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The Forgotten History of Japanese Women's History and the Rise of Women and Gender History in the Academy

Marnie S. Anderson

Abstract: Japanese men began writing Japanese women's history over a century ago, although the academic field of women's history did not become established until more recent decades. This article traces the development of women's history in both Japan and the Anglophone West by focusing on four distinct moments. I examine how the field evolved and consider some of the key players. Then, I turn to the sometimes-complicated relationship between women's history and feminism and the rise of gender history. Tracing the absence and presence of women over the past 130 years provides a novel view on the history of Japanese women's history. The post-World War II period marks the only era when women were entirely absent from the historiography—and this absence was limited to Western scholarship. Finally, I draw attention to the rich conversations and works of translation in the international field of Japanese women's history today.

Introduction: While it is commonplace to think about women's history as a relatively recent development, in fact, Japanese men began writing histories of Japanese women shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. This article sketches the development of the history of women and gender in Japan and later the Anglophone West over the past approximately 130 years; it considers where the fields developed separately and where they converged.¹ To a lesser extent, it also touches on some of the people who wrote this history. While individuals have been writing Japanese women's history for many decades, the field only became established within the academy starting in the 1970s.

In an era when fields like global history have come under attack for ignoring non-Anglophone scholarship, I highlight conversations between Japanese and Western-based historians of women and gender in Japan. Their conversations have forged a rich and creative field, which has led to transnational conversations and translations, often in the form of edited volumes.² In addition, I suggest that this collaboration may provide inspiration for other fields.³ In order to understand the rise of Japanese women's history, I have divided this article into four historical moments. The first moment begins in the late nineteenth century when Japan rapidly modernized on a Western model. It continues through the 1920s, a decade that saw considerable scholarship on women and gender, most of which was written by male scholars. These scholars were keenly aware of how important clarifying the "woman question" (or "woman problem") was to establishing Japan's status in the world at a time when Western countries viewed Japan as less than civilized. In the West, this moment coincided with the professionalization of the discipline of history, and it was a time when scholarly writing on any aspect of Japanese history in English was scarce, much less writing on women.⁴ My second moment is the immediate post-World War II years through the 1960s, an era that brought growth in the writing of women's history in Japan but not in the West. Western scholars of Japan—almost all male—were shaped by the then-dominant paradigm of modernization theory. The third moment considers the 1970s and 1980s, when women's history as an

academic field took off in both places, coinciding in complex ways with second-wave feminism in the West and *ūman ribu* (women's liberation) in Japan. The fourth and final moment begins in the 1990s when scholars began using the term "gender history" more widely and continues to the present. Of course, distinct national and regional contexts led to differences in how this story unfolded.

Overall, I demonstrate that Japanese women's history has been around much longer than scholars normally appreciate. In addition, I suggest some reasons why scholars have overlooked or forgotten this long history. To appreciate the way the field developed, it is necessary to pinpoint the multiple centers and influences that contributed to the rise of Japanese women's history. The lines between earlier and later developments in the field of women and gender history do not always connect—earlier studies did not necessarily inform later scholarship and the reasons are multiple. Sometimes later practitioners were unaware of earlier texts or scholars dismissed their predecessors as ideologically driven or "amateurish" as Bonnie Smith has noted in *The Gender of History*, a study of the birth of the discipline of academic history in the West and the attendant exclusion of women as authors of history.⁵ I contend that the complete absence of Japanese women's history was most pronounced in Anglophone scholarship on Japan during the height of modernization studies in the post-World War II era and that it lasted through the early 1970s, when different forces propelled the rise of the academic field of women's history around the world. A caveat—my account of how Japanese women's history developed is in no way exhaustive or authoritative. I attempt to highlight key figures and scholarly works in each of the four historical moments I take up, but there are, no doubt, many people and texts that I have unintentionally left out.⁶

The Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

As I noted, Japanese male historians began writing Japanese women's history in the decades following the turn of the twentieth century. A list of early works suggests that initial efforts were scattered but gained momentum by the 1920s.⁷ A few female historians joined this project in the 1930s.

Interest in the history of women's experiences emerged out of a long-standing concern with the status of women in Japan, an issue that absorbed male elites in the decades following the Meiji Restoration (1868), as they sought to raise Japan's status on the international stage. The important bibliography of women's history, *Nihon joseishi kenkyū bunken mokuroku* (Bibliography of research on Japanese women's history), considers these works to be early examples of the genre of women's history, as precursors to the academic works that took off in the early twentieth century. For example, in 1889 the journalist Kawata Rin'ya's *Nihon joshi shinkaron* (On the evolution of Japanese women) argued that social reform and equal rights for men and women were necessary if Japan was to enhance its authority, build a strong economy, and establish itself on equal footing with Western nations. Tatsumi Kojirō's 1887 *Seiyō Nihon joken enkakushi* (History of women's rights in the West and Japan) advanced similar arguments and claimed that Japanese women enjoyed equality in the ancient past before the arrival of Buddhism and Confucianism.⁸

In the late nineteenth century, the status of women served as a barometer of a country's level of civilization around the world. Elite Japanese men took up the question of a woman's place because they were eager to show Westerners that Japan was civilized; this effort was part of their bid to overturn the unequal treaties and attain parity with Western powers on the international stage. As I have argued elsewhere, these debates began among male elites but eventually came to include women.⁹ Even as the "woman question" took center stage in the Meiji period, women were marginalized as never before by the time the government promulgated the Meiji Constitution in 1889 and the first legislature (Diet) met in 1890. In other words, women faced both new opportunities and new constraints as Japan modernized. By the turn of the twentieth century, the urgency that informed the early Meiji debates about women subsided, and Japan attained an elusive parity with the West. Conversations about women's roles moved to another sphere, and critics labeled the issue a "problem."¹⁰ It was also during the first decades of the twentieth century that the vocabulary of "feminism" took hold around the world, reshaping the parameters of debates about women. Conversations increasingly centered on political rights, especially suffrage.¹¹

Scholars in the fields of history and ethnology examined women's issues in the late 1910s and 1920s.¹² Gains were particularly rich in the field of folk ethnology (*minzoku gaku*). In 1937, a group of young male historians published an outstanding collection of essays on women's historical roles entitled *Joseishi kenkyū* (A study of women's history).¹³ The contributors, including Nishioka Toranosuke and Inoue Kiyoshi, became key figures in various eras of Japanese history in the postwar era, as the editors of *Women and Class in Japanese History* point out.¹⁴

