Asia-Pacific Journal Articles Recommended for Further Reading

"Women in Japanese Local Politics: From Voters to Activists to Politicians"
Yasuo TAKAO
January 29, 2008
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Yasuo-TAKAO/2647

This article is highly recommended, and readers are encouraged to read the following introduction and corresponding article immediately after Tomomi Yamaguchi's and Norma Field's essay. The article is a revised and expanded version of an essay that was previously published as "Japanese women in grassroots politics: building a gender-equal society from the bottom up" in The Pacific Review*, Volume 20, Issue 2, pp. 147-172 (May 23, 2007). The permalink for the article is http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09512740701306790.*

This article addresses further some of the themes presented in the first two essays including women's rights, activism, and political participation. The author Yasuo Takao explores the political roles of women, including the possibilities for alternative approaches to improve representative democracy in Japan. Takao explains that women's engagement in politics increased in the 1990s, particularly with the 1999 Basic Law of Gender-Equality in Society and the "unprecedented success of grassroots campaigns to increase women's share of seats in local elections." In addition, the one-party dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) that defined post-WWII Japan since 1955 came to an end in 1993. The subsequent electoral system reforms included proportional representation, which seemed to create a more favorable environment for successfully running female candidates.

Along with placing women in political positions, organizations such as the Ichikawa Fusae Foundation created training centers to help more women gain access to practical knowledge and political education. Ichikawa Fusae (1893-1981) was a feminist leader who worked for women's suffrage in the pre-WWII era. She became one of the first women elected to the Diet in 1952 and served a total of five terms. In her honor, the Foundation offers grassroots political training to help women receive hands-on experiences with key decision-making processes.

Further expanding the meaning of political engagement, organizations such as the Life Club Consumers Co-operative Union (Seikatsu Kurabu) play a crucial intermediary role in achieving policy decisions. The Tokyo Citizens' Network coordinates "policy consultation between citizens and the metropolitan administration." By hosting conferences and special citizen input sessions, the Network achieves legislation on concerns salient to women, especially food safety for children, air quality controls, and measures to address domestic violence. Other Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) also offer women alternative opportunities for political involvement including recycling centers, tree-planting activities, and clean-energy campaigns.

Despite all of these advancements, Takao explains that there remain certain limitations for women's access to political power in Japan. Some women's networks require a rotation system to allow for a greater number of participants. This system limits the benefits individual female candidates can receive from the Diet structure that privileges lifetime male politicians. In 2007, mergers of municipalities restructured local elections

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and severely altered the power of local grassroots groups, the specific kinds of groups that female candidates utilize. Organizations such as the Gender Equality Bureau continue to fight against such inequities. According to data accessed in 2012, in 2009 Japan's House of Representatives included only 16.7% female candidates, a statistic the Bureau seeks to expand to a full 30% by 2020. This goal will be challenged by the increasing prominence of neoliberal policies in Japan. Takao uses the term "neo-liberalism" in reference to economic rationalism that celebrates the unbridled rule of the market throughout society and decreases spending for social services. In this context, Takao notes that gender plays a significant role, particularly as women struggle to reconnect political equality with economic equality.

In his conclusion, Takao presents an encouraging view that despite ever-present barriers, Japanese women's groups work to overcome gendered structures and to promote social renewal. This article provides students of contemporary Japan with both useful statistics for quantitative analysis, along with qualitative explanations of how specific groups engage with ongoing pressures against women in politics.

For Mire Koikari, "Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952"

"U.S. Courts-Martial in Occupation Japan: Rape, Race, and Censorship"
Terese Svoboda
May 23, 2009
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Terese-Svoboda/3148.

This article addresses how the U.S. Occupation in Japan censored cases of rape. The author presents evidence from her own family history to examine the correlations between sexual violence, race relations, and U.S. attempts to suppress rape reports.

"The Cold War Explodes in Kobe—The 1948 Korean Ethnic School 'Riots' and US Occupation Authorities"
Mark E. Caprio
November 24, 2008
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Mark-Caprio/2962.

This article offers another historical case for challenging the "triumphant narrative" of the U.S. Occupation of Japan. The author discusses protests in Kobe after U.S. occupiers instructed Japanese authorities to close Korean ethnic schools.

