in United States actually can give them some benefits. Kuribayashi is an open minded person who never discriminates people. He will associate with anyone and be neutral. He also knows how to face Americans.

On the other hand, Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi also has experienced of living in United States and making friends with many popular Americans. This experience drives him to think differently in seeing and treating Americans. As seen on the dialogue in 01:25:48 – 01:26:10 when his subordinates have shot an American soldier and in the Picture 4.43 which is taken with medium close up:



Picture 4.43  
Injured American Soldier  
01:28:09

OKUBO : Shall I finish him off?  
NISHI : No. Treat him.  
OKUBO : But, sir –  
NISHI : Okubo, you would expect the same, wouldn't you?  
(Looking to Medic Endo) Endo, treat him.  
ENDO : We are short on morphine/  
SHIMIZU : Sir, the Americans would not treat a wounded Japanese  
soldier.  
NISHI : Son, have you ever meet one?  
SHIMIZU : (Keep silence)  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:25:48 – 01:26:10)

From this scene, it can be seen that Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi who has experienced in making friend with Americans will not immediately treat the American soldier badly. He chooses to treat the injured American soldier. This scene talks about there is still a hope in the battlefield that United States and Japan will live in harmony again.

In addition to the appearance of real two famous high ranked soldier characters in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), the rest of characters in this film are fictional. Those fictional characters have important roles to develop the plot, and the biggest role goes to Private Saigo.

Private Saigo is a fictional character who takes a major role in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006). His appearance is a symbol of low ranked soldier who actually does not want to be a soldier. On the other hand, his appearance is very important

to develop the plot of the film. This character gives the clue about where the story will go in the opening monologue he speaks based on his letter to his wife in 00:02:33 – 00:02:55:

SAIGO : Hanako, we soldiers dig. We dig all day. This is the hole that we will fight and die in. Hanako, am I digging my own grave?  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:02:33 – 00:02:55)

This monologue is a clue about the whole story of this film where those Japanese soldiers will be lost the battle, and Iwo Jima will fall into United States as well as there will be many Japanese soldiers die in that island. The sound of piano with grave tempo as background music when Saigo is speaking makes the feelings of gloomy and worry become stronger. It changes to trumpet sounds with faster tempo after he stops speaking which is a sign that he must fight hard after this.

Saigo, as one of major character in this film, has spoken his feelings about the battle and about his despair of being there as a soldier. Saigo also tells his friend, Kashiwara in 00:04:01 – 00:04:36 about that desperation:

SAIGO : Damn this island! The Americans can have it. Nothing grows here. It smells. It's hot. There are too many damn bugs, and there's no water.  
KASHIWARA : This island is part of Japan's sacred homeland.  
SAIGO : There's nothing sacred about this island.  
KASHIWARA : Saigo! (Knowing that Captain Tanida is coming)  
SAIGO : We should just give this island to the Americans, and then we can go home.  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:04:01 – 00:04:36)

This desperation is being stronger after Saigo says that they shall just give the island to the Americans which someday it will come true. Saigo thinks that if

Americans just take over Iwo Jima, then he can go back home and continue his life with his family. The struggle of living in Iwo Jima as soldier drives people here to get frustrated.

The frustration brings Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi to know that it will be the last battle of him and his soldiers, he says to them not to expect return home alive. This is also strengthened by the letter that comes from the mainland that says about there would not be any reinforcement sent for Iwo Jima in 01:23:23 – 01:23:40:

FUJITA : General, this just arrived. (Hands a letter)  
KURIBAYASHI : Read it.  
FUJITA : (Opens the letter) From headquarters. “We regret that we are unable to send reinforcement to Iwo Jima at this time. We earnestly hope you will fight honorably and die for your country.”  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:23:23 – 01:23:40)

This letter that is read in this scene emphasizes the fact that all of Japanese soldiers in Iwo Jima are given death penalty by the country. They must fight to death and there will be no help anymore. Since their men and ammunitions have already run out, they cannot promise to give their victory to the country. They only can do anything they can after all of this.