A similar impulse to write about women in the context of rapid nation building can be found in the work of male intellectuals in late-imperial China who, at the turn of the twentieth century, wrote about Chinese women. They laid the groundwork for the emergence of women's history a few decades later. To be sure, continuities with past practices persisted. As Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng note, "when male intellectuals concerned with building a nation-state began to write about women at the turn of the twentieth century, they were continuing the practice of prescribing women's conduct, this time for an enlarged role in society."¹⁵ By the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese male scholars "produced a historiography of women organized in a binary scheme of 'oppressed victim' vs. 'liberated modern subject.'"¹⁶

Turning to Europe, we see that women wrote history (although not women's history) throughout the nineteenth century, often alongside their historian husbands or fathers. But the birth of history as an academic discipline brought major changes to the practice of writing history. The professionalization of the discipline in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries relegated women to the sidelines, especially as history became a male profession and the "central concerns revolved around the (male) political sphere."¹⁷

Whereas the authors of early women's history in both China and Japan were men, in the West, the primary authors were women. Notable works in this genre include Alice Clark's *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (1919) and Ivy Pinchbeck's *Women Workers and the In-*

dustrial Revolution (1930).¹⁸ Both women were part of a group working on “feminist-inspired social and economic history” at the London School of Economics.¹⁹ In the United States, women historians had been able to join the American Historical Association, a professional organization, since the late nineteenth century, but men dominated the professional culture and effectively barred women from crucial spaces for networking, a situation that led some female historians to found the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians in 1930.²⁰ One of the early pioneers of women’s history was Mary Ritter Beard (1876–1958) who published several books, including one on Japanese women. Beard also helped found the Sophia Smith Collection, an archive of women’s history at Smith College, in 1942.²¹

Western research on Japanese women, unsurprisingly, did not emerge for several decades, and research on any subject of Japanese history in English was just beginning with the work of Asakawa Kan’ichi (1873–1948), who taught and researched at Dartmouth and later Yale, and E. H. Norman (1909–1957), who published his most famous work *Japan’s Emergence as a Modern State* in 1940.²²

Why did the practice of writing about women in history exist on a larger scale earlier in Japan and China than in the West? While there is no way to definitively answer this question, it undoubtedly relates to the fact that government officials and intellectuals in Japan and China were in no position to dismiss women’s status as trivial. Western countries justified unequal treaties with Japan and China in part on the grounds that East Asian societies were less civilized—among other things, Westerners believed that countries like Japan treated women and workers poorly.²³ In Japan, the “woman question” as well the “labor question” dominated the agenda of social scientists during this period, entwined as these questions were with Japan’s status in the world.²⁴ Women’s history—and women’s biographies, a long-standing genre in East Asia—mattered less to national male leaders and scholars in the West who were secure in the conviction that Westerners were ahead of the rest of the world.

Japanese Women Writing History before 1945

As E. Patricia Tsurumi has documented, Japanese women also wrote history in the decades leading up to the Asia-Pacific War (1937–1945).²⁶ The most famous was the anarchist-feminist historian Takamure Itsue (1894–1964) who turned to writing history in 1931. She published extensively on Japan’s ancient past and conducted pathbreaking research on transformations in Japanese marriage customs, pinpointing the beginnings of patriarchal society in Japan in the fourteenth century. By showing that patriarchy in Japan was not timeless, Takamure hoped to lend historical evidence to her idealized view of the past—a past where Japanese people lived in small, self-sufficient communities that valued women, especially as mothers. Hitomi Tonomura points out that Takamure’s assertions have since “invited vigorous reexamination and reinterpretation of her categories and analyses,” but the importance of Takamure’s work cannot be overstated.²⁷ Takamure was not alone in her idealization of the past, but her support of the wartime Japanese state and embrace of the emperor has meant that she remains a controversial figure among feminists today who struggle with how to weigh her legacy.²⁸

The socialist-feminist Yamakawa Kikue (1890–1980), whom Tsurumi once called “an accidental historian,” also wrote history in the wartime years. Anglophone scholars typically associate Yamakawa with debates she engaged in with prominent socialists and feminists in the 1920s; Yamakawa reminded male socialists of the need to address women’s issues, while she sparred with feminists “on the possibility of women achieving full rights within a capitalist system.”²⁹ But in the chilling political environment of the late 1930s and early 1940s, Yamakawa was no longer able to write freely about feminism or socialism without running the risk of prison. At this point, she met the folklore scholar Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) who encouraged her to write her own family’s history. The result is the marvelous *Buke no josei* (Women of the Mito Domain) (1943), a study of lower-level samurai families in the nineteenth century that centered on her mother and grandmother.³⁰ In it, Yamakawa trains her eyes on the frequently overlooked experiences of these women, leaving detailed and often moving portraits of their lives.³¹

Finally, it is worth mentioning the work of Aoyama Nao (1900–1985), a historian of education who achieved prominence in the postwar decades with such studies as her 1982 *Meiji joggakō no kenkyū* (Studies of Meiji girls’ schools).³² Aoyama entered Tohoku University in 1928 and studied with Muraoka Tsunetsugu (1884–1946), a renowned scholar of Japanese thought. In the 1930s, she taught at Tokyo Woman’s Christian College (present-day Tokyo Woman’s Christian University). A women’s history prize was established in her name in 1986.

On Women’s History in Postwar Japan

The postwar Japanese Constitution (1946). granted women the right to vote, and the larger atmosphere of demilitarization and democratization spurred publications on women in Japanese history.³³ In 1948, Inoue Kiyoshi—who contributed to the 1937 collection noted above—published a best-selling survey *Nihon joseishi* (Japanese women’s history).³⁴ Meanwhile, Takamure Itsue’s work continued into the postwar period, and she produced several surveys of women’s history.³⁵ Yamakawa became a bureaucrat, serving as the first director of the Women’s and Minors Bureau. She continued to write social commentary, but history did not occupy much of her time, for the constraints that channeled her energies into writing history during wartime had dissipated.³⁶

In these early postwar decades, Inoue and Takamure presented two entirely different interpretive arcs of women in Japanese history that set the stage for trends that emerged in the 1970s. While Inoue focused on Japanese women’s history as one of gradual liberation over time, Takamure believed that women enjoyed high status early on in history, but their position declined with the rise of private property. Influenced by the writings of Frederick Engels and Henry Louis Morgan, Takamure “viewed civilization as harmful to women’s interests in contrast to the ideal natural or primitive state.”³⁷ Into this debate stepped the historian Murakami Nobuhiko in the 1970s. Like Takamure, Murakami saw patriarchy as rooted in the Meiji state, but he introduced a new direction for women’s history by focusing on the rhythms of women’s daily lives rather than solely on women’s liberation.³⁸ Meanwhile, scholars began to specialize

in women's history in the 1970s, whereas scholars previously wrote women's history *in addition* to their major field of specialization.³⁹