"Occupation Authorities, the Hatoyama Purge and the Making of Japan's Postwar Political Order"
Juha Saunavaara
September 28, 2009
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Juha-Saunavaara/3229.

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The author addresses how the General Headquarters (GHQ) leaders decided to purge politician Hatoyama Ichirō and support Yoshida Shigeru as the first postwar Prime Minister of Japan in 1946.

"The Allied Occupation of Japan—An Australian View"
Christine de Matos
July 27, 2005
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Christine_de-Matos/1765.

While most works focus solely on the role of U.S. occupiers in Japan, other Allied Powers including Australia were involved in this complex rebuilding process. This article summarizes some of the main contributions of the Australian occupiers. The author also published an article more specifically on Australian women in the occupation.

For Tomomi Yamaguchi and Norma Field, "Gendered Labor Justice and the Law of Peace"

"Why I Went to Iraq: Reflections of a Japanese Hostage"
Noriaki IMAI and Norma Field
December 29, 2007
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Imai-Noriaki/2620.

Imai, who travelled as an individual citizen to Iraq to bear witness, discusses why he decided to go to Iraq, his experiences in Iraq, and his struggles to deal with intolerant "bashing" in Japan.

"Engendering the Concept of Peace: On Violence Against Women"
Ruri ITO
April 3, 2003
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Ito-Ruri/2309# published XX

Ito discusses positive peace as a gendered concept, one that requires attention to the politics of dealing with Japan's wartime violence against women.

"The Women's Active Museum on War and Peace: Its Role in Public Education"
Rumiko NISHINO
December 16, 2007
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Rumiko-NISHINO/2604.

This article, written by the Director of WAM, explains the role of the museum in educating the public on wartime violence against women.

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"Article Nine in Context – Limitations of National Sovereignty and the Abolition of War in Constitutional Law"
Klaus Schlichtmann
June 8, 2009
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Klaus-Schlichtmann/3168

The author offers a historical and comparative examination of the "peace" clause in Japan's postwar constitution.

For Yasuo Takao, "Women in Japanese Local Politics"

"Japan's Worker Co-operative Movement into the 21st Century"
Bob Marshall
(No date)
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Bob-Marshall/1704

In the context of the co-operative movement across Japan, Marshall discusses women's worker co-operatives and the Seikatsu Club referenced by Takao.

"Japan Gender Conflict Sparks Censorship Debate"
Tony McNicol
March 23, 2006
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Tony-McNicol/2114

McNicol provides a brief summary of an incident surrounding a cancelled lecture by gender-rights advocate and leading scholar Chizuko Ueno.

"Fukushima Women Against Nuclear Power: Finding a Voice from Tohoku"
David Slater
November 9, 2011
http://www.japanfocus.org/events/view/117

This article presents the role of women as political activists following the devastation of the 3/11 earthquake and subsequent nuclear disasters.

"Japan's Grassroots Pacifism"
Mari YAMAMOTO
February 24, 2005
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Mari-YAMAMOTO/2102

Analyzing peace movements in Japan, Yamamoto includes a section on the role of housewives and women in postwar pacifist activism.

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For Charles Weathers, "Equal Opportunity for Japanese Women—What Progress?"

"The Development and Structure of Japanese Enterprise Unions"
John Benson
November 3, 2008
http://www.japanfocus.org/-John-Benson/2938.

The author assesses the current situation of Japan's unionism in light of the economic struggles since the turn of the 21st century.

"Lifetime Employment in Japan: Concepts and Measurements"
Hiroshi ONO
April 26, 2006
http://www.japanfocus.org/data/Ono.pdf

The author explains that assumptions about the realities of Japan's "lifetime employment" system are difficult to isolate, define, and measure. However, he presents evidence that firms continue to offer regular male employees at least some version of lifelong job security.

"Sexual Harassment: The Emergence of Legal Consciousness in Japan and the US"
Chika SHINOHARA and Christopher Uggen
August 3, 2009
http://japanfocus.org/-Christopher-Uggen/3199

This article discusses a rising consciousness about sexual harassment claims and an increase in women reporting to local Equal Employment Offices in 2008.

"Gender, Equity and the Japanese Welfare System"
Philip Brasor
October 31, 2011
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Philip-Brasor/3625

The author discusses comments about changes to the social security system and other issues made by the first female to be appointed to Japan's Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Labor, Yoko KOMIYAMA.