Before the climax of the battle, Kuribayashi and his comrades were listening to the radio broadcasted from the mainland. The radio plays a song called *Song for Defenders of Iwo Jima* to give support to the soldiers in Iwo Jima as they must fight to defend their country. The song plays on the 02:02:11 – 02:03:16:

<b>Romaji</b>	<b>English Translation</b>
<i>Taiheiyo no nami no ue</i> <i>Teito no minami sen yo kiro</i> <i>Ukabu chiisana ichi koto</i> <i>Ima Nippon no kouhai wo</i> <i>Kessuru yosho Iwo Jima</i>	On the waves of the Pacific Down south from the Imperial city A small lonely island floats The fate of Japan lies in the hands of this island Iwo Jima
<i>Warera kono ji ni aru kagiri</i> <i>Hondo ha yasushi eien ni</i> <i>Nippon danji no na wo toshite</i> <i>Kunan ni kachite mamorinuku</i> <i>Homare mo takaki Iwo Jima</i>	As long as we are in this place For the Japan land shall forever be at peace We shall fight with pride and honor at any price All for our proud island Iwo Jima

Table 2  
The lyrics of *Song for Defenders of Iwo Jima*  
(02:02:11 – 02:03:16)

This song can be an encouragement for the soldiers before they enter the battlefield, however, it can be a clue about the death penalty itself. The mainland sends hidden messages to the soldiers which tell them to fight for the country will all the things they have include their souls. This song is sung by children choir from Kuribayashi's hometown, Nagano. The simple melody with mars tempo accompanied by piano sound can make this song becomes a good battle song. On the other hand, as the song is played when the soldiers are in the state of frustration and the battle is going to its climax, this song can be a sign of letting go from the mainland of Japan to the soldiers in Iwo Jima.

The clue of the death sentence also can be seen on Picture 4.44 and 4.45 where Kuribayashi bring the Colt 45 from Americans which is a gift of their friendship to him.



Picture 4.44  
Kuribayashi brings Colt 45  
00:24:44



Picture 4.45  
Colt 45 to end Kuribayashi's life  
02:10:43

Kuribayashi always brings this gun with him and uses it to end his life. This is a clue about that United States will certainly take over this island. This is actually a symbol of America's superiority that cannot be beaten by those Japanese soldiers in the battle of Iwo Jima. As the Americans take over the island, Kuribayashi is gone. With this gun, he will kill himself in that battle.

#### **4.2.2. Blurring Stereotypes Towards Japanese Soldiers**

In *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), the common stereotypes of Japanese soldiers are blurred because even though the stereotypes are countered, some aspects in this film still show those stereotypes. Many Pacific War themed films have given the stereotype to Japanese soldiers. They are depicted as savage people who will kill anyone but still an inferior to United States. The Japanese are also portrayed to be some drunken people who make fun of their enemy. Some films also depict them as a pack of wild wolves that must be avoided (see page 26). Meanwhile, in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), some Japanese soldiers can make friends with Americans, and they still treat the Americans well (see page 51), and fight them logically. By digging tunnels and caves, they can fool American soldiers as they think that the island is already empty at the first time they land to

Iwo Jima. This strategy is used to maintain the number of troops and prevent to waste lives.

The savagery of Japanese soldiers in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) is countered with the act that has been done by Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi (see page 54). He treats an American soldier who gets injured in his cave. He also has some conversation with the American to make him feels better. On the other hand, some violations do exist in this film. Those violations have been done by Japanese soldiers to Japanese soldiers instead.



Picture 4.46  
Violation by Japanese Soldier  
00:07:28

Picture 4.46 is an example of Japanese soldiers' violation to their fellow Japanese soldiers in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006). The action shows that the stereotype of Japanese soldier savagery is only concealed and become blurring, not fully countered.

Japanese soldiers are also depicted as inferior enemy to United States by some films about Pacific (see page 26). However, the inferiorities of Japanese soldier are blurred in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006).

This can be seen from the character of Saigo. Since he is the one with a strong willing to live, he uses his logical thoughts to stay alive that also can be seen on 01:11:59 – 01:12:13:

SAIGO : Don't run with the herd. That's where the enemy will fire.  
Stay back!  
SHIMIZU : That's cowardice! (Insisted to go ahead)  
SAIGO : (Pulling Shimizu back) There is no use for a dead soldier.  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:11:59 – 01:12:13)

In this dialogue, Saigo and Shimizu are having different logic of thinking. Saigo thinks that to stay alive without taking risks is much better to do, however, Shimizu thinks that taking risks is better than going back. Nevertheless, in order to keep the fighting in the long term battle, the soldier must stay alive until the last seconds of the battle. Saigo's logic of thinking is good to maintain the number of troops, and indeed, there is no use for a dead soldier primarily before the climax of the battle begins.