Research on women, importantly, was not confined to the academy in the early postwar decades. Outside of academic circles, Japanese women began writing history under the guidance of male scholars, as an aspect of democratic practice under the Marxist-inspired "People's History Movement" ("Kokuminteki rekishigaku undō").⁴⁰ Curtis Anderson Gayle points out that amateur historians offered up alternative woman-centered views of history, locating the meaning of womanhood in motherhood.⁴¹ Similar movements continued into the 1960s, when women formed history-writing groups and explored their wartime experiences not just for themselves but also so that their children could read and learn from them.⁴² The connections between these early amateur groups and the later established field of women's history is complicated. Yet Gayle suggests that today, local women's history is viewed as a "precursor" for the later, more fully developed field of academic women's history.⁴³ Over time, interest in women's historical experiences from academics to ordinary citizens gathered momentum across society. Several groups wrote regional women's history, leading to rich volumes that focused on women's histories at the prefectural level, although such histories tend to be looked down upon within the academy.⁴⁴

What was happening among academic historians in Japan who did not address women? This article is by no means the place for a comprehensive analysis, but it is worth mentioning that Marxist thought dominated "mainstream" Japanese history during the postwar era. Over time, another group of historians who sought to understand the lives of ordinary people by writing "people's history" (*minshūshi*) emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.⁴⁵ As Carol Gluck explained in 1978, these scholars "began a search for what they call an internal—or indigenous—approach to modern Japanese history" while eschewing Marxist frameworks and modernization theory.⁴⁶ But even this group—with its clear sympathies for non-elite actors—did not write much about women.⁴⁷

Modernization Theory and the Absence of Women

The postwar years marked the moment when the Anglophone field of Japanese studies came together within the context of Cold War area studies.⁴⁸ Modernization theory, a supposedly value-free framework that posited a set of universal stages all societies pass through (and an alternative to Marxist theory), dominated the Anglophone historiography of Japan in the postwar years. This moment also saw a complete absence of women, as a look at a famous 1960 conference on modernization theory held in Hakone, Japan, suggests. The Hakone conference, which included Japanese and Western scholars, was the first in a series of six seminars on the nature of modernization sponsored by the Ford Foundation—the topic was closely bound up with cold war politics and priorities.⁴⁹

There were few female scholars of Japan in the West in the early 1960s. None were present at the Hakone conference. Even the wives of male scholars did not attend the proceedings or the meals. According to Victor Koschmann, special entertainment was provided for the wives and

they were only asked to join the men during a social hour.⁵⁰ Not only were women physically absent, but the question of women's historical experiences did not emerge in the conference discussions as scholars debated the stages of modernization and the nature of democracy in Japan.⁵¹ Women's history as a field did not yet exist, so the lack of discussion of women should not surprise us. To borrow the vocabulary of gender history, the Hakone conference was a masculine space, and modernization theory as practiced by Western scholars of Japan was a masculine field.

Perhaps by 1960 the Hakone participants assumed that the "woman question and problem" had been solved, for Japanese women had been granted the vote in the aftermath of the war under the Allied Occupation. Observers considered the granting of rights, especially suffrage, as the mark of a civilized society. Modernization theory maintained that all societies progressed through a series of stages, and the enactment of women's suffrage throughout the world in the first half of the twentieth century lent itself to this framework.⁵²

Even as women were not present at the conversations at the Hakone conference, the framework of inevitable progress that anchored debates about women's status and civilization some eighty years earlier in the Meiji years remained intact. As Harry Harootunian points out in his discussion of the conference, "the invited surprise mystery guest was the ghost of Herbert Spencer, an old friend of Meiji Japanese, who worried about getting out of a feudal standstill and onto the track leading to rational progress."⁵³ Spencer's influence lived on in the work of the modernization theorists, but his concern with women's status and equality entirely disappeared. Spencer devoted a chapter of his *Social Statics* (1851) to the rights of women (parts of his book were translated into Japanese in 1878 and 1881).⁵⁴ No doubt women did not fit into the value-free taxonomy and the focus on institutions that so concerned modernization scholars. Modernization theory, then, was distinguished by its focus on processes over people—with the exception of a few great men—and was especially inattentive to women.⁵⁵ Modernization theory fell from its dominant position in the 1970s, just as the field of women's history came into its own.

The 1970s in the US and Japan

The rise of academic women's history coincided with the height of second-wave feminism. Scholars of women, buoyed by their experiences of restoring women to the historical record, sought to rescue women from patriarchal paradigms. In the United States, the decades saw the founding of journals like *Signs* (1975) and the publication of Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's pathbreaking article, "The Female World of Love and Ritual" (1975), all of which signaled the arrival of a new field of women's history.⁵⁶

In the midst of this growth, the Japan historian John Dower observed in 1975, "There exists no really comprehensive study of women in Japanese history."⁵⁷ As I have suggested above, Dower's assessment was mostly correct in the case of Anglophone scholarship. To the best of my knowledge, the only two postwar texts on women's history published in English before 1975 were Mary Ritter Beard's 1953 *Women as a Force in Japanese History* and Joyce Ackroyd's 1959

article “Women in Feudal Japan.”⁵⁸ It is worth noting that Beard served more as an editor than an author, as she did not read Japanese. Almost two decades earlier, Beard’s friend, the birth control advocate Katō (Ishimoto) Shidzue (sometimes rendered as Shizue) (1897–2001), asked several scholars in Japan to compile sketches of famous women in Japanese history.⁵⁹ Another friend, Reiko Mitsui, translated the sketches into English in the late 1930s, although the time was not right to publish such a work given the rising tensions between Japan and the United States.⁶⁰

Ackroyd’s publication was quite different. An Australian scholar of Japan with a PhD from Cambridge University, she not only read Japanese but also wrote a dissertation on the Confucian scholar Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725). Other books worth mentioning include such well-known memoirs published in English as Katō’s *Facing Two Ways* (1935) and Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto’s *Daughter of the Samurai* (1925) and such portraits as Isabella Bird’s *Japanese Girls and Women* (1891).⁶¹ All three texts contain valuable information but were not written from a scholarly perspective, although they undoubtedly shaped Western public opinion. The same point holds true for books by Protestant missionaries like Maude Whitmore Madden’s *Women of the Meiji Era* (1919).⁶²