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"Women and Japan's New Poor"
J. Sean Curtin
May 19, 2005
http://www.japanfocus.org/-J__Sean-Curtin/1641

This article provides divorce rates and a case study of how a single mother is affected by Japan's welfare reforms.

"Turning Back the Clock on Gender Equality: Proposed Constitutional Revision Jeopardizes Japanese Women's Rights"
Satoko KOGURE
May 22, 2005
http://www.japanfocus.org/-Satoko-KOGURE/1814

The author addresses attempts by the Liberal Democratic Party to change Article 24 in the Constitution, one of the articles that protects gender equality.

Recommended Articles from Other Sources

For Mire Koikari, "Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952"

Mire KOIKARI, "Rethinking Gender and Power in the US Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952," *Gender and History* Vol 11, No 2 (1999): 313-335.

Mire KOIKARI, *Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, Temple University Press: Tokyo, 2009.

Mire KOIKARI, "'The World is Our Campus': Michigan State University and Cold-War Home Economics in US-Occupied Okinawa, 1945-1972," *Gender and History* Vol 24, Issue (1) (April 2012): 74-92.

Mark McLelland, *Love, Sex, and Democracy in Japan during the American Occupation*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

For Tomomi Yamaguchi and Norma Field, "Gendered Labor Justice and the Law of Peace"

http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/index.html

The website for the Gender Equality Bureau of Japan, a resource with English-language translations of specific legislation, political initiatives, and action policies for achieving a gender equal Japan.

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http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/japans-about-face/map-japans-self-defense-forces-deployments/1275/

Interactive Map Posted by PBS on Japan's Self-Defense Forces Deployment around the world since 1992.

http://www1.jca.apc.org/vaww-net-japan/english/womenstribunal2000/whatstribunal.html

Violence Against Women in War-Network Japan (VAWW-NET), Website on The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery.

For Yasuo Takao, "Women in Japanese Local Politics"

"Expansion of Women's Participation in Policy and Decision-Making Processes in All Fields of Society," Japan Cabinet Office Gender Equality Bureau, Goal 2020, http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/mge/process/index.html

The Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association, Bibliography and Timeline of Fusae Ichikawa, http://yoshtec.com/japanologie/07.pdf

Robin LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizenship: The Political World of the Japanese Housewife*, Berkeley: University of California, 1999.

LeBlanc examines women's everyday experiences with politics, especially how they navigate political spaces as "bicycle citizens," a view that represents a more female-centered approach to democratic participation.

Seikatsu Club Consumer's Co-operative Union, Shinjuku Branch English Website, http://www.seikatsuclub.coop/english/

The website provides background information on the history of co-operatives in Japan, membership statistics, alternative economic activities, etc.

For Charles Weathers, "Equal Opportunity for Japanese Women—What Progress?"

Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO) English Language Website, http://www.jtuc-rengo.org/

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Council of Executives of Public and Private Sectors to Promote Work-Life Balance, "Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance (Revised 2010), http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/mge/wlb/index.html

This plan first identifies what constitutes a work-life balanced society. The first category of economic independence targets the employment rate of women ages 25-44 to be improved by 8% in 2020.

Hiroya Nakakubo, "'Phase III' of the Japanese Equal Employment Opportunity Law," Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training, 2007, http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR/documents/2007/JLR15_nakakubo.pdf

For Chisa Fujiwara, "Single Mothers and Welfare Restructuring in Japan"

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Statistical Handbook of Japan 2011, Chapter 2 on Japan's "Population," http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/c02cont.htm

Aya EZAWA, "From Welfare to Work: The Conditions of Single Mothers' 'Independence,'" *Journal of Political Science and Sociology*, Vol 7 (March 2007).

This article explores further the notion of independence, especially economic independence, and how welfare work policies affect single mothers.

Aya EZAWA and Chisa FUJIWARA, "Lone Mothers and Welfare-to-Work Policies in Japan and the United States: Toward an Alternative Perspective," *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* Vol 32, No 4 (December 2005).

The authors provide a comparative perspective between policies on the U.S. and Japan.

"Facts and Figures" on the Japanese Population, Posted by the Gender Bureau, http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/category/pub/pamphlet/women-and-men10/pdf/1-1.pdf

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