The inferiority of Japanese soldiers in World War II is also depicted for their suicidal thoughts. In order to prevent suicidal thoughts of his men, Kuribayashi also gives them some motivation before against the Americans in 00:49:39 – 00:50:43:

KURIBAYASHI: Men, this time has come to show your true colors. As a member of the honorable Imperial Army, I trust that you will fight with honor. This island is of utmost importance to Japan. If the enemy takes this island, they will use it as their base to attack our homeland. Until the very last man. Our duty is to stop the enemy right here. None one of you is allowed to die until you have killed 10 enemy soldiers. Do not expect to return home alive. I will always in front of you.  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 00:49:39 – 00:50:43)

This speech can be evidence that the Japanese soldiers are prohibited to die or to surrender, especially die of committing suicide before killing 10 enemy soldiers. They must really maintain Iwo Jima because if it has fallen into

America's hand, the mainland of Japan will be threatened. A thing they must do is to fight and stop America before reaching Japan. If they kill themselves, it will be useless because they do not really fight the enemy. Thus, this speech is opposing the stereotype of Japanese soldiers' suicidal thoughts in order to die with honor before the war is over.

The suicidal thought is also mentioned by Saigo to Shimizu after escaping from the order to commit suicide that is given by Colonel Adachi in 01:07:59 – 01:09:03:



Picture 4.47

Shimizu points his gun to Saigo  
01:08:20

- SHIMIZU : (Seeing Saigo run away) Stop! (Pointing his gun to Saigo) You should die like an honorable soldier.  
SAIGO : Look, Shimizu. We can still join the troops in the northern caves.  
SHIMIZU : Our orders are to stay here until death.  
SAIGO : I heard General Kuribayashi himself. That's what he said over radio. It's true. We can die here or we can continue fighting. Which would better serve the emperor?  
SHIMIZU : (Keep silent)  
SAIGO : (Screaming) Which one?  
(*Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006), 01:07:59 – 01:09:03)

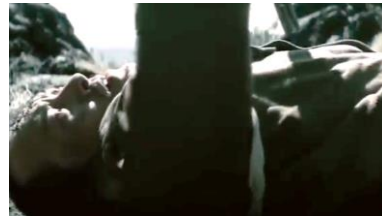
In Picture 4.47 which taken by using medium long shot technique, Shimizu is pointing his gun to Saigo who runs away from the duty to commit suicide whereas, he has doubts for himself to commit suicide. Shimizu himself cannot take an action either to kill himself or to stay alive before Saigo talks to

him about which one the better idea is. After having this conversation, Shimizu chooses to follow Saigo to continue to fight. It can be seen in this scene that not all soldiers have suicidal thoughts.

On the other hand, the inferiorities of Japanese in *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) are still depicted. Many lives are still wasted as the result of suicidal thoughts. The high ranked soldiers such as Kuribayashi and Nishi are two characters who die of suicide instead.



Picture 4.48  
Nishi commits suicide  
01:45:21



Picture 4.49  
Kuribayashi commits suicide  
02:10:51

From Picture 4.48 and 4.49, the inferiorities of Japanese soldiers are still shown. Although they commit suicide because they feel ashamed and guilty, but still it shows that they are unable to accept the situation. Instead, it indicates that they have given up.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION.

Film is an effective media to make propaganda in order to change the mind of audiences about some issues including stereotypes by using any symbols and signs. *Letters from Iwo Jima (2006)* is a representation of propaganda media particularly as symbolic interaction propaganda. As symbolic interaction propaganda, there are found some signs and symbols of propaganda in *Letters from Iwo Jima (2006)* which blur the stereotypes of Japanese soldiers in Pacific War who are depicted as savage soldiers who are actually still inferior to United States in any World War II films. The signs of propaganda are found in the picture, dialogue and musical aspects of the film.

The signs of propaganda which blur the stereotypes of Japanese soldiers are found in *Letters from Iwo Jima (2006)*. The first sign is the using of real life figures as characters that are actually have good relationship with United States before the war, they are General Tadamichi Kuribayashi and Lieutenant Colonel Baron Takeichi Nishi. The second sign is *Letters from Iwo Jima (2006)* exposes that the soldiers are actually suffering by using fictional low rank character such as Private Saigo to represent the rest Japanese soldiers. The third sign is that the Japanese soldiers in Iwo Jima are sent to face death penalty as they must fight hard there. Nevertheless, violation scene of Japanese soldiers and suicide scenes still exist in the film that makes it does not counter the stereotypes of Japanese soldier, but it only makes the stereotypes become blurred.

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