The growth of women’s history in Japan and the United States in the 1970s coincided with second-wave feminism in the West and *ūman ribu* in Japan.⁶³ But we should be wary of assuming these social movements were the same. As Setsu Shigematsu argues, feminism in Japan was not a foreign import but rather “born from the cross-fertilizations of genealogies of resistance both domestic and international.”⁶⁴ In contrast to the United States and other Western countries, feminism had little direct effect on the development of the women’s history field in Japan. In fact, Yuko Takahashi and Ueno Chizuko have pointed out that sociology rather than history was the discipline most impacted by feminism, and the discipline of women’s studies developed separately from women’s history.⁶⁵

By the 1980s, Japanese historians of Japan and other places like China, the United States, and Europe who specialized in women’s history began to reach a wider audience. Takahashi observes that historians at Japanese universities who focused on European and US women’s history had an easier time gaining legitimacy within the Japanese academy than scholars of Japanese women’s history.⁶⁶ Still, the 1980s saw stunning growth in the field and the publication of a number of important collaborative volumes.⁶⁷

In general, scholars of women’s history faced several obstacles. For one, new scholars had difficulty finding jobs unless they already had one since universities did not designate positions for “women’s history.” As a result, much of the scholarship on women’s history was produced outside of the academy by female scholars who did not have formal academic positions.⁶⁸ There were a few exceptions. When Nagano Hiroko began writing women’s history in the 1980s, she already had a position as an economic historian at Chūō University that enabled her to pursue her research on women.⁶⁹ Wakita Haruko (1934–2016) of Shiga University also started out as a historian of medieval commerce and urban space before taking up women’s history in the 1980s.⁷⁰

The Turn to Gender

Whereas early scholars of women's history in the Western academy aimed to restore women to history, their emphasis shifted in the 1980s and 1990s.⁷¹ Under the influence of poststructuralist theory and the linguistic turn, historians of women began casting about for new models and a place in the mainstream of the profession. Until this time, women's history had been largely "contained in a separate sphere."⁷² But as Kathleen Canning explains, "a gradual breakdown of the category 'woman' had begun to propel the turn to gender."⁷³ In this setting, Joan Scott's "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" made waves. Scott's contribution made "explicit the new directions and analytical promise of the flourishing scholarship in feminist history" and called on all historians to address gender.⁷⁴ Some of Scott's points did not go unchallenged—particularly her focus on discourse—and set off a series of lively debates among feminist scholars, but gender as a category had arrived.

To simplify a complicated and rich story, the turn to gender elicited multiple reactions. Many welcomed it and used the terms "women" and "gender" together.⁷⁵ Others who saw themselves as practitioners of "women's history"—rather than gender history—expressed anxiety about the destabilizing effects of using "gender" rather than "women." They worried that turning to gender undermined the political project of writing women into history. Canning reminds us that national context mattered in these debates: "Where women's history was still in an early stage of research or had yet to establish its legitimacy, the arrival of gender appeared to cut short a struggle not yet won."⁷⁶ In the end, however, their fears about the turn to gender proved unfounded. Rather, scholars addressed both women and gender together, and most scholars did not see the fields as mutually exclusive—one could be *both* a historian of women and gender.

Canning's comments focus on developments in western Europe and the United States, but her point about "national contexts" as a major factor in the development of the field pertains to Japan as well. The arrival of gender history in Japan in the late 1980s and early 1990s—and the formation of a society dedicated to gender history, the Gender History Association of Japan (GHAJ) in 2004—sparked resistance among mainstream male scholars as well as scholars of women's history who opposed the new field of women's studies.⁷⁷ Some objected vociferously to the idea that masculinity could be an object of study.⁷⁸ Nagano explains that gender history was gaining currency and, subsequently, the "old style of women's history. . . is now becoming the minority."⁷⁹ Much of the momentum for the rise of gender history came from Japanese specialists of European and American history, although Japanese historians of Japanese women's history also played an integral role. A small group at its founding, the GHAJ has grown significantly in recent years. In addition to generating scholarship, some members have worked with other historians of women to produce two secondary textbooks, one on Japanese history and one on world history, that engage with the theme of gender in history.⁸⁰ These authors aim to correct misconceptions of women in other textbooks, for instance challenging the tendency to romanticize the urban culture of the early modern Japanese pleasure quarters while obscuring the exploitation of the licensed prostitution system.⁸¹

The question of whether women and gender history are conceptually distinct fields appears to be not yet settled in Japan.⁸² In a recent article, Rui Kohiyama notes that before publishing a book, she and a colleague debated the question of whether to title it “women’s history” or “gender history.” In the end, they “settled on gender history to highlight the inclusive message that ‘gender’ would convey.”⁸³ But other scholars made different choices, and in the end, Kohiyama notes that “there is no final consensus” on how to approach the issue. These concerns are no longer heard much in the West.⁸⁴

The Anglophone Japan Field since the 1980s and Cross-Cultural Connections: From Absence to Presence

While Dower highlighted the lack of a field of Japanese women’s history in English in the mid-1970s, the situation changed in the 1980s with the publication of Sharon Sievers’s *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Japan* (1983), a book that continues to be widely read and cited.⁸⁵ The field made great strides in the 1990s with the publication of such edited volumes as Gail Lee Bernstein’s *Recreating Japanese Women* (1991), Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko’s *Women and Class in Japanese History* (1999), and Wakita Haruko, Susan Hanley, and Anne Bouchy’s *Gender and Japanese History* (1999).⁸⁶ *Recreating Japanese Women*, the earliest volume, inspired a new generation of scholars to pursue women’s history, as the volume signaled that the field now had legitimacy.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, historians began to grapple with gender, and by the 2000s, the word “gender” was ubiquitous in scholarly works. The field boasted several volumes on gender as well as masculinity.⁸⁸ Scholars started to address gender in the Japanese Empire, for after all, the borders of imperial Japan from 1895 to 1945 stretched well beyond the archipelago.⁸⁹ The once unimaginable became thinkable as scholars wrote biographies focused on female subjects. Anne Walthall published *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration* (1998), and more recently Laura Nenzi produced *The Chaos and Cosmos of Kurosawa Tokiko: One Women’s Transit from Tokugawa to Meiji Japan* (2015).⁹⁰ Yet even as the field made great advances, challenges remain. For example, Nenzi received reviewer feedback at an early stage of her project asking why she needed to write a biography of another loyalist woman since Walthall already had written one.⁹¹ We can detect a larger tendency to approach women and gender history with different standards than are applied to more “mainstream historical scholarship”; when it comes to women, some scholars expect a high level of representativeness that they do not apply to the study of men. Put differently, there is a “one is enough” logic persisting in the background.⁹²

Worth stressing too is the extent to which the field in the West developed in conversation with Japanese scholars of women and through the work of translation. Here I credit the labor of several scholars who have dedicated time and energy to organizing conferences, engaging in dialogue, and translating scholarship, both from Japanese to English and English to Japanese.⁹³ English-language books that exemplify these trends include *Gender and Japanese History*, edited by Wakita Haruko, Susan Hanley, and Anne Bouchy (2 vols., 1999, also published in Japanese); *Women and Class in Japanese History* (1999); *Engendering Faith*, edited by Barbara

Ruch (2002); *The Female As Subject*, edited by P. F. Kornicki, Mara Patessio, and G. G. Rowley (2010); *Recreating Japanese Men*, edited by Sabine Früstück and Anne Walthall (2011); and the forthcoming *Women and Networks in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, edited by Bettina Gramlich-Oka, Anne Walthall, Miyazaki Fumiko, and Sugano Noriko.⁹⁴ Journals like the U.S.-Japan Women's Journal, founded in 1988, also facilitate international conversations on women and gender and are indebted to the pioneering role of founder Mizuta Noriko, a scholar of literature.⁹⁵ Mizuta's work reminds us that literary studies of women writers who were also activists has been a fruitful area of inquiry and a site where women's history and literary studies have overlapped.⁹⁶

The growth of the Anglophone Japan field on women and gender has drawn inspiration from both larger developments in the historical scholarship on women and gender and in transnational conversations with Japanese scholars.⁹⁷ At the same time, the relatively small numbers of people working in Japanese history has meant that the field's development has been slower than in fields like US and European women's and gender history. Even the Anglophone China field seems bigger. These other fields simply have more scholars. The situation begs the question of how the field can continue to thrive at a time when history departments in the United States appear to be cutting positions in Japanese history and, in some cases, not replacing lines after a faculty member retires. One way forward is for all scholars to start taking up gender. This approach has been most recently adopted by the editors of the forthcoming *Cambridge History of Japan* series who called on all contributors to engage with gender, rather than designate a single essay as the "gender chapter."⁹⁸

Final Thoughts

We have seen that the history of writing Japanese women's history dates back to the turn of the twentieth century and that the roots go back even further. In contrast, in the Anglophone West, Japanese women's history emerged later, and, in both cases, the field of women's history did not come into its own until the 1970s and 1980s. But the writing of women's history and the legitimacy of women's and gender history within the academy are not the same thing. And legitimacy has multiple levels; even if one's scholarship enjoys currency, one needs institutional support—including positions, funding, and opportunities—to publish. And what of the ability to train graduate students? The question of positions within the academy for scholars of women's and gender history—many of whom are women—continues to be an issue around the world.⁹⁹

In closing, I return to the title of this article, "The Forgotten History of Women's History." The scale we use to study the past matters. Looking at the absence and presence of women over the past 130 years—rather than the past 50 years—provides a different view on the subject of women in Japanese history. The post-World War II and Cold War period marks the only era when women were entirely absent from historiography—and this absence was limited to Western scholarship. Women's absence during the height of modernization-minded work in the early postwar decades emerges as more of an anomaly when we adopt a wider lens. In Japan, however, women's history was not so much forgotten in the postwar moment as present on the margins (with key exceptions like Inoue's 1948 *Nihon joseishi*). The disconnected lines—that

people have often not remembered what came before or else disparaged it—combined with the liminal place of some of the early research on women has made it difficult to appreciate this longer history.

Conversations between historians of women and gender in the West and Japan may offer inspiration for other transnational endeavors, especially at a time when critics have pointed out how little non-Anglophone scholarship is absorbed by Anglophone historians.¹⁰⁰ The Latin America specialist Jeremy Adelman has recently called global history “another Anglospheric invention to integrate the Other into a cosmopolitan narrative on our terms, in our tongues.”¹⁰¹ While Adelman’s charge is not without merit, it does not apply to the conferences, collaborations, and translations among scholars of Japanese women’s history in Japan and abroad that I have mentioned here.

While women and women’s history were marginal in the scholarly worlds of Japanese history a half-century ago, we are at a different place today. Yet the academy still has a ways to go until full presence is a reality.¹⁰² Remembering the past history of women’s history should play a key role in the future.

Notes

I wish to thank the editors and anonymous reviewers for the *Journal of Women’s History*. I thank Amy Stanley for inspiration at a key moment, including references on global history; David Howell for inviting me to think about gender and modernization theory at the 2014 Harvard University Reischauer Institute Workshop “It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time: Modernization Theory Forty Years Later”; and Hitomi Tonomura for introducing me to Takamura Itsue and other historians of Japanese women’s history years ago. Leslie Pincus provided insights on modernization theory.

¹Of course, “the West” is a simplistic shorthand. It refers here to western Europe, Australia, and North America. Given the nature of the topic, I find such broad generalizations unavoidable. Japanese individuals are listed with their surname first. Authors with Japanese names who usually publish in English are listed with the surname following the given name. The location for Japanese-language publications is Tokyo unless otherwise noted.

²Jeremy Adelman, “What is Global History Now?” *Aeon*, March 2, 2017, <https://aeon.co/essays/is-global-history-still-possible-or-has-it-had-its-moment>. On how scholars of French history in the United States have not fully incorporated French-language scholarship, see Richard Drayton and David Motadel, “Discussion: The Futures of Global History 2018,” *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21, 13. For exceptional work in English that addresses the Japanese-language historiography, see Carol Gluck, “The People in History: Recent Trends in Japanese Historiography,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 38, no. 1 (1978): 25–50; and Daniel Botsman, “Recovering Urban Pasts: Yoshida Nobuyuki, Tsukada Takashi, and the Cities of the Tokugawa Period,” *City, Culture, and Society* 3 (2012): 9–14. On pre-1600 Japan, see Amino Yoshihiko, *Rethinking Japanese History*, trans. Alan S. Christy (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2012).

³For related inquiries, see Rui Kohiyama, “Women’s History at the Cutting Edge in Japan,” *Women’s History Review* 27, no. 1 (2018): 58–70; Yuko Takahashi, “Recent Collaborative Endeavors by Historians of Women and Gender in Japan,” *Journal of Women’s History* 25, no. 4 (2013): 244–254; and Hayakawa Noriyo, “The Development of Women’s History in Japan,” in *Writing Women’s History: International Perspectives*, ed. Karen Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson, and Jane Rendall (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 171–179.

⁴While individuals were not writing women’s history at this point, some did write about about Japanese women through an orientalist lens. For example, the minister William Griffis proclaimed, “The Japanese maiden, as pure as the purest Christian virgin, will at the command of her father enter the brothel to-morrow, and prostitute herself for life.” William Elliot Griffis, *The Mikado’s Empire* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1876), 555.

⁵Bonnie Smith, *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), chap. 2.

⁶The choices of who and what to include are based on my research and graduate training as well as my wide teaching responsibilities at a liberal arts college. As one reviewer pointed out to me, ten different scholars would no doubt generate ten different lists of who and what to include. While I am a modernist by training, I have opted to cast a wider net and include scholarship on medieval and early modern Japan rather than focus solely on scholarship on the modern period.

⁷*Nihon joseishi kenkyu bunken mokuroku* [Bibliography of Research on Japanese Women's History], vol. 1, ed. Joseishi kenkyu kai (Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1983), 3.

⁸Kawata Rin'ya, *Nihon joshi shinkaron* (Kawata Rin'ya, 1889); and Tatsumi Kōjiro, *Seiyō Nihon joken enkakushi* (Tetsugaku shoin, 1887).

⁹Marnie S. Anderson, *A Place in Public: Women's Rights in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010).

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 198–199. For China, see Susan Mann, *Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 196.

¹¹The earliest use of the term “feminism” in Japan, as far as I know, was in Nagai Kafu's novel *House for a Mistress* [*Shōtaku*]. *Nihon kokugo daijiten daihinan henshu* iinkai, ed., *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, vol. 11, 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2000), 714. For a consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of using “feminism” before the term gained currency, see Barbara Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 12. Also, see Nancy Cott, *Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).

¹²Wakita Haruko, Narita Ryuichi, Hitomi Tonomura, and Anne Walthall, “Appendix: Past Developments and Future Issues,” in *Women and Class in Japanese History*, ed. Wakita Haruko, Hitomi Tonomura, and Anne Walthall (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 1999), 311n1.

¹³Rekishi kyōiku kenkyū kai, ed., *Joseishi kenkyū* (Shikai shobō, 1937).

¹⁴Wakita, Narita, Walthall, and Tonomura, “Appendix,” 299. On the “main-stream” history of this era, see Margaret Mehl, *History and the State in Nineteenth-Century Japan: the World, the Nation, and the Search for a Modern Past* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); and Lisa Yoshikawa, *Making History Matter: Kuroita Katsumi and the Construction of Imperial Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2017).

¹⁵Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng, “Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis,” *American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1404–1421, 1412.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 1412. Joan Judge, “Chinese Women's History: Global Circuits, Local Meanings,” *Journal of Women's History* 25, no. 4 (2013): 224–243. On Korean women during this period, see Hyaweol Choi, ed., *New Women in Colonial Korea: A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

¹⁷Laura Lee Downs, *Writing Gender History* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2004), 11.

¹⁸Sarah Maza, *Thinking about History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), 34; Alice Clark, *The Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1919); and Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750–1850* (London: Routledge, 1930).

¹⁹Downs, *Writing Gender History*, 10–11. Pinchbeck held an academic position at Bedford College, University of London, but Clark did not hold an academic job.

²⁰“History,” Berkshire Conference of Women's Historians, accessed May 30, 2018, <https://berksconference.org/about/history/>.

²¹“Biographical/Historical,” Mary Ritter Beard Papers, Sophia Smith Archives, Smith College Libraries, accessed June 1, 2018, https://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss135_bioghist.html. On Beard's trips to Japan, see Taeko Shibahara, *Japanese Women and the Transnational Feminist Movement before World War II* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2014), chap. 2.

²²Asakawa was born in Japan but educated in the United States. Norman was born in Japan to missionary parents from Canada, received his doctorate from Harvard, and joined the Canadian Foreign Service. E. H. Norman, *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940).

²³On the treaties, see Par Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁴I thank an anonymous reviewer for helping me appreciate how intertwined the “labor question” was with the “woman question.” For examples of early scholarship centered on the labor question, see Yokoyama Gennosuke's *Nihon no kaso shakai* [*The Sad History of Female Textile Workers*] (1899; repr. Iwanami shoten, 1949) and Hosoi Wakizō's *Jōko aishi* [*Japan's Lower Class Society*] (1925; repr. Iwanami bunko, 1954). The 1872 Maria Luz incident also shows how Meiji officials connected these two issues. On the incident, see Daniel V. Botsman, “Freedom without Slavery? ‘Coolies,’ Prostitutes, and Outcasts in Meiji Japan's ‘Emancipation Moment,’” *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (2011): 1323–1347.

²⁵On the importance of women's biographies, see Joan Judge, *The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010). Sekiguchi Sumiko also mentions the importance of biographies in *Goishin to jenda* [*The Meiji Restoration and Gender*] (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2005). Nagano Hiroko discusses the development of women's history in Japan but does not reference the nineteenth-century discourses. See Nagano Hiroko, “Nihon no joseishi jenda shi kenkyū to rekishi ninshiki [Research on Japanese Women's History and Gender History and Historical Awareness],” *Rekishi hyōron* 748 (August 2012): 12–20, 13.

²⁶I define a historian here as someone who studies change over time. E. Patricia Tsurumi, “The Accidental Historian: Yamakawa Kikue,” *Gender & History* 8, no. 2 (1996): 258–276. Tsurumi was in the process of writing a book about four early Japanese women's historians, according to her 1996 article. In addition to Takamura and Yamakawa, Tsurumi planned to write about the labor historian Sanpei Kōkō (1903–1978) and Murata Shizuko (1923–2004). Murata worked at the University of Tokyo Historical Geographical Institute and published on the activist Fukuda Hideko. Tsurumi died in 2016, and the book was never

published, although Tsurumi published an article on Takamura. See Tsurumi, "Feminism and Anarchism in Japan: The Case of Takamura Itsue, 1894–1964," *Bulletin of Concerned Asia Scholars* 17, no. 2 (1985): 2–19. For recent coverage of Yamakawa as an activist and translator, see Elyssa Faison, "Women's Rights as Proletarian Rights: Yamakawa Kikue, Suffrage, and the 'Dawn of Liberation,'" in *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, ed. Julia C. Bullock, Ayako Kano, and James Welker (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2017); and Sarah Frederick, "Yamakawa Kikue and Edward Carpenter: Translation, Affiliation, and Queer Internationalism," in Bullock, Kano, and Welker, *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, 187–204.

²⁷Hitomi Tonomura, "Reenvisioning Women in the Post-Kamakura Age," in *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World: Courtiers, Clerics, Warriors, and Peasants in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Jeffrey P. Mass (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 138–169, 146–147. Takamura's notable works in the pre-1945 period include *Bokeisei no kenkyu* [A study of the matrilineal systems] (Tokyo: Ko-seikaku, 1938) and her encyclopedia *Dai Nihon josei jinmei jiten* [Biographical dictionary of Japanese women] (Ko-seikaku, 1936).

²⁸The controversies began in the 1970s. See one example, Suzuki Yu-ko, *Feminizumu to senso: fujin undo-ka no senso-kyo-ryoku* [Feminism and war: the wartime cooperation of female activists] (Tokyo: Marujusha, 1986).

²⁹Faison, "Women's Rights as Proletarian Rights," in Bullock, Kano, and Welker, *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, 18.

³⁰Yamakawa Kikue, *Buke no josei* (1943: repr. Iwanami shoten, 1983).

³¹On the assistance of Yanagita, see Tsurumi, "The Accidental Historian," 262–263, 266. See also Kate Wildman Nakai, "Introduction," *Women of the Mito Domain: Recollections of Samurai Family Life*, trans. Kate Wildman Nakai (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), ix–xxiv, xxi. To be sure, samurai status was high in the early modern period, but the women Yamakawa studied lived in straightened circumstances at a moment of upheaval.

³²Aoyama Nao, *Meji joggako no kenkyu* (Keio-tsu-shin, 1982).

³³Wakita, Narita, Walthall, and Tonomura, "Appendix," 299–313, 300. On the complex dynamics of this moment as the occupation strove to "liberate" Japanese women, see Mire Koikari, *Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2008).

³⁴Wakita, Narita, Walthall, and Tonomura, "Appendix," 300; and Inoue Kiyoshi, *Nihon joseishi* (San'ichi shobo, 1948).

³⁵For a full list, see Hashimoto Kenzo, ed., *Takamura Itsue zenshu* [Collected Works of Takamura Itsue], 10 vols. (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1967).

³⁶Tsurumi, "The Accidental Historian," 265.

³⁷Wakita, Narita, Walthall, and Tonomura, "Appendix," 301.

³⁸See *ibid.*, 302–303, for a detailed analysis of the debates.

³⁹A wonderful example of the former type of scholar is the male historian Kano Masanao (b. 1931) who taught at Waseda University for many years.

⁴⁰Curtis Anderson Gayle, *Women's History and Local Community in Postwar Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 3–4.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 82, 124.

⁴²Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous: Citizen Protest in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 115.

⁴³Gayle, *Women's History and Local Community*, 134.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 137.

⁴⁵The larger moment was dominated by opposition to the US-Japan Security Treaty. Gluck, "The People in History," 25.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁷When historians like Amino Yoshihiko took up women as historical subjects, they treated women in essentialist ways and did not consider men as gendered beings. See Nagano, "Nihon no joseishi," 14–15.

⁴⁸Masao Miyoshi and Harry Harootunian, eds., *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

⁴⁹Some Japanese scholars were not fans of modernization theory and critiqued the conference, including Toyama Shigeki. Harry Harootunian, "America's Japan/ Japan's Japan," in *Japan in the World*, ed. Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 196–221, 204–205.

⁵⁰Victor Koschmann, "Modernization and Democratic Values: the 'Japanese Model' in the 1960s," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War*, ed. David Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark Haefele, and Michael Latham (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 225–247, 228.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 231.

⁵²To be clear, I have not found cases where this issue was discussed explicitly by modernization scholars. On the history of women's suffrage, see John Markoff, "Margins, Centers, and Democracy: The Paradigmatic History of Women's Suffrage," *Signs* 29, no.1 (2003): 85–116.

⁵³Harootunian, "America's Japan," 204.

⁵⁴Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics: The Conditions to Human Happiness Specified, and the First of them Developed* (1851: repr., University Press of the Pacific, 2003). On the translation of *Social Statics* into Japanese, see Douglas R. Howland, *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 173.

⁵⁵On modernization theory's penchant for "celebrating" great men, see Anne Walthall, "The Meiji Restoration Seen from English-Speaking Countries," *Japanese Studies* 38, no. 3 (2018): 363–376.

⁵⁶Caroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 1, no. 1 (1975): 1–29.

⁵⁷John Dower, "E. H. Norman, Japan, and the Uses of History," in *Origins of the Modern Japanese State: Selected Writings of E. H. Norman*, ed. John Dower (New York: Random House, 1975), 3–101, 75. Dower briefly referenced some Japanese scholarship, including "precedents" from the prewar era, Inoue Kiyoshi's 1948 book that he deemed a "radical interpretation," and subsequent monographs that followed in Inoue's wake.

⁵⁸Mary Ritter Beard, *Women as a Force in Japanese History* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1953); and Joyce Ackroyd, "Women in Feudal Japan," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 8, Third Series (November 1959): 31–68.

⁵⁹Kato published in English using the name Shidzue, but Shizue is the standard way of romanizing her name today.

⁶⁰When independent research was no longer possible in Japan, two copies were sent abroad in 1939, one to Beard who placed it at the Smith College Archives and one to Anna Askanasy of Vienna who encouraged Kato to write it in the first place. Beard did not publish the book until after the war. Mary Beard, "Preface," in *Women as a Force in Japanese History* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1953).

⁶¹Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto, *Daughter of the Samurai* (New York: Doubleday, 1926); Ishimoto Shindzue, *Facing Two Ways: The Story of My Life* (1935, repr. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984); and Isabella Bird, *Japanese Girls and Women* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1891).

⁶²Maud Whitmore Madden, *Women of the Meiji Era* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1919).

⁶³On the problems of the term "second-wave," see Setsu Shigematsu, "Re-thinking Japanese Feminism and the Lessons of *u-man ribu*," in Bullock, Kano, and Welker, *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, 205–229.

⁶⁴Setsu Shigematsu, *Scream from the Shadows: The Women's Liberation Movement in Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2012), xv.

⁶⁵Takahashi, "Recent Collaborative Endeavors," 245. Takahashi cites Ueno's work. See also Kohiyama, "Women's History at the Cutting Edge in Japan," 60.

⁶⁶Takahashi, "Recent Collaborative Endeavors," 246.

⁶⁷There are many examples. To name just one, Joseishi so-go kenkyu kai, ed., *Nihon joseishi* [Japanese women's history], 5 vols., (Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1982).

⁶⁸Nagano Hiroko, "The Unique Relationship between Women's History and Gender History in Japan: In Search of Direction for the Future," *Sydney Women's History-International Historical Studies*, 2. <http://www.historians.ie/women/nagano>. PDF, accessed July 26, 2013, (site discontinued).

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁰On Wakita's legacy, see the special volume of *Rekishigaku kenkyu*, 969 (April 2018).

⁷¹Downs quotes Carroll Smith-Rosenberg on the period: "If the personal was political, so too was the historical." Laura Downs, *Writing Gender History*, 21.

⁷²Joan Scott, "Women's History," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1992), 42–66, 55.

⁷³Kathleen Canning, *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class, and Citizenship* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 8.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 9; and Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–1075.

⁷⁵Canning, *Gender History in Practice*, 11.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷Nagano, "The Unique Relationship," 3–5.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 3–4.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁰In writing textbooks, GHAI members worked with members of the So-go jo-seishi kenkyu kai and Joseishi so-go kenkyu kai. The symposium from which the books emerged was sponsored by the Social Science Council of Japan (Nihon gakujuutsu kaigi). I thank an anonymous reviewer for making this point.

⁸¹Kohiyama, "Women's History at the Cutting Edge in Japan," 65; and Nagano, "Nihon no joseishi," 17–18.

⁸²This is my perception based on Nagano's work. Of course, the wheels of history are still turning. A distinct yet related issue is the general public's backlash to the term "gender." See Tomomi Yamaguchi, "The Mainstreaming of Feminism and the Politics of Backlash in Twenty-First-Century Japan," in *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, ed. Julia C. Bullock, Ayako Kano, and James Welker (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 68–85, 70–71.

⁸³Kohiyama, "Women's History at the Cutting Edge in Japan," 62.

⁸⁴As Canning observes, “gender history became a more theoretically inflected history of female subjects, whereby the process of becoming of a subject itself became part of the investigation. This is still the case today in many fields, whereas in others, the study of gender increasingly encompasses attention to both sexes.” Canning, *Gender History in Practice*, 11.

⁸⁵Sharon Sievers, *Flowers in Salt* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983).

⁸⁶Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Wakita Haruko, Susan Hanley, and Anne Bouchy, eds., *Gender and Japanese History*, vols. 1 and 2 (Osaka: Osaka University Press); and Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko, eds., *Women and Class in Japanese History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 1999).

⁸⁷Anne Walthall, Sally Hastings, Andrew Gordon, Yurika Wakamatsu, and Marnie Anderson, “Recreating Japanese Women: The Past, Present and Future of Women’s and Gender History,” (panel organized by Amy Stanley, Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 23, 2018).

⁸⁸Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno, eds., *Gendering Japanese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005). On masculinity, see Sabine Früstück and Anne Walthall, eds., *Recreating Japanese Men* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); and Gregory Phlugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

⁸⁹On gender and empire, see Susan Burns and Barbara Brooks, eds., *Gender and Law in the Japanese Imperium* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2013); Elyssa Faison and Ruth Barraclough, *Gender and Labor in Korea and Japan: Sexing Class* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Noriko Horiguchi, *Women Adrift: the Literature of Japan’s Imperial Body* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Kimberly Kono, *Romance, Family and Nation in Japanese Colonial Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); and Sidney Xu Lu, “Good Women for Empire: Educating Overseas Female Emigrants in Imperial Japan, 1900–1945,” *Journal of Global History* 8, no. 3 (2013): 436–460.

⁹⁰Anne Walthall, *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); and Laura Nenzi, *The Chaos and Cosmos of Kurosawa Tokiko: One Woman’s Transit from Tokugawa to Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2015).

⁹¹Laura Nenzi, *The Chaos and Cosmos of Kurosawa Tokiko*, 3.

⁹²This critique differs from the charge that early women’s history was too narrow because it focused on elite and literate women rather than *all* women.

⁹³Among the many scholars who participated in translation projects related to women’s and gender history, see the work of Anne Walthall, Vera Mackie, Wakita Haruko, Nagano Hiroko, Ueno Chizuko, Sugano Noriko, Hayakawa Noriyo, Hitomi Tonomura, Barbara Ruch, G. G. Rowley, Peter Kornicki, Suzanne Gay, Gregory Phlugfelder, Anne Bouchy, Christina Laffin, Mara Patessio, Sakurai Yuki, Vera Mackie, Bettina Gramlich-Oka, and Laura Nenzi. This list is by no means comprehensive. Note that some scholars like Ueno publish in both English and Japanese.

⁹⁴Most volumes take up long time periods, usually the Tokugawa and modern periods, but some volumes like *Women and Class in Japanese History* and *Engendering Faith* include pre-1600 material as well. In general, more work gets translated from Western languages into Japanese. Recent edited volumes in the Japanese language have made efforts to include non-Japanese contributors. For example, see Yokoyama Yuriko and Nishizawa Naoko, eds., *Meiji ishin to josei* [*The Meiji Restoration and Women*] (Tokyo: Yushisha, 2015). Wakita, Hanley, and Bouchy, eds., *Gender and Japanese History*; Barbara Ruch, ed., *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2013); P.F. Kornicki, Mara Patessio, and G.G. Rowley, eds., *The Female as Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2010); Sabine Früstück and Anne Walthall, eds., *Recreating Japanese Men* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); and Bettina Gramlich-Oka, Anne Walthall, Miyazaki Fumiko, and Sugano Noriko, eds., *Women’s Networks in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (forthcoming from University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies).

⁹⁵On Mizuta, see Bullock, Kano, and Welker, *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, 279. Note too the work of Sally A. Hastings, the longtime editor-in-chief for the English-language edition.

⁹⁶For a few examples of this rich field, see Noriko Mizuta Lippit and Kyoko Iriye Selden, *Japanese Women Writers: Twentieth Century Short Fiction* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1991); Rebecca Copeland, *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000); and Jan Bardsley, *The Bluestockings of Japan: New Woman Essays and Fiction from Seito, 1911–1916* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2007).

⁹⁷For an overview of Japanese women’s history and gender in the premodern field, see Hitomi Tonomura, “Women and Sexuality in Premodern Japan,” in *A Companion to Japanese History*, ed. William Tsutsui (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 351–371. For the modern period, see Sally Hastings, “Gender and Sexuality in Modern Japan” in Tsutsui, *A Companion to Japanese History*, 372–388.

⁹⁸“Writing History for the Cambridge History of Japan,” (Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, March 24, 2018). The Cambridge history volumes are forthcoming, and editors are Laura Hein, Hitomi Tonomura, and David Howell.

⁹⁹On the work to be done in the future, see Nagano, “Nihon no joseishi,” 19.

¹⁰⁰Anne Walthall made this point at “Meiji Restoration Workshop,” (Yale University, Henry Luce Hall, November 11, 2016). Other fields also have such transnational connections. For an example of a trans-Pacific conference of Chinese and Western scholars, see Judge, “Chinese Women’s History,” 236. I do not wish to romanticize the field or suggest that it is without its inequalities.

¹⁰¹Adelman, “What is Global History Now?”

¹⁰²For a recent, important intervention, see Amy Stanley, “Writing the History of Sexual Assault in the Age of #METOO,” *Perspectives on History*, accessed October 11, 2019, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2018/writing-the-history-of-sexual-assault-in-the-age-of-metoo>